



MEETING MINUTES
USA National Karate-do Federation Board of Directors Meeting
May 13, 2022, via Zoom

Board Members in Attendance

Elisa Au
Rahul Bawa
Sasha Gerritson
Pat Hickey
Brian Mertel
Matthew Ralph
Brian Ramrup
Tom Scott

USANKF Staff Present

Elizabeth Poloni

Others Present during Open Session

Will Gatch
Adam Older
Eugene Tibon

Call to Order – Rahul Bawa called the meeting to order at 2:05pm Eastern Time (ET).

Open Session

1) Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

- a) Rahul Bawa declared a conflict regarding the discussion about the President position since he may become the President based on the outcome of the Board discussion.
- b) Brian Ramrup declared a conflict regarding the discussion about Senior National Team Funding since he is on the USA Senior National Team.
- c) Tom Scott declared a conflict regarding the discussion about Senior National Team Funding since he is on the USA Senior National Team.

2) Approval of April 1-2, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes

- a) Motion to Approve made by Brian Ramrup; Seconded by Pat Hickey
- b) Motion approved: Votes in favor = 5; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 2 (by members not present for the complete meeting).

3) 2022 Priorities Updates (to be included in all 2022 Board Meetings)

- a) Improve Communications
 - i) The framework of the Communication plan has been completed
 - ii) Details of the Communication plan will be developed by Elisa Au and Phil Hampel and presented to the Board during the June 29, 2022, Board meeting.
- b) Develop Strategic Plan
 - i) A Strategic Planning exercise was started during the April 1 in-person Board meeting
 - ii) The remainder of the Strategic Planning work will be scheduled for a future Board meeting.

- c) Complete the actions from the USOPC Demand Letter
 - i) Governance and Conflict of Interest Training for the Board was completed during the April 2, 2022, Board meeting
 - ii) The required Board discussion related to the addition of the President position will take place during the Closed session of this meeting.
- d) Re-examine Committee structure – Proposed changes to the Referee Committees will be discussed during the Closed session of this meeting.
- e) Review Bylaws
 - i) Various topics to be discussed during this meeting’s Closed session may result in required Bylaw changes
 - ii) The overall goal is to clean-up the Bylaws by the end of 2022.
- f) Enhance Junior Team Support – planned on being discussed during the Closed session of this meeting.
- g) Support inclusion of karate in LA 2028 – report by Elisa Au
 - i) Three of USA Karate’s Olympians (Sakura Kokumai, Tom Scott and Ariel Torres) met with WKF President Antonio Espinos during the Karate 1 Premier League in Matsoinhos, Portugal, to express their support for the inclusion of karate in LA 2028
 - ii) USA Karate’s Olympians participated in Team USA week activities in Washington, D.C. from May 1-4. Tom Scott indicated that he discussed karate’s inclusion in LA 2028 during that trip.
 - iii) Elisa Au discussed the final version of the video created from the “Passing the Torch” event held during the 2022 US Open. The event was a large success.

4) Board Election Update (Independent position)

- a) The Nominating and Governance committee has recommended another candidate for the open Independent Board position.
- b) After discussion, the Board agreed on the following approach:
 - i) Rahul Bawa will coordinate a Zoom call with the candidate and as many Board members as available prior to the June 29, 2022, Board meeting
 - ii) The Board will vote on the candidate during the June 29, 2022, Board meeting.

5) Task-Force updates

- a) Sponsorship
 - i) Tom Scott reported that he has started to develop a high-level plan for USANKF sponsorships and is identifying other potential members for the Sponsorship Task Force
 - ii) Tom has contacted sponsorship teams at Toyota and Coca Cola and also has a lead with Dick’s Sporting Goods.
- b) Fundraising – Sasha Gerritson suggested a Board discussion is required regarding the amount of funding the USANKF is willing to provide to create a true Major Gifts effort. The Board agreed to have this discussing during a future Board meeting.

Motion to enter Closed Session made by Pat Hickey; Seconded by Tom Scott at 2:50pm ET.
Motion approved: Votes in favor = 7; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0.

Participants that are not Board members or USANKF staff left the meeting.

Closed Session

1) At-large Board Member election logistics – the Board had a healthy discussion regarding this topic and agreed on the following items related to electing the new At-Large Board member position which replaces the ASO Board member position:

a) Who can run for the position?

- i) The Board agreed that all active adult USANKF members can run for the position unless otherwise prevented by the USANKF Bylaws (for items such as term limits, etc.) This includes parents of USANKF athletes as long as the parent is an active adult USANKF member.
- ii) Motion to Approve item 1(a)(i) above made by Pat Hickey; Seconded by Sasha Gerritson
- iii) Motion approved: Votes in favor = 7; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0.

b) What is required for a nomination?

