



Member, United States
Olympic & Paralympic Committee

USA Team Handball board meeting

Meeting minutes for the 19-Nov-2024 meeting

Board members in attendance

- Marianne Acker
- Andre Carter
- Patrick Jalabert – interim chair
- Mark Ortega
- Ebiye Udo-Udoma

Board members excused

- Jennifer Fithian

USATH Staff in attendance

- Michael King

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 11.05am MT by Patrick Jalabert, interim chair. Mr. Jalabert thanked board members for joining, and reminded them that several topics would be discussed, as detailed in the shared agenda.

Agenda item #1: Interim board - 30/60/90-day priorities

- Update on NGC progress
 - The board welcomed Andre Carter as its newest member.
 - Mr. Carter gave a brief introduction of himself and his interest in the sport
 - Mr. Jalabert noted that the other recently appointed board member, Olga Chaikouskaya, was in the process of completing the last steps in the documentation process to join the board.
 - Mr. Jalabert noted that the NGC was working through reviewing additional candidates for the remaining open seats on the board.
- The board discussed the status of other ad-hoc committees, including the need to fill an open seat on the NGC.

Action item

Mr. Jalabert was tasked with reviewing the status of the Judicial Committee, and whether any open seats remained on that committee.

Agenda item #2 – Meeting minutes

- Meeting minutes for October 22, 2024 had been circulated ahead of time for review.
- No changes were requested.

Motion

A motion was made to approve the October 22, 2024 meeting minutes, and was duly seconded. Hearing no objections, the motion passed.

Agenda item 3 - CEO update

- Mr. King noted that the 2022 and 2023 tax and audit process had been completed, as had some of the overdue filings to the USOPC, state of Colorado, and congressional requests.
- Mr. King noted that an updated MAAPP had been submitted to the Center for SafeSport.
- The Team USA AC had provided its approval of the updated election timeline. The election was on-going, and expected to close by the following Sunday.
- The next elections on the calendar would be for the beach athlete director, followed by the general membership director. The THAAC seats required some updates in line with the Team USA AC by-laws relative to all members needing to be 10-year athletes, and elections would then be conducted.
- Mr. King noted that work was on-going with Sport80 on back-end adjustments to match expectations of SafeSport, specifically for referees, coaches, timekeepers, scorekeepers, etc. Completion was expected by the end of the year.
- Mr. King noted an increasing contribution with etrainu, and specifically thanked Michi Mensing for leading that effort. The next area of focus was expected to be on referee training.
- Mr. King was engaging with partners to develop a new media strategy to increase exposure of the sport domestically.
- Work was also in process to build guidelines to starting a club, and hosting a sanctioned event, with the objective of posting these for easy access on the website.
- Mr. King noted that the staff was engaging with the USOPC for support with USCIS to help individual contributors gain status in the US to support the sport despite not being employed. This need was driven by the organization's limitations in employing more individual contributors at this time.
- The staff was finalizing dates and a venue for Collegiate Nationals. The event was expected to take place at James Madison University, April 4-6, 2025. The objective was to add a third court with a vision on increasing the size of the event.
- Discussions around Open Nationals were in progress. The staff was specifically looking for a local organizing committee to help facilitate the size and scope that a potential venue would be hoping for. The objective was to announce to the community in December, pending finalization of negotiations.

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- The board requested an update on membership. At the time of the meeting, USATH had 572 members, in line with 2022. An increase was expected with an increase in focus from the staff. Four (4) new clubs had been added.
 - Mr. Jalabert noted Mr. Branick's decision to trigger the severance clause in his contract, and some conversations were expected to help facilitate that transition.
 - Mr. King provided an update on national teams:
 - The organization was receiving good support from the USOPC Chief Medical Officer to help staff traveling teams and provide continuity of care for athletes.
 - Conversations had been engaged with National team coaches to review agreements and discuss formal responsibilities and expectations for performance moving forward.
 - The staff was also navigating the legal ramifications of covering expenses for coaches based on their immigration status.
 - The status of all National teams, including recent performance and upcoming training or talent identification camps, was discussed. Mr. King specifically recognized the individual support from staff members such as Edina Borsos, Hendrik Schultze, Julio Sainz, Martin Bilello, and Danilo Rojevic.
 - At the board's request, Mr. King noted that live viewing opportunities for upcoming junior/youth events would be posted on the website as soon as they were communicated by organizers.
 - Some amendments would be needed to selection procedures, in line with the IHF player eligibility code for dual citizens.
 - The US Team Handball Foundation had supported multiple NT programs recently, including the recent successful wheelchair campaign which yielded the US' first world championships medal. The board and the staff acknowledged the tremendous staff effort that led to that achievement!
 - Mr. King shared a recommendation to formalize a club system for beach handball, as an opportunity for growth, to bring multiple efforts under one umbrella.
 - The staff was working with local municipalities to host multiple NACHC events, in order to generate higher interest than individual events based on local economic impact.
 - Mr. King shared the on-going heavy focus on establishing a training site, with some promising progress, including one seemingly in the final stages.
 - The board discussed the Handball Futures initiative, aimed at supporting the growth of women's handball and establishing a pipeline.
 - Mr. King noted that work was on-going on a 2025 budget, for board review in December. The staff and the board were conscious that financial challenges could not inhibit handball going into a key Olympic quad.
 - Mr. King shared some positive conversations during USOPC Assembly the previous week in Colorado Springs, and some of the conversations with the LA2028 committee regarding handball promotion ahead of the games.



Board of Directors Meeting minutes

19-Nov-2024

The board moved to executive session at 12pm MT, ending the webinar.

- The board discussed amendments needed to the by-laws, specifically related to some of the findings from the USOPC's review. A formal review was to be circulated by email and subsequently voted on.
- The board discussed renaming the "beach" seat to "non-Olympic" seat, and weighed that option with others such as increasing the size of the board to add a dedicated wheelchair representative. The board agreed to prioritize correcting the gaps in the by-laws before increasing the board's size.
- The board discussed the leadership of the National Referee Committee (NRC), and aligned on feedback to be provided to its current chair.

The board meeting was adjourned at 12.35pm MT.