



Member, United States
Olympic & Paralympic Committee

USA Team Handball board meeting

Minutes of the 10-Oct-2023 regular meeting teleconference

Board members in attendance

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

Board members excused

- Marianne Acker
- Camille Nichols

USATH Staff in attendance

- Martin Branick – CEO

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 2.05 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

- National team activities
 - The men's indoor National team was scheduled to attend the Pan American championships at the end of October, with some logistics adjustments on-going. It was expected to be a true test against teams from the Americas, building on some solid work since 2021.
 - The women's indoor team was attending a training camp in Paris. Mr. Branick noted that despite several avenues to recruit, a defined pipeline and process was still lacking.
 - The women's youth and junior indoor IHF trophy details had been received. The focus for the staff was to be intentional about the value of participation for building the next generation. It was noted that fielding a team just to field a team was not valuable if we could not support the team with sufficient staff, logistics, etc. Overall, the coaching staff appeared to be in alignment that fielding teams for both events (scheduled for consecutive weeks) would be challenging or possibly impossible, primarily due to the limited size of the athlete pool. At the time, the organization was committed to the Junior event, but not fully committed to the Youth event.
 - Mr. Branick reiterated the need for better organization ahead of time at the NACHC level, which was not a new topic, but continued to create logistical and financial challenges for fielding teams.
 - USATH was aiming to bid on hosting the continental beach championships for 2024. There was also some interest in potentially hosting a phase of the IHF global tour 2024 in the US.
- USOPC assembly
 - The recommended new sports for the LA 2028 Olympic games had been announced, not including beach handball. However, it was noted that beach handball fell under the individual disciplines scope under handball, so it could potentially be added to the schedule instead of indoor handball. That finalization was expected for Q4-2024 / Q1-2025.
 - Mr. Branick noted that a proposal was submitted for Play LA (see previous meeting notes for details). The organization was waiting for a response to confirm whether handball was included, starting in 2024.
 - The USOPC was working on a new NGB support model to define allocation of funding. The most significant development would be well defined metrics for securing funding.
 - Mr. Branick noted that the new USOPC strategic plan was expected by early 2024, including continuous improvement to the audit process.
 - The key takeaway from the assembly was the value of in person discussions for level setting objectives and strategic planning. The USATH board planned to meet in Q1-2024, potentially aligned with a scheduled event.
- TEAMS conference
 - The USOPC National team marketplace had been kicked off. Mr. Branick was planning to meet with the USOPC and work with the Athletes Advisory Committee (AAC) to develop the same structure for USATH athletes.
 - Partnership discussions were on-going to have the USOP Foundation support NGBs.
 - The Center for SafeSport was working on updating its training modules, with the expectation to rolled them out in April 2024.

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- Mr. Branick requested volunteers to participate in the 2022/2023 awards committee. Mr. Udo-Udoma and Mr. Wall volunteered.

Action item

Mr. Jalabert was tasked with aligning with Ms. Acker on which membership representative would serve on the committee.

- Mr. Branick shared the slide deck that was shown during the September 2023 town hall meeting regarding the results of the Community talks.

Agenda item #2 - Minutes of Board Meetings

- Mr. Jalabert had circulated the meeting minutes for August and September ahead of time for review.
- No changes were requested.

Motion

A motion was made to approve the August 8, 2023 meeting minutes, and was duly seconded. Hearing no objections, the motion passed.

Motion

A motion was made to approve the September 9, 2023 meeting minutes, and was duly seconded. Hearing no objections, the motion passed.

Executive session

The board entered executive session at 2.50 pm MT, ending the webinar. Ms. Acker joined the conference call for the executive session.

- Mr. Jalabert noted that there had been some discussion with Mr. Anusic about the NRC, though some of the supporting documentation was still missing. There did not seem to be any blocking points to moving forward; the document simply needed to be wrapped up.
- Mr. Branick noted that a transgender policy was pending discussion after reviewing other NGBs' policies.
- Mr. Wall summarized the discussion with Mr. King and Mr. Orr, and updated the proposed Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU). Mr. Branick had spoken with the US Center for SafeSport, and the resulting feedback was included in the updated MOU. Liability concerns seemed to be addressed, as long as it was clear that events were publicized but not sanctioned by USATH. The board discussed the next steps in depth.

Action item

The audit committee was tasked with determining costs and potential losses associated with releasing portions of the membership to the USHU.

Action item

Mr. Wall was tasked with sending the draft MOU to Jean Brihault to align with the IHF on the direction to take after finances were gathered.

Mr. Branick dropped off the call.

- The board discussed compensation expectations and questions from Mr. Branick. The board then approved an offer letter, retroactive to the start date.

Action item

The audit committee was tasked with reviewing the payroll implications of retroactive pay.

Motion

A motion to adjourn was made at 4 pm MT, and was duly seconded. Hearing no objections, the motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned.

Patrick Jalabert served as Secretary.