



Member, United States
Olympic & Paralympic Committee

USA Team Handball board meeting

Minutes of the 27-Apr-2023 regular meeting teleconference

Board members in attendance

- Michael Wall – Chair
- Tracy Deforge
- Sandra De La Riva Repede
- Camille Nichols
- Mark Ortega

Board members excused

- Marianne Acker
- Jennifer Fithian
- Patrick Jalabert – acting as secretary
- Ebiye Udo-Udoma

USATH Staff in attendance

- Martin Branick – Interim CEO

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 2 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. Branick to record the meeting so that Mr. Jalabert could retroactively act as secretary, and take minutes for the meeting.

This meeting had not been opened to the USATH community, as a town hall meeting had been hosted earlier in the week.

Agenda item #1 – CEO report

- Mr. Branick provided an update on membership, with 1,365 members (up 9% year-over-year) across 50 clubs (up 28% year-over-year). Following up on a request from the previous meeting, Mr. Branick addressed the geographic distribution of the membership. No region seemed to be growing more than another, with all or most states within 1 to 2% of their 2022 membership levels. Mr. Branick noted a growth in coach/referee (12%) and youth (14%) memberships.
- Mr. Branick discussed recent events:
 - The Collegiate Conference was hosted at James Madison University, with seven (7) men's teams in attendance. The staff was looking to grow that event, including extending to a women's division.
 - The Collegiate Nationals were hosted in Tiffin, OH, with 12 men's teams and four (4) women's teams. The total participation was tied for highest attendance in recent years. The host university was expected to move forward with an on-site handball program, adding to a robust regional collegiate system in Ohio.
- Mr. Branick provided an overview of upcoming events, with U19 Nationals (two teams) and the US Open Nationals (25 confirmed teams).
- Mr. Branick gave the board the status update on National team activities:
 - The beach teams were in Brazil, giving the organization and the sport a very positive image as they competed at a high level.
 - The women's indoor National team would be traveling to Greenland for the NACHC World Championships qualifier.
 - The men's beach National team was expected to travel to Bali for the ANOC games.
 - The men's junior and youth National teams would be traveling to World Championships in Germany and Croatia respectively.
- As previously discussed, these trips drove the need to identify qualified candidates for the Head of Delegation roles. The board also discussed the funding of that position, considering that the annually allocated travel budget would likely not be able to cover international trips for Heads of Delegation. For reference, considering the World Championships daily participation fees of \$170/day/person, a Head of Delegation would cost \$4,000-5,000 approximately.

Action item

Mr. Branick was tasked with creating a role description document for the Head of Delegation, in order to facilitate finding candidates.

- Mr. Branick noted that the end of the relationship between United Healthcare and the USOPC had created an urgent need to secure travel insurance for athletes. The staff had been able to secure a policy through EPIC, the broker that handled other forms of insurance for the organization.

Action item

Mr. Branick was asked to review the contract with Ms. De La Riva Repede to leverage her experience and expertise.

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- Mr. Branick noted that a congressional commission survey had been sent out, and asked that all board members complete it and encourage their constituents to respond also.
 - The US Center for SafeSport would be auditing the US Open Nationals in Spokane, WA, as part of their on-going efforts to ensure organizational compliance.

Ms. De La Riva Repede left the meeting. This dropped attendance to 4/9 board members so no formal decision making would be possible moving forward in the meeting.

- Mr. Branick and Mr. Wall had met with the organizing committee for the LA 2028 Olympic Games, and would be working on proposing ways to bring handball to the LA area by leveraging the committee's funding of the local Parks and Recreation departments. The deadline to present to the city of Los Angeles was set in October 2023.
- Mr. Branick provided a summary of the Olympian reunion event that was hosted in Colorado Springs. Ms. Nichols noted that several conversations were had with Ms. Hirshland to engage the USOPC in providing guidance and support to the sport of handball.

Action item

Ms. Nichols was tasked to attempt to engage with Ms. Hirshland for a follow-up discussion with USATH leadership.

- Mr. Branick summarized the recent Town Hall meeting with members of the community, and shared his excitement with the positive engagement in those events.
- It was noted that the NRC reform was still pending Mr. Jalabert's work on the constitutional document, including feedback from members of the board.
- Mr. Branick had circulated the preliminary financial report from the accounting firm shortly before the meeting, and discussed some of the major findings.
- Mr. Branick provided his operational priorities for the coming month, with a focus on US Open Nationals, and National team activities.

Non agenda items

- The board discussed Ms. Austin's standing with the National teams, in light of her offer to volunteer with the teams following her termination as Director of High Performance.
- Mr. Ortega provided an update of where the job description for the CEO position would be posted for recruitment.

Executive session

The board entered executive session at 3 pm MT, ending the recording.

Patrick Jalabert served as Secretary.