



Member, United States  
Olympic & Paralympic Committee

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## USA Team Handball board meeting

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Minutes of the 13-Jun-2023 regular meeting teleconference

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### **Board members in attendance**

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

### **Board members excused**

- N/A

### **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. Jalabert to act as secretary, and take minutes for the meeting.

This meeting had not been opened to the USATH community, as a town hall meeting was scheduled for the following week.

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### **Agenda item #1 – CEO report**

- Mr. Branick provided an update on membership, with 1,397 members (up 11% year-over-year) across 50 clubs.
- Mr. Branick summarized the US Open Nationals which took place in Spokane, WA, wrapping up the domestic indoor handball season. The primary feedback received was related to the geographic location and associated challenges, but comments were positive about the venue and schedule improvements. The partnership with Spokane Sports was very positive.
- Mr. Branick stated that the staff was looking to work on additional programming for teams that cannot travel to Spokane, considering that the main challenge for teams that did not attend was the financial burden of the trip. The board discussed the feedback received by the membership representatives, and topics to consider when looking beyond 2024.
- For information, the new website launched at the end of May, providing additional flexibility and ability to respond to feedback provided by the community.
- Mr. Branick provided an update on National Team activities:
  - The Women's Senior NT had wrapped up the NACHC World Championship's qualifier in Greenland, with seven (7) new players on the team. A post-event evaluation was expected shortly with the coaching staff, pending information related to the second chance tournament to qualify for the Pan American games.
  - The Men's Junior NT would be in Germany for a training camp by the following week. The team was facing some financial challenges, especially in light of the 170€/player/day fee to participate. Some IHF support had been provided and the US Team Handball Foundation had also committed some contribution.
  - The financial limitations would drive some in-depth discussion as to whether to enter teams in the IHF Trophy continental qualifiers.
  - The Men's Senior Beach NT was scheduled to travel to Bali, and was finalizing details with a selection camp upcoming, and a roster announcement expected shortly after.
  - Some discussion was on-going related to the absence of a formal continental qualifier being hosted in 2023, though no formal announcement had been made.
  - Mr. Udo-Udoma reiterated that there was no nominated women's beach head coach and no international competition on the calendar in the short term, which put the longevity of the team at risk.

### ***Action item***

*Mr. Udo-Udoma and Mr. Branick to work together to wrap-up the job description and get it posted to formally search for a head coach.*

- The youth indoor team was scheduled to go to Croatia for the world championships in the summer, but foregoing a training camp to minimize financial challenges.
- Mr. Branick summarized the Center for SafeSport audit during the US Open Nationals in Spokane. The final report was pending, but the preliminary report was positive. The next audit would likely be a regional event, such as a sanctioned tournament during the 2023-2024 season.

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- The board briefly discussed the TAHC Nationals, which were recently hosted, and how to ensure all events were conducted in cooperation with USA Team Handball.
  - Mr. Branick noted that the 2022 financial audit was planned for the end of June.
  - Mr. Branick mentioned that community Town Hall meetings had been going well, and raised some questions that were asked.
    - The community was interested in a Town Hall meeting with the full board, to allow members to meet and get to know the board members. The board noted an openness to that approach, and discussed the possibility of hosting an in-person meeting at the next US Open Nationals as well.
    - A request had been made for financial transparency, explaining where all funds were allocated. The board noted that the standard way non-profit organizations share their finances was by publishing the 990 forms on their website for public availability. It was agreed that once the auditor provided feedback on the 2022 financial report, the board could more firmly commit to a publication date.

**Agenda item #2 - Minutes of Board Meetings**

- Mr. Wall had circulated the meeting minutes ahead of time for review.
- No changes were requested.

***Motion***

*A motion was made to approve the February 21, 2023 meeting minutes, and was duly seconded. Hearing no objections, the motion passed.*

***Motion***

*A motion was made to approve the March 24, 2023 meeting minutes, and was duly seconded. Hearing no objections, the motion passed.*

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## **Executive session**

*The board entered executive session at 3.05 pm MT.*

- Mr. Wall met with Mr. Vestberg, to reiterate Verizon's continued support, provided USOPC and IHF continued support.
- Ms. Nichols discussed with Ms. Hirshland of the USOPC to discuss risk assessment on USATH's ability to meet the continually increasing standards as a small NGB with limited funds.
- Mr. Wall and Ms. Nichols had a short discussion with leadership at the National Junior College Athletic Association, with a recommendation to build content to promote the sport within that community. Mr. Udo-Udoma offered to support this initiative by providing existing "what is" content that could be built upon.
- The board discussed the updated National Referee Committee (NRC) constitutional document, and noted a few points that still needed to be addressed.

## **Action item**

*Mr. Jalabert was tasked with providing a red lined version of the updated draft, including proposing a selection protocol for committee members. The objective was to have a final draft ready to vote on before the next meeting.*

Mr. Branick left the meeting at this point.

- The CEO search committee provided a detailed update. They explained that they had taken a pool of 80 candidates down to five, who were interviewed, and two that qualified for a second round of interviews. There was no unanimous recommendation. The board discussed both candidates extensively.

## **Action item**

*Board members were asked to review the recordings of the second round of interviews, and potentially set up times to individually speak to both candidates to get more clarity ahead of a vote.*

## **Action item**

Ms. Deforge was tasked with communicating to all other candidates that they were no longer being considered. She was also asked to notify the remaining candidates to expect a call from board members.

- The target was to vote on a final candidate during the 11-Jul-2023 meeting at the latest.

## **Motion**

*A motion to adjourn was made at 4.15 pm MT, and was duly seconded. Hearing no objections, the motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned.*

Patrick Jalabert served as Secretary.