

USATT ETHICS & GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2020 MEETING

MEETING BY VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee Members in attendance: Frank Roth, Chair, Ross Brown, Michael Clardy, Steve Hopkins, and James Segrest.

Absent: None.

Call to order: Mr. Roth, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m. U.S. EDT.

I. Agenda review: Mr. Roth reviewed the items (II. through V. below) appearing on the agenda he distributed by email to the Committee members in advance and inquired whether any members wished to add any topics. No additions were requested.

II. Approval of Minutes: The draft minutes of the Committee's August 11, 2020 meeting, distributed in advance, were submitted for approval. There being no changes to the minutes, the August 11, 2020 meeting minutes were approved by unanimous consent of the members present.

III. Committee meeting procedures:

As discussed at the Committee's July 9th and August 11th meetings, Mr. Roth noted that USATT Bylaws Article 9.8, pertaining to all USATT Committees, states that "*Each Committee shall establish procedures for conducting its business and affairs*" and that these "*shall be published and made available on USATT's website.*" Following the Committee's August 11th meeting, Mr. Roth drafted proposed Committee procedures, but the draft was not complete and distributed to the Committee members until September 7th. In order to give the Committee members more time to review, comment, and proposed revisions to the draft Committee procedures, all members agreed to table the Committee's approval to the next Committee meeting.

He also noted that USATT Bylaws Article 9.10 states that each Committee shall take minutes of its meetings, which, after approval by the Committee, must be "published" within 30 days after the meeting. Mr. Roth stated, and all agreed, that the Committee will raise this with USATT staff how to accomplish this. It is likely this will be referred to the new Technology and Innovation Committee, chaired by Bill Draper, since that Committee is working on other aspects of the USATT website.

IV. Complaint and Grievance Process: Improvements:

a. Online Grievance Form – Review draft:

At its August 11th meeting, the Committee had discussed the draft online grievance form prepared by Mr. Hopkins using as models a sampling of online grievance and complaint forms used by the national governing bodies of other USOPC sports. Suggested additions were discussed as noted in the August 11th meeting minutes. Mr. Brown has followed up by email with Chad Knasinski, USATT Marketing and Communications Director, and Bill Draper, Chair of the USATT Technology and Innovation Committee, since we will need website assistance and support so we can have a means for USATT members (or other parties with a grievance) to submit their grievance online. We will also include an email address in the event that an individual would like to submit a grievance anonymously. As discussed during our August meeting, our Committee's goal is to have a system for logging of all grievances, including information for tracking the status of a grievance until it is resolved.

b. Supplemental Hearing Procedural Rules – Revisions:

Mr. Roth stated that he continues to review the Supplemental Hearing Procedural Rules (dated January 22, 2010). As he reviews these Rules, he is creating a mark-up noting his comments, questions, and suggestions for clarifications or additions. He will distribute these to the Committee members for discussion and all members' input so these Rules are accurate and promote the fair and efficient hearing and resolution of grievances. Mr. Roth noted that pursuant to USATT Bylaws Section 9.13. b. 5., the Committee is delegated the responsibility and authority to promulgate procedures in addition to those stated in the USATT Bylaws to provide for "the effective administration of complaints filed with the USATT," and is responsible for "ensuring that all complaints are heard in a timely, fair and impartial manner."

V. "Codes Project" Update:

Prior to the Committee's August 11th meeting, Mr. Roth had sent to the Committee members copies of the various codes of ethics and conduct that the USATT currently uses. The codes distributed were: (A) the USATT Board of Directors Code of Ethics; (B) the USATT Board of Directors Code of Conduct; (C) a Statement of Principles on Ethical Behavior and Conflict of Interest (and accompanying COI form) that applies to USATT Board members, Committee members, candidates for office, executive staff and other staff members; (D) a Code of Ethics for USATT volunteers, committee members, and paid professionals; (E) a USA Table Tennis National Team Member Code of Conduct and Athlete Pledge; and (F) a USATT Member Code of Conduct applicable to all USATT members.

The Committee continued its discussion from its August 11th meeting about having an inventory of Codes, determining the applicability of each Code and whether there is redundancy or gaps, and whether some are in need of updating or elimination. The various Codes need to be accessible on the USATT website (as nearly all are) but they could be better organized.

As discussed at the August 11th meeting, the Committee members' consensus was as follows:

- One option is to categorize the codes as they apply to 3 principal groups: (1) the USATT Board of Directors, USATT Committee members, and USATT staff; (2) all USATT members; and (3) National Team member athletes.
- Another option is to have one over-arching code of conduct and ethics, with sub-parts applicable to the 3 groups mentioned above (and/or subgroups of these).

There followed a discussion about what issues of USATT members' conduct the Committee members have heard about, or experienced, and whether the USATT Members Code of Conduct addresses these issues. The Committee discussed the use of social media arguably in contravention of the broad language of the Code of Conduct and the significant challenges of applying a conduct code to social media. There was also discussion of the fact that the vast majority of conduct and behavior is handled at the club level, and the fact that many club members may not be USATT members, and other conduct issues such as behavior directed towards tournament directors and umpires.

The discussion concluded as the one hour allotted for the meeting arrived. Mr. Roth noted again, as during the August 11th meeting, that USATT Bylaws Section 9.13 b. 3. states that among the responsibilities of this Committee is to "*develop, and review on an annual basis, a Code of Ethics for the Board, officers, committee and task force members, volunteers, staff and member organizations for adoption by the Board.*" All agreed on the importance of continuing the Committee's Codes Project. This topic will be added to the Committee's request for assistance of USATT staff and the Technology and Innovation Committee working on the USATT website.

VI. Adjournment: Mr. Roth noted that the one hour allotted for the meeting had been reached, and the meeting adjourned by consensus at 12:00 p.m. EDT.

VII. Next meeting: Tuesday, October 13, 2020, 11:00 a.m. EDT

Respectfully submitted,

Frank A. Roth, Chair