



Member, United States
Olympic & Paralympic Committee

USA Team Handball board meeting

Minutes of the 12-Sep-2023 regular meeting teleconference

Board members in attendance

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

Board members excused

- Tracy Deforge

USATH Staff in attendance

- Martin Branick – 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. 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.

Agenda item #1 – CEO report

- Mr. Branick provided an updated National team activities:
 - The men's Beach National Team placed first at the recent invitational event in Puerto Rico, while the women's Beach National Team placed third. Mr. Udo-Udoma and Ms. Acker provided some insight on the positive outcome for the team. Overall, the teams had performed well and were looking forward to the next challenges.
 - A copy of the formal protest that was submitted following the second chance tournament in the Dominican Republic and subsequent response was forwarded to the board prior to the meeting. Mr. Branick provided some additional information to complement that document. Ms. Taylor and the Athlete Advisory Committee (AAC) had drafted a formal letter to the NACHC and IHF to emphasize the importance of player safety above other considerations. The focus for the women's Indoor National Team was now expected to shift to the next Olympic cycle, with the LA 2028 games in line of sight. This included an emphasis on coaching development.
 - Mr. Branick had started to establish a dialogue with the Texas project leadership to determine how a partnership may evolve and impact the efforts to develop the women's National team.
 - The summer performance from the men's youth and junior National teams offered some promise for coming years, but put a focus on the heavy reliance of the organization on individual contributors to drive the growth.
- Mr. Branick had attended the Association of Chief Executives in Sports (ACES) conference in late August. The primary takeaways were the need to develop comprehensive policies on transgender athletes, which the board had already started discussing, and challenges with insurance providers, mainly revolving around the rising cost of policies. On the latter point, there did not seem to be a strong path forward, other than building strong risk-mitigation policies, which presented a challenge for almost all NGBs.
- Mr. Branick provided some takeaways from the North American and Caribbean Handball Confederation (NACHC) congress:
 - All currently elected officials were extended to align with term limits for other continental federations. USATH would be looking to put forward candidates to all working groups in order to be more involved in the decision making process for the confederation.
 - A working group was established to review the daily fee for NACHC events, to review changing the \$50/player/day fee. This, in part, would make it more feasible for the US to host events, which was currently a challenge considering the cost of accommodation in the US.
 - A plan was expected to be submitted to the IHF in early 2024 for funding of the NACHC, including the potential for a full-time staff member which the organization did not have.
- Mr. Branick provided an update on the Play LA initiative. He and the IHF were working collaboratively to develop a proposal to be made to the city of Los Angeles to increase exposure to the sport of handball in schools and park districts. The plan was expected to include indoor, beach, and wheelchair handball in order to cover the full scope of the sport.

Executive session

The board entered executive session at 2.40 pm MT, ending the webinar.

- There had not been any update on the NRC document since the last meeting.

Action item

Mr. Jalabert was tasked with following up with Mr. Anusic.

- The board discussed the US Handball Union and the potential for collaboration. Some of the previous discussions had been circulated ahead of the meeting.
- The board established an ad-hoc committee to put together a partnership proposal, composed of Mr. Wall (independent), Mr. Jalabert (membership), and a board athlete representative to be confirmed by 13-Sep-2023.
- The board discussed whether Mr. King's involvement in the AAC was appropriate, in light of the on-going potential conflict of interest. In line with USATH by-laws, this topic would be referred to the Judicial Committee for a recommendation.

Action item

Mr. Wall was tasked with connecting with Mr. King to determine if he would be willing to step aside from the AAC temporarily, while a collaboration was defined.

Motion

A motion to adjourn was made at 3.45 pm MT, and was duly seconded. Hearing no objections, the motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned.

Patrick Jalabert served as Secretary.