

March 18, 2025

**SUBJECT: Minutes of the US Chess Federation Executive Board Monthly Meeting,
Thursday, March 13, 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 8:03 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) (John had to leave the meeting at 10 PM)
 - 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
 - h) Lakshmana (Vish) Viswanath (TX), Member-at-Large
 - 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 began his report by noting that February was a quiet month for US Chess. The loss for the month was just \$357. He noted that we continue to see membership revenue growth of about 5% year-to-year. The increase in membership dues that began in January 2025 is beginning to come through in the financial report; however, the overall membership revenues have not yet achieved the 2% increase for the year that we forecasted in the budget. As we approach the end of the US Chess fiscal year this coming June, the budget is \$318K ahead of projections given in the report at the August 2024 Delegates Annual Meeting. Although the bottom line has significantly improved, US Chess has a (\$303K) shortfall for the year due to earlier losses from events. Our cost controls and investment strategy are both working well, and restricted donations have added to the bottom line.

Looking ahead, VPF Unruh still sees some uncertainty, owing especially to the turbulence in the markets. He said, "I'm not anticipating anything but breaking even from this point on or actually losing some" through the end of the business year. He clarified his comment by noting, "Just because the markets are off some 10-20% does not mean that our investments are following the decline in technology. We were somewhat prepared," he added, explaining, "we had a very large position in cash deposits through all three [of our] portfolios and we continue to have cash deposit ladders combined with an equity cost-averaging strategy." He said that when he checked the status of our investments on March 11th US Chess was down only 0.0084 (less than 1%).

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He feels optimistic about achieving record numbers in Orlando at the upcoming SuperNationals VIII. The results of that tournament will determine whether we stay ahead of the budget for this year.

VP Unruh then invited Executive Director Bartlett to make a few comments.

ED Bartlett opened her comments by noting that we have just over 1,100 players registered for SuperNationals and that the trend for hotel room pickup suggests that the Hyatt Regency Orlando will sell out first. The Hilton Orlando, Rosen Centre, and Rosen Plaza are not as filled. She noted that Monday March 24th is the “early registration deadline” for the tournament, so we expect a major increase in registrations leading up to that date and added that the hiring of TD staff is proceeding well. She said that US Chess also has posted a position for an Event Manager, hoping to get that person hired in time for SuperNationals. ED Bartlett said US Chess currently has two positions posted for hiring—an Event Manager and an Administrative Assistant position.

VP Unruh opened the floor for Executive Board members to ask questions about the current and future budget. There were no questions.

- 4) The Executive Board went into its Closed Session at 8:12 PM and reconvened in Open Session at 10:01 PM. There were four (4) motions that emerged from the Closed Session. It also is noted for the record that EB Vice President John Fernandez had to depart at 10 PM and was not present to vote on any of the motions listed below.
 - a) **EB25-033:** The Executive Board moves to authorize the Executive Director to purchase a new cargo van for US Chess and to trade in the old cargo van as part of the transaction. **Approved: 7-0.**
 - b) **EB25-034:** On February 27, 2025, the US Chess Executive Board heard the parent's appeal of the Ethics Committee's decision to suspend a minor player's US Chess membership for two (2) years for violations of Section 6(b) of the US Chess Code of Ethics. The Executive Board decided to reduce the suspension to one (1) year beginning September 2, 2024, and ending September 1, 2025. In addition, the Executive Board decided to impose a two (2) year period of probation to cover the period September 2, 2025, through September 1, 2027. During the period of probation, the player's membership rights are fully restored. The Executive Board further directs this case to be sent to FIDE's Ethics and Disciplinary Commission with the recommendation that FIDE endorse the sanctions imposed by the USA and implement them for all FIDE events. **Passed 5-0-2, with EB members Randy Bauer and Leila D'Aquin abstaining.**
 - c) **EB25-035:** The Executive Board moves to suspend the US Chess membership until December 31, 2025, of a minor player for a Safe Play violation. After the period of suspension, the player shall be on probation for two (2) additional years. **Approved 7-0.**
 - d) **EB25-036:** The Executive Board moves to deny the written appeal of a parent on behalf of their minor player. **Approved 7-0.**
- 5) With no further business to conduct, the Executive Board moved to and adjourned at 10:06 PM.

Prepared by: Mike Hoffpauir, EB Secretary
