



MEETING MINUTES
USA National Karate-do Federation Board of Directors Meeting
July 12, 2023, 10:00am Eastern time, Richmond, Virginia

Board Members in Attendance

Elisa Au
Michael Donadio
Sasha Gerritson
Pat Hickey
Brian Hilliard
Angel Johnson
Todd Myers
Brian Ramrup
Tom Scott
Senthil Thiyagarajan

Staff

Michael Cain
John Dussliere

Call to Order – Elisa Au called the meeting to order at 10:32am Eastern Time (ET).

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest – none were declared, but two were later declared post-meeting (see 2.d.iii)

Open Session

1. Board and Organization Update by Elisa Au
 - a. Regional referee certification is active and currently has 33 licensed instructors.
 - b. Sr PKF results reviewed
 - c. 13 athletes qualified for the Pan American Games
2. CEO Update by Michael Cain
 - a. Mr. Cain proposed the following schedule for future Signature Events:
 - i. 2024 USA Open – Ft Worth, TX
 - ii. 2024 Nationals – Lafayette, LA
 - iii. 2025 USA Open – Las Vegas, NV
 - iv. 2025 Nationals – Ft Worth, TX
 - v. 2026+ in process, Ft Worth to be considered
 - b. Ft Worth offered to pay \$50,000 for the rights fee to host. Rights fee is just in 1st year. \$5/night hotel kickback. The advantage to USANKF is both financial and supports athletes better in that they are competing in an arena vs a convention center.
 - c. Senthil Thiyagarajan raised the question of international involvement. Board members responded that they would have an easier travel through DFW, a global hub.
 - d. Elisa Au motioned to approve the above 2024-25 Signature Events locations, seconded by Senthil Thiyagarajan.
 - i. Motion approved: Votes in favor = 9; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0
 - ii. Pat Hickey asked that any conflict between the dates for the 2024 Nationals and 2024 Pan American Masters Games (Cleveland, OH) be avoided.





- iii. Post meeting: Senthil Thiyagarajan and Tom Scott retroactively declared a possible conflict of interest as they may indirectly benefit from the tournaments being local (Dallas) to them and cost less for their Dojo members. Board acknowledged.
3. USOPC – Outstanding Compliance Items Update
 - a. The Board will be completing more of the outstanding requirements and recommendations through the anti-retaliation and COI training they will receive later in the day from David Patterson (USOPC).
4. Pan American Games Preparation Plan – Brody Burns
 - a. Mr. Burns presented a plan for preparation for the upcoming Pan American Games, as requested by Elisa Au.
 - b. Mr. Burns stated that there would be a training camp in Dallas this fall for PAG, World Combat Games and World Championships athletes.
 - c. Mr. Burns identified the PAG athletes who will be competing in either the Premier League or Series A events this fall as a tune-up for the PAG.
 - d. Ms. Au asked what the plan is to activate Regions 2 and 4, which have not had any events or training camps this year. Mr. Burns said that with new coaches, these regions will activate in 2024.
 - e. Ms. Au asked if the National Coaches are working in collaboration with the personal coaches of the PAG athletes to coordinate their preparation and training. Mr. Burns replied yes.
 - f. Driss El Mannani asked if the plan included any international training camps for the athletes or if the National coaches planned to leverage any international athletes with international accolades to train with our athletes in preparation. Mr. Burns thanked Mr. El Mannani for the suggestion.
5. 2024 Selection Process for Teams
 - a. Elisa Au asked the AAC and Technical Committee for recommendations on a Senior Team Kata selection process. Currently, none exists, and next year is the first Senior World Championships for Teams.
6. 2025 Selection Process for Sr Individual
 - a. Elisa Au asked the AAC and Technical Committee for thoughts on a point-based ranking system for 2025 and beyond Senior Team Selection.
 - b. There was a healthy discussion on how a potential point system would need to be equitable for athletes as costs to compete internationally can be restrictive.

The Open Session of the Board meeting ended at approximately 12:15pm. There was a brief recess.

Angel Johnson motioned to move into Closed session, seconded by Todd Myer.

Motion approved: Votes in favor = 9; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0

Closed Session

1. Committee Structure Evaluation
 - a. The Board discussed the proposal from the Referee Committee Evaluation Task Force. Some of the discussion points included:
 - i. A single-committee, based on task forces for work
 - ii. 5-7 member committee with different roles and responsibilities for each member.
 - iii. Chair and Secretary are both non-voting.
 - iv. Athlete reps shall be seated by the AAC, with criteria set by the Board.
 - v. There was a discussion about the drawbacks of having a 6-voting member committee. David Patterson advised that in the event of a 3-3 tie, the matter is already defeated.
 - vi. The Committee would be responsible for naming the Chief Referee for every Signature Event. This should not be the same person every time.
 - vii. The metrics of success should be defined in collaboration with the new committee, so those were not fully defined.
2. Technical Committee and Dan Certification
 - a. The Board had a discussion on the function of the Technical Committee.
 - b. The Board also discussed Dan certification, including the consistency of following criteria and procedures.
3. Coaches
 - a. The Board discussed re-seating a new Coaches Committee with the function of education and national certification.
4. Committee member Criteria
 - a. The Board reviewed function, roles and criteria for selection for all of the committees.
5. Points #1-4 above were motioned to be approved by Angel Johnson, seconded by Todd Myer.
 - a. Motion approved: Votes in favor = 9; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0

The Board took a brief recess at 2:30pm and reconvened at 2:47pm.

6. Angel Johnson motioned to change the Women's Sports Committee to the Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee, seconded by Todd Myer.
 - a. She noted that while diversity worldwide typically means gender equity, here in the USA, it means many things.
 - b. Motion approved: Votes in favor = 9; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0
7. Elisa Au motioned to approve Todd Myers to the Audit Committee, seconded by Pat Hickey
 - a. Motion approved: Votes in favor = 9; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0
8. Elisa Au motioned to approve the following members to the Nominating & Governance Committee, seconded by Tom Scott.
 - a. Matthew Ralph – Chair (former Board member)
 - b. Vince Koehle (Independent)
 - c. Motion approved: Votes in favor = 9; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0





9. The Board participated in Anti-Retaliation and Conflict of Interest Training with David Patterson.

The Board took a brief recess and reconvened at 4:13pm.

10. Review Strategic Plan
 - a. Under Core Values, equality was changed to equity
11. Metrics of Success – the Board had a healthy discussion on metrics of success for the organization:
 - a. Membership count (individual, club, geography, new members)
 - b. Signature event participation
 - c. # of USA Referees & PKF/WKF licensed Referees
 - d. Strategic partnerships & sponsors value
 - e. Senior medals
 - f. Youth development – results and participation
 - g. Para Karate program growth

Brian Ramrup motioned to move into Executive session, seconded by Tom Scott.
Motion approved: Votes in favor = 9; Opposed = 0; Abstained = 0

Executive Session

1. The Board discussed the framework for conducting formal and consistent reviews with the CEO.

Previously approved items since 5/5/23 meeting

- 6/12/23: Settlement agreement with anonymous member (8 approved; 0 rejected; 1 abstained)
- 6/12/23: April 6-7, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes (8 approved; 0 rejected; 1 abstained)
- 6/12/23: May 5, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes (8 approved; 0 rejected; 1 abstained)
- 6/27/23: Approval to extend Michael Cain's to continue as CEO from 7/1/23 for an additional year (8 approved; 0 rejected; 1 abstained)

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:30pm Eastern time (ET).