



USATT Board Teleconference Minutes June 7, 2021

Board Chair **Richard Char** called the Board Teleconference to order at **6:03 pm** US Mountain time.

Board Members in attendance: **Tara Profitt, Tom Feng, Thomas Hu, Will Shortz, Dan Reynolds, Kelly Watson, Brandon Lawrence,** and **Board Chair Char.**

Board Member not in attendance: **Sergio Garcia.**

USATT Outside Counsel: **Brian Moran, Esq. and Stephen Hess, Esq. and Megan Craig, Esq.**

USATT Foundation: **Pam Fontaine**

USATT Staff Present: **Virginia Sung** (CEO) and **Mark Thompson** (COO, Athlete Protection Officer, General Secretary), **Sean O'Neill** (High Performance Director), **Jasna Rather** (Para High Performance Director).

Other Persons Present: **Lee Kondo, Niraj Oak, Willy Leparulo** (NCTTA), **Kagin Lee,** and **Larry Hodges.**

Board Chair Call for Conflicts

None noted.

Approval of Minutes from Board Meeting of March 22, 2021

Upon Motion properly presented and seconded, the following unanimous Resolution was approved:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes from the Board Meeting held on March 22, 2021, are approved and formally entered into the record.

Approval of Minutes from Board Meeting of April 5, 2021

Upon Motion properly presented and seconded, the following unanimous Resolution was approved:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes from the Board Meeting held on February 22, 2021 are approved and formally entered into the record.

CEO Report

Chief Executive Officer Virginia Sung reported on several important matters on which the USATT is currently focused, including operations and participant registration for the 2021 US National Table Tennis Championships. Ms. Sung noted several challenges associated with hosting this upcoming event, but she expressed a belief that the organization will be able to meet these challenges and present a successful National Championship event. Ms. Sung addressed the status of the 2021 US Open, noting that the organization is currently considering four potential host cities. Ms. Sung provided an update on the organization's impending efforts to send athletes to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Ms. Sung stated the organization is pleased with the pace of growth of the USATT membership coming out of the COVID-19 restrictions, and that the organization expects a larger uptick in membership as we



approach the third quarter, particularly as the United States continues to loosen the pandemic restrictions. Ms. Sung also noted the USATT launched the organization's Tournament Sanctioning Web App last week, and it is believed that this on-line process will make applying for and obtaining a USATT sanction more efficient for tournament directors.

High Performance Director Report

USATT High Performance Director Sean O'Neill provided a review of the recent US National Team trials conducted in Fort Worth, Texas, and at ICC in Milpitas California. Mr. O'Neill stated that these events went extremely smoothly due in large part to the staffs at these events, particularly the competition managers and officials. Mr. O'Neill noted that the eight persons selected for the male and female adult teams will play in several important events over the next one-year cycle, including the 2021 World Championships in Houston, Texas, the Pan Am Championships, and the 2022 World Team Championships. He noted that the U-19 and U-15 National Teams were selected at ICC, and the U-17 and U-13 teams will be selected in a tournament that is being held at Westchester Table Tennis Center in Pleasantville, New York this week. Mr. O'Neill stated that Westchester TTC is actually serving host to several big events this week including the T2 Challenge Season Two, the Hall of Fame Cup, and a match between America's female Olympians and several young players from Texas Wesleyan.

Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

Pro Bono Outside Counsel Brian Moran, Esq. and his co-counsel, Megan Craig, Esq. reported that the USATT bylaws continue to undergo a strict review and revision to ensure adherence to the Ted Stevens Act, Illinois law, and the USOPC guidance. It is expected that the proposed revised version of the bylaws will be published for member comments in a few weeks. The hope is that the Board will be able to review the member comments and approve the revised bylaws before the end of July, so as to allow the organization to hold an election for athlete representatives on the Board.

