



Member, United States  
Olympic & Paralympic Committee

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## USA Team Handball board meeting

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Minutes of the 7-Mar-2024 regular meeting teleconference

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### **Board members in attendance**

- Michael Wall – Chair
- Sandra De La Riva Repede
- Tracy Deforge
- Jennifer Fithian
- Camille Nichols
- Patrick Jalabert – acting as secretary
- Mark Ortega
- Ebiye Udo-Udoma

### **Board members excused**

- Marianne Acker

### **USATH Staff in attendance**

- Martin Branick – CEO

### **Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 3 pm MT by Michael Wall, Chair. Mr. Wall thanked board members for joining, and reminded them that several topics would be discussed, as detailed in the shared agenda. Mr. Wall asked Mr. Jalabert to act as secretary, and take minutes for the meeting.

This meeting was opened to the USATH community as a webinar, excluding the executive session.

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### **Agenda item #2 – 2022 Financial Audit and Form 990**

- Both the 2022 financial audit, and the form 990 had been circulated ahead of the meeting.
- Mr. Branick and the Audit and Compensation Committee had reviewed the taxes with the accounting company prior to sharing with the board at large.
- There were no major questions raised, but the board was provided with an opportunity to spend further time reviewing the content.

### ***Action item***

*Board members were tasked with reviewing the circulated documents and providing any questions or comments before the end of the day on March 11, 2024.*

- Ms. De La Riva Repede provided some background on the audit process, conducted by the independent auditor that USA Team Handball had previously used.
- Ms. De La Riva Repede then provided a high level walk through of the audit results, including the recommendations and findings from the auditor.

### ***Motion***

*A motion was made to approve the audit results and post them for public view on the USA Team Handball website, and was duly seconded. Hearing no objections, the motion passed.*

### **Agenda item #1 – CEO report**

- Mr. Branick extended his and USA Team Handball's condolences to the friends and family of Lazlo Jurak, long time champion of handball in the United States, who had passed away earlier that week.
- Mr. Branick provided an update on the status of the US Open Nationals, which were scheduled to be hosted in Spokane, WA on the weekend of May 3-5, 2024. This would be a USA Team Handball only event, as the US Handball Union had elected to host its own event later in the season.
- It was noted that, looking beyond this event, an in-depth review of the bidding process for US Nationals host cities would be needed, to be more inclusive of the community.
- Mr. Jalabert and Mr. Branick discussed the efforts that were made to work with the US Handball Union and best serve the handball community. Long term partnership or collaboration discussions would be an important part of the work to be done over the summer off-season.
- Mr. Branick provided an update on National team activities:
  - The men's senior indoor National team would be hosting a training camp in the coming weeks, and would then be expected to participate in the NACHC qualifier in Mexico City in May 2024.
  - The men's junior indoor National team would be hosting a training camp in France the week after the board call. A training camp was targeted for the summer of 2024 in the US, possibly in the Chicago area.
  - The women's senior indoor National team had just completed a training camp in Hungary, and was looking for an opportunity to host a domestic training camp in the coming months.
  - The beach handball programs were expected to participate in an NACHC qualifier in April, the World Beach tour in Brazil in May, and potentially the world championship in China in July. The resulting dense season was a point of concern that would be escalated back to the NACHC, in

order to target continental qualifiers in “off” years rather than the same year as world championships.

- Mr. Branick noted that the effort to find the next senior women’s beach head coach was still on-going, with increasing criticality as events drew nearer. Mr. Ortega emphasized that some key support from the board and/or AAC was needed to help push that recruitment more aggressively.

### **Action item**

*Mr. Ortega and Mr. Udo-Udoma were tasked with aligning on a chairperson for the search committee, to be accountable for the progress toward hiring a new head coach.*

- Mr. Branick noted that, at this time, no formal update had been provided regarding the beach handball exhibition event at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.
- Mr. Branick shared that some interest had been expressed related to establishing a wheelchair handball program and National team. The IHF had noted that there was limited infrastructure in the NACHC with regards to that discipline, but a pathway could be established to obtain a wild card bid for the world championships in Cairo, Egypt later in 2024. For reference, the upcoming world championship would only be the third such event, giving USA Team Handball an opportunity to be an early member of the wheelchair handball community worldwide.

### **Agenda item #3 – Update as to board candidates**

- Mr. Wall thanked Ms. De La Riva for her service to the board, as she had elected to step down from her role, effective March 15.
- Mr. Wall had spoken with Mr. Buckman of the Nominating and Governance Committee in order to find a replacement candidate.
- Mr. Wall encouraged board members to present potential candidates to either himself or Mr. Buckman for consideration, with a preference for candidates with a strong financial background.

### **Agenda item #4 – Amendment to bylaws**

- In light of Ms. De La Riva Repede’s departure, and several board members’ terms expiring simultaneously at the end of 2024, Mr. Wall had circulated a proposed update to the bylaws to better stagger terms and allow for no more than three (3) seats to be changed over at any given time.
- The proposed amendment had been circulated ahead of the meeting, and been reviewed with David Patterson at the USOPC for feedback.

### **Motion**

*A motion was made to approve the amendment to the bylaws, and was duly seconded. Hearing no objections, the motion passed.*

**Non-agenda item(s)**

- Mr. Branick noted that the NRC constitution would be formally announced in an upcoming press release, and a call for candidates would be issued shortly thereafter.
- Mr. Jalabert had not completed the meeting minutes for the January meeting, which he had not attended. It was agreed that these minutes would be reviewed and approved at the next meeting.

**Executive session**

*The board entered executive session at 4 pm MT, ending the webinar.*

- Mr. Branick gave a brief overview of an upcoming meeting with Christian Zaharia, former member of the USA Team Handball leadership, who was looking to develop a handball course at a university he was the international director at.
- The board discussed the staff's workload, following a review session that Mr. Jalabert had with Mr. Branick and the resulting findings. This included discussions of priorities, available resources, and potentially leveraging community members.

***Action item***

*Mr. Branick was tasked with determining what administrative workload could be handed off to Mr. Collins.*

***Action item***

Mr. Branick was tasked with requesting board members' availability for a virtual strategic planning meeting in April.

- The board endorsed Mr. Jalabert to lead the membership working group.

***Motion***

*A motion to adjourn was made at 4.50 pm MT, and was duly seconded. Hearing no objections, the motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned.*

Patrick Jalabert served as Secretary.