



## MEETING MINUTES

### USA National Karate-do Federation Board of Directors Meeting October 20, 2022, 4:30pm Eastern time via Zoom

#### Board Members in Attendance

Elisa Au  
Rahul Bawa  
Michael Donadio  
Sasha Gerritson  
Pat Hickey  
Brian Mertel  
Matthew Ralph (joined at 5:35pm)  
Brian Ramrup  
Tom Scott

#### USANKF Staff Present

Sara Plackett  
Elizabeth Poloni

#### Others Present during Open Session

Various USANKF members that pre-registered for the meeting

**Call to Order** – Rahul Bawa called the meeting to order at 4:37pm Eastern Time (ET).

#### Open Session

##### 1) Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

- a) Tom Scott declared a conflict due to his relationship with Brody Burns since Mr. Scott is Brody Burns' student.
- b) Pat Hickey declared the following:

I declare a possible conflict of interest that could arise as I am the president of the USA Karate Federation (USAKF). The USAKF could be considered a competing organization to USANKF. I aver that the USA Karate Federation has no interest in becoming the NGB for Karate in the United States. I repeat that I have made my conflict of interest declaration at the start of my term available to all board members and I am still waiting for other board members to provide theirs.

Further, I have been questioned if it is the intent of the USAKF to become the National Governing Body, first a board member in an open session of the board and later by a question from Doug Jepperson in a phone call. I have heard that this question has arisen through the USA. Anyone spreading these patently false rumors is attempting to either disparage me, or reduce my effectiveness as a board member. This type of rumor spreading is against the principles of this organization.

Further, as to the position of chairman, there is another rumor that is going around. I wish to direct everyone to a clause in the USANKF Bylaws Section 7.2. Election/Selection:



“The Board of Directors shall elect from among the directors of the Board, by majority vote, a presiding officer or Chair, to be known as President. The Affiliate Member Director shall not be eligible to be the Chair of the Board of Directors.”

I ask that anyone who has information on who is spreading these false rumors to either come forth to me or make an anonymous report to the ethics committee. I know that recent changes in USA-NKF governance have given rise to extensive public comment. I appreciate the interest of the community and the vigor with which these matters are being debated in social media and elsewhere. At the same time, I hasten to remind everyone that passion for debate has limits, and USA-NKF has very strong whistleblower, anti-bullying, and anti-retaliation policies. If you are ever put in a position in which you think the discourse has crossed the line or you are being pressured to take sides against your will, you can report any offensive communications confidentially at <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/51452/index.html>

I am providing all board members, by email, a complete copy of this conflict of interest declaration for inclusion the public minutes and I will forward it to anyone who requests.

- c) Brian Mertel declared a conflict since John DiPasquale and Phil Hampel were named in the USOPC Investigation Report & Findings.
- d) Elisa Au declared a conflict since she was coached by Brody Burns while she was on the US National Team and at a WKF Premier League event.
- e) Brian Ramrup declared a conflict since he is a friend of Tom Scott (due to Tom’s declared conflict).

## 2) 2023 National Championships

- a) Mr. Bawa stated that the 2023 National Championships and Team Trials will be held from July 13 – July 16, 2023, in Richmond Virginia.
- b) Details regarding the venue and hotels will be posted on the USANKF web site by the end of November 2022.

## 3) Board Election Update (Elected At-Large position)

- a) Mr. Bawa indicated that the timeline for the Elected At-Large position on the Board is being developed and will be shared with all members soon.

## 4) USOPC Investigation

- a) Mr. Bawa indicated that the Board would not be able to share the details of the USOPC Investigation Findings and Report due to confidentiality.

## 5) USANKF Member Opportunity to address Board – the following members addressed the Board and asked questions:

- a) Robert Mazza
- b) Carol Park

- c) John Vercellino
- d) Check Sweigart
- e) Kathy Bailey

**6) 2022 Priorities Updates (to be included in all 2022 Board Meetings) – listed during meeting**

- a) Improve Communications
- b) Develop Strategic Plan
- c) Complete the actions from the USOPC Demand Letter
- d) Re-examine Committee structure
- e) Review Bylaws
- f) Enhance Junior Team Support
- g) Support inclusion of karate in LA 2028

**7) Task-Force updates**

- a) Fundraising – Sasha Gerritson: not active as per Board decision on 6/29/22
- b) Sponsorship – Tom Scott: send any contacts, thoughts and recommendations to Tom Scott
- c) Junior Development – Elisa Au and Matthew Ralph
- d) Organizational Structure – Rahul Bawa

**8) Approval of September 4, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes**

- a) Motion to Approve made by Pat Hickey; Seconded by Elisa Au
- b) After discussion, the motion was withdrawn by Pat Hickey

Motion to enter Closed Session made by Pat Hickey; seconded by Brian Ramrup.

Motion approved: Votes in favor = 7; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0.

Participants that are not Board members or USANKF staff left the meeting.

**Closed Session**

**1) Board Minutes**

- a) The Board discussed the process of recording minutes during Executive sessions.
- b) September 9, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes
  - i) Motion to Approve made by Elisa Au; seconded by Mike Donadio
  - ii) Motion approved: Votes in favor = 7; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0
- c) September 23, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes
  - i) Motion to Approve made by Elisa Au; seconded by Mike Donadio
  - ii) Motion approved: Votes in favor = 7; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0

**2) USOPC Investigation**

- a) The Board discussed a letter received from the USOPC on October 19, 2022, and discussed potential changes to be requested to the letter.
- b) The Board requested that Holly Shick meet with the full Board regarding the investigation.



**3) Tabled Items – the following items on the agenda were not discussed and tabled for a future meeting**

- a) Board Election for open Elected At-Large position
- b) Committee Discussions
  - i) Referee
  - ii) Ethics
  - iii) Nominating and Governance
  - iv) Selection
- c) International Representation
- d) CEO / Executive Director Search
- e) Schedule Strategic Planning Session
- f) Referee Code of Conduct

**Adjourn Meeting**

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Brian Ramrup; seconded by Pat Hickey.

Motion approved: Votes in favor = 8; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:15pm Eastern time.**