- i) The Board agreed that 25 signatures of support from active adult USANKF members will be required for a valid nomination
- ii) Motion to Approve item 1(b)(i) above made by Pat Hickey; Seconded by Tom Scott
- iii) Motion approved: Votes in favor = 6; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 1.

c) Types of nominations allowed

- i) The Board agreed that active adult USANKF members can nominate themselves for the position
- ii) The Board also agreed that any active adult USANKF member can nominate any other active adult USANKF member as long as the nominee accepts the nomination in writing
- iii) Motion to Approve items 1(c)(i) and 1(c)(ii) above made by Pat Hickey; Seconded by Matthew Ralph
- iv) Motion approved: Votes in favor = 7; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0.

d) Logistics of Election – the Board agreed on the following overall process:

- i) All active Adult USANKF Members are eligible to run for the position
- ii) Any active Adult USANKF member can nominate any other active adult USANKF member as long as the nominee accepts the nomination in writing
- iii) All nominations must be accompanied with 25 signatures of support from active adult USANKF members
- iv) The Nominating and Governance committee shall validate nominations as per the requirements listed in 1(d)(i) – 1(d)(iii) above
- v) All eligible nominees will be included in the election
- vi) Only active adult USANKF members that cannot vote for another Board member position as individuals will be eligible to vote for this position

- vii) If one candidate receives more than 50% of the vote in the election, that candidate will be elected.
 - viii) If no candidate receives more than 50% of the vote, the top 3 vote getters will be included in a run-off election.
 - ix) The candidate with the plurality of the votes in the run-off election shall be elected to the position.
 - x) Motion to Approve items 1(d)(i) through 1(d)(ix) above made by Pat Hickey;
Seconded by Matthew Ralph
 - xi) Motion approved: Votes in favor = 7; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0.
- 2) President position discussion (required by USOPC Demand Letter)** – the Board had a good discussion regarding the President position added to the Bylaws in 2017.
- a) The Board agreed to repeal the 2017 Bylaw amendment creating the additional President position in the organization.
 - b) Motion to repeal the amendment that added the separate President position made by Tom Scott; Seconded by Pat Hickey
 - c) Motion approved: Votes in favor = 7; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0.
- 3) Referee Committees** – discussion deferred until Executive Session.
- 4) Selection Committee** – topic tabled until June 29, 2022, Board Meeting.
- 5) Senior National Team Funding**
- a) Brian Ramrup discussed a proposal to change the Senior National Team funding model to provide some type of expense reimbursement for medalists in Team competitions at Protected Events (similar to the reimbursements currently provided to medalists at individual competitions at Protected Events).
 - b) The AAC is in favor of this proposal
 - c) The Board was supportive of the request and asked the AAC to send a formal request to the Board outlining their proposal for further review, discussion and voting by the Board.
- 6) Referee Code of Conduct** – topic tabled until June 29, 2022, Board Meeting.
- 7) Review of Bylaw changes from USOPC Audit** – due to the Bylaw changes not being distributed in advance as required by section 21.1 of the Bylaws, this topic was tabled until June 29, 2022, Board Meeting.
- 8) Junior Team Support Task Force** – topic tabled until June 29, 2022, Board Meeting.

Motion to enter Executive Session by Rahul Bawa; Seconded by Brian Mertel at 4:55pm ET.
Motion approved: Votes in favor = 7; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0.

USANKF Staff (Elizabeth Poloni) left the meeting.

Executive Session

- 1) The Board discussed the purpose, roles and responsibilities and composition of the 3 Referee committees specified in the Bylaws.
- 2) Motion to approve the Referee Committees Roles and Responsibilities (included as Appendix A) and the following members of each Referee committee until November, 1, 2022, made by Pat Hickey and seconded by Matthew Ralph:
 - a) Referee Certification Committee
 - i) Gary Tsutsui – Chair
 - ii) Cedric Barksdale
 - iii) Chris Hodgins
 - iv) Chuck Sweigart
 - v) Elisa Au (athlete representative – no change)
 - b) Referee Education Committee
 - i) Alex Madani – Chair
 - ii) Mary Crawford
 - iii) Caren Lesser
 - iv) Michael McKenzie
 - v) Jessica Kwong (athlete representative – no change)
 - c) Referee Operating Committee
 - i) Fariba Madani – Chair
 - ii) Kathly Bailey
 - iii) Cleve Baxter
 - iv) Raul Shelton
 - v) Brian Ramrup (athlete representative – no change)
- 3) Motion Approved: Votes in Favor 6; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 1

Motion to leave Executive Session by Rahul Bawa; Seconded by Matthew Ralph at 5:30pm ET.
Motion approved: Votes in favor = 7; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0.