Athletes Advisory Council – First and Second Athletes – Third and Fourth Athletes

Board Chair Char addressed issues related to the election of USATT's current Athlete Advisory Committee and the selection of the current First and Second Athletes by the AAC. Mr. Char stated that the USOPC reviewed USATT's processes in this regard and concluded that USATT's seven member AAC should have been chosen by an election held amongst athletes even though only seven athletes were willing to serve on the Council. Nonetheless, the USOPC has determined that USATT is permitted to implement the "Rule of Acclamation" to approve the organization's current seven person AAC.

Upon Motion properly presented and seconded, the following unanimous Resolution was approved:

RESOLVED: USATT's current seven-person Athlete Advisory Committee is ratified and approved by acclamation.

The USOPC also noted that the USATT Bylaws are currently in violation of the Ted Stevens Act with respect to the selection of the First and Second athletes and that USATT's Bylaws must be revised to ensure two separate fair



elections of (i) the First and Second Athlete; and (ii) the Third and Fourth Athletes. The USATT Board agreed that all appropriate measures should be undertaken to ensure that the organization encourages diversity in all of these positions. The elections will take place after the Bylaws have been amended. In response to a question, Mr. Char also reported that new gender and para diversity provisions were incorporated in the proposed Bylaw revisions for the election of the AAC, First and Second Athletes, and Third and Fourth Athletes.

Proposed Committee Assignments

Board Chair Char noted that vacancies that currently exist on the Tournament Committee and the Nominating and Governance Committee and that the process of filling these vacancies would be further discussed in Executive Session.

Mr. Char also noted that USATT is considering efforts to protect the Intellectual Property of USATT. There was considerable discussion on the best way to approach the protection of USATT's brand and licenses, including the formation of a committee or the appointment of a special master to the CEO, and it was agreed that further consideration was required.

Issues Related to Officiating and Problematic Players

Board Member Dan Reynolds discussed several issues that he stated have been plaguing table tennis tournament play for some time, including the improper cross-over of responsibilities for a single tournament official serving in more than one capacity, such as Tournament Director, Tournament Referee and Umpire—all at once. Mr. Reynolds noted the inherent problems associated with persons serving in these multiple capacities at the same time and suggested that action should be taken to prevent this. Mr. Reynolds also expressed concern about the historic and apparently on-going problem with certain players intentionally playing poorly in order to falsely manipulate their rating to their advantage, a practice commonly referred to as "sandbagging". Mr. Reynolds stated that these are issues that need clear policy direction and decisions from USATT. It was agreed that USATT Staff would organize a meeting with the Chairs of the Ethics and Grievance Committee, the Umpire and Referee Committee, the Tournament Committee, and thereafter the Staff and these Committees would work together to formulate ideas and new policies to address these issues. If practical, the Committees could provide a joint report to the Board at the August meeting.

Executive Session

Upon Motion properly presented and seconded, the Board excused the General Membership and moved into Executive Session where it discussed various matters, including confidential matters related to international table tennis events. The issues discussed in Executive Session included the selection process for members on the Nominating and Governance Committee and the Tournament Committee; the proper way to proceed to protect USATT's brand and intellectual property; the USATT Foundation; and process of conducting performance reviews for the Chief Executive Officer and USATT Staff.



Upon Motion properly presented and seconded, the following Resolution approved:

RESOLUTION: That Wai Wang and Horace Byfield are hereby appointed to the Nominating and Governance Committee as general membership representatives, to serve until their successors are duly appointed.

RESOLVED FURTHER: That the appointment of Bobby Sharma and Bob Luckinbill to the Nominating and Governance Committee as independent representatives, to serve until their successors are duly appointed, is hereby ratified.

Upon Motion properly presented and seconded, the following unanimous Resolution approved:

RESOLUTION: That the Board concludes the Executive Session and move back into the Board's General Session.

Adjournment

It was properly moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Board meeting adjourned at 8:21 pm US Mountain time.

Respectfully submitted.

Mark Thompson
USATT General Secretary

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