

April 22, 2025

**SUBJECT: Minutes of the US Chess Federation Executive Board Monthly Meeting,
Tuesday, April 8, 2025**

- 1) **Purpose.** This document captures the minutes of the Executive Board (EB) Meeting held via Zoom on the subject date. EB online meetings normally are held on Tuesday evenings, but several EB members' personal schedules necessitated the change. All times listed are Eastern U.S.
- 2) **Call to Order and Roll Call.** President Kevin Pryor called the meeting to order at 8:02 PM. Executive Director Ranae Bartlett recorded the Open Sessions of the meeting using Zoom.
 - a. President Pryor called the roll and the following board members responded:
 - a) Kevin Pryor (FL), President
 - b) John Fernandez (MO), Vice President (VP)
 - c) Chuck Unruh (OK), Vice President for Finance (VPF)
 - d) Mike Hoffpauir (VA), Secretary
 - e) Randy Bauer (IA), Member-at-Large
 - f) Leila D'Aquin (LA), Member-at-Large
 - g) David Hater (GA), Member-at-Large (unable to attend due to travel)
 - h) Lakshmana (Vish) Viswanath (TX), Member-at-Large (arrived at 8:14 PM)
 - i) Ranae Bartlett, Executive Director (ED)
 - b. President Pryor asked board members whether anyone has a new conflict of interest to disclose. There were none.
- 3) **Financial Update.** VPF Unruh opened his remarks by stating, "March was kind to us, I expect much kinder than April will be." Regarding memberships, he noted that US Chess is still about \$150,000 short of expected revenue, but he added that the numbers were up substantially in February and March were each up more than 15%. VPF Unruh said he expects the increased cost of memberships that took effect in January 2025 to improve the revenue pattern for the remainder of the fiscal year. For the next fiscal year (FY) we need to rethink how we budget for membership revenue, as the "2% increase" applied to the FY2025 budget may underperform.

Continuing his report, VPF Unruh noted that through March 2025 we are very solid, adding that through March we are over \$461,000 ahead of budget and our cost controls are working. He stated that "events still haunt us," a reference to the major drops in the financial markets. He said that US Chess's position is "very conservative, but there's a point to where credit become unstable." For the remainder of the budget year, he said he would not be surprised by a Capital adjustment (loss) of as much as \$250,000, giving back most (if not all) of what we gained earlier in the budget year. He said that income from our investments should not change unless something drastic happens like cuts in dividends and bankruptcies from JP Morgan and Bank of America. "This is uncharted territory," he noted, and we do not know how far down the markets might go. He said our conservative attitude should mitigate problems because about 50% of our investments across all portfolios are in multiple FDIC-insured banks.

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He said he's somewhat surprised that long-term interest rates are increasing, which is counter-intuitive because we would think that the yield on Treasury Bonds would start falling ... but this is not happening, as the yield curve has steepened. VPF Unruh said he will continue to monitor this closely.

He said he also is closely watching how we've budgeted for SuperNationals VIII (SN8). "If we can break even," he said, "we should end the year with good cash flow." ED Bartlett updated the Board on SN8 registrations, which are just over 4,000. She said we'd hoped this would be a little higher at this point in time, so she's directed the staff to put out an email blast to notify members that three of the hotels booked for SN8 have extended their Chess Rate window for another week to now expire on April 13th. VPF Unruh and Secretary Hoffpauir asked, "what's our break-even attendance" for SN8. ED Bartlett responded we'd budgeted for 6,000 players. Secretary Hoffpauir noted that "it's not just the number of registered players that contributes to breaking even, it's also the use of the hotels." ED Bartlett said that we've not yet met our minimum lodging requirements at the hotels, which is why some of them have extended the deadline for the Chess Rate.

Regarding US Chess membership, she said at the end of March we were at just over 116,000 members, noting that this has been stable. She added that US Chess has recently hired a new Administrative Assistant, Brian Harting, who is focused on membership and processing of member complaints. ED Bartlett also noted that US Chess has a job posting for a full-time Events Manager and a part-time Graphics Assistant. She said she expects to announce hirings on these two positions by the end of April.

VPF Unruh closed his report noting, "We need SuperNationals to work. Our Reserve Fund is about \$300,000. So, any losses that exceed \$300,000 will be very detrimental to the bottom line."

- 4) The Executive Board went into its Closed Session at 8:16 PM and reconvened in Open Session at 9:44 PM. There were no motions emerging from the Closed Session.
- 5) With no further business to conduct, the Executive Board moved to and adjourned at 9:45PM.

Prepared by: Mike Hoffpauir, EB Secretary