Brian Mertel left the meeting at 5:30pm ET.

Adjourn Meeting

- 1) Motion to adjourn meeting made by Pat Hickey and seconded by Matthew Ralph.
- 2) Motion approved: Votes in favor = 6; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0

Meeting adjourned at 5:40pm Eastern time.

The next Board Meeting is scheduled in-person for June 29 in Spokane, Washington.

Appendix A – Referee Committees Roles and Responsibilities

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

OBJECTIVE:

To develop and implement educational programs, materials, and activities to provide members with access and opportunity to achieve knowledge and skills to work as officials with competence, confidence, and professionalism.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Maintain and edit USANKF Rules of Competition with input from the Technical Committee, Medical Committee, and other Referee committees
- Define and develop curriculum for the training and education of referees
- Create appropriate materials and manuals to assist referees
- Coordinate, develop and administer seminars and clinics for referees and referee instructors
- Prepare and present educational curriculum, teaching modules and/or courses at Signature Events and Team Trials including kata and kumite video presentations
- Develop and maintain test process, questions, answers, and test results in accordance with the most current USANKF Rules of Competition
- Maintain and provide literature for officials' tables at Signature Events and Team Trials such as the Approved Kata list, Protest forms and any other pertinent information for the specific tournament
- Provide USA Karate with the training agenda for each day, including website and postings for the event
- Operate the Regional Referee Training Program including the following:
 - Create, review, and revise the structure of the program including the certification requirements and process
 - Provide ongoing support and oversight
 - Prepare and maintain training materials
 - Prepare and maintain training/educational materials on the USANKF website.
- Create and send all education/course related announcements and/or bulletins to Referees
- Recruit referee volunteers including for each Signature Event and Team Trials
- Participate in Mandatory Referee briefing at Signature Events and Team Trials
- Work collaboratively with the Certification and Operations Committees.

CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE

OBJECTIVE:

To maintain standards for the licenses offered through USANKF; to manage and implement the processes for issuing of licenses for the highest USANKF license levels; to be the examination panel for the highest USANKF licenses to ensure quality. The highest USANKF license levels are defined as Kata Judge A, Kata Judge B, Kumite Referee A, and Kumite Referee B.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Assist the Education Committee with the maintenance of the USANKF Rules of Competition
- Develop, operate, and monitor a certification program to augment training and education at Signature Events and Team Trials
- Develop, maintain, verify, and distribute materials for licensing evaluations at Signature Events and Team Trials
- Develop and evaluate the criteria required to pass tests for each level
- Serve as the Examination panel for the highest USANKF licenses
- Maintain records of testing and provide evaluation results to candidates and National Office
- Document, maintain, and communicate the process used for determining priority and eligibility for officials to test at PKF and/or WKF events
- Maintain and share with all officials the selection list of USANKF officials for the purpose of determining priority and eligibility for officials to test at PKF and/or WKF events
- Provide notice to candidates to test at PKF and/or WKF events with sufficient time to make travel and work accommodations
- Complete the required PKF/WKF paperwork for candidates to test at PKF and/or WKF events
- Participate in Mandatory Referee briefing at Signature Events and Team Trials
- Recruit referee volunteers including for each Signature Event and Team Trials
- Work collaboratively with the Education and Operations Committees.



OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

OBJECTIVE:

To manage, oversee and coordinate the referee-related environment and operations of Signature Events and Team Trials.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Assist the Education Committee with the maintenance of the USANKF Rules of Competition
- Plan, organize and manage officials at USANKF Signature Events and Team Trials
- Recruit referee volunteers including for each Signature Event and Team Trials
- Ensure the smooth operation of referees within Signature Events and Team Trials
- Work with the USANKF National Office and Event Staff to understand the requirements and details of each event location
- Coordinate with Event staff to determine how many rings (elite and non-elite) will be needed for each event
- Conduct officials' morning briefing at Signature Events and Team Trials
- Participate in Mandatory Referee briefing at Signature Events and Team Trials
- Work closely with officials, coaches, athletes and spectators at Signature Events and Team Trials to ensure customer satisfaction
- Provide updates for Operational event-related Referee material on the USANKF website
- Work collaboratively with the Certification and Education Committees.

