

February 7, 2009 USCF Executive Board Meeting – Conference Call – Open Session 1

All Board members were in attendance.

Goichberg: It's been an exciting time for chess. Both of our teams won Bronze Medals at the Olympiad. I don't think it happens often that a country wins medals in both competitions. Congratulations to those teams. They did do a great job.

We did spend some extra money in supporting them, which was not budgeted. However, I don't think our teams fare well when they show up at the last minute. Even with the extra two days we had to pay for, they still started out slowly.

Also the U.S. Chess Championship in Saint Louis will be held in the beautiful Saint Louis Chess Club and Scholastic Center. The sponsorship has resulted in the largest prize fund we've had in three years. It's \$130,000. That will be a great event and they will be sponsoring the Women's Championship later in the year.

Also, starting very soon, our top rated player Gata Kamsky, will be playing his match against Topolov with the winner to play Anand for the World Championship.

So, there's a lot of exciting happenings in U.S. chess.

As for where the Federation stands, financially there've been a lot of ups and downs. Obviously the worst thing is, we have high legal fees. That certainly is a problem. They are going to be a lot more than what was budgeted. On the other hand we've received a very generous bequest from the late Phil LeCornu for about \$350,000. We received another bequest for forty some thousand from Mr. Gustafson. Financially it looks like we're OK.

The Board proposed and the Delegates did pass a restructuring of the membership categories at Dallas, last August. In the last two months we've seen the impact. The results look very favorable, with more of an increase than anticipated. The reduction in the cost of mailing and printing the magazine will not be realized immediately, and we see the full benefit.

OK let's hear from the VP of Finance Randy Bauer.

Bauer: The P&L is out for the first eight months. If you look at the major categories of revenue, they are right on where we expected them to be. Total Membership revenues are within \$2000 of budget. Sales are down a little bit. Magazine revenue is up a little bit. Other Services are basically right on. Tournament Revenues are pretty much right on, also. In terms of top line revenue, most major categories are doing what we expected them to do. With the other miscellaneous income and the little under \$400,000 in bequests, we're about \$385,000 over budget. \$397,000 are the bequests. So basically if you took those out, you'd be within \$11,000 to \$12,000 of the estimate. That's a pretty darn good place to be.

On the expenses side, they're also running pretty close to where we expected them to be.

Magazine Expenses are up \$12,000 compared to budget. We did spend some more on the Olympiad and that shows up in total Tournament Year to Date budget. That's about \$25,000. Personnel is running below budget by about \$6000. When you go through the other General Administrative categories one is up a few thousand, one is down a few thousand, except for when you get to Professional Fees where we're talking of a difference of about \$130,000. All in all we're not looking too bad with the one major problem of what to do about the legal expenses.

Goichberg: Thank you Randy. Bill Hall.

Hall: On the viewpoint of the financials, we have been negotiating with the general liability company and it looks promising that we will recoup a portion of the Texas legal fees. Also as part of this negotiation, legal representation would be provided in CA if the counter-suit is allowed. Hopefully that will help us with the legal fee damages.

Two main factors have impacted the cash flow. One, we have not received the lion's share of SuperNationals entry fees, yet. Second, in late September to early November we had a huge decline in the adult membership revenues.

Preliminary indications for the SuperNationals are that we're going to have a blow-out event. Hotel room block is 90% filled. Team rooms are already sold out with a 10-team waiting list. A very special guest appearance, the name will be shared in Closed Session. Plus Yury Shulman, Alexandra Kosteniuk, Maurice Ashley, and Alexander Stripunsky will be there. A few more special guests we have not finalized will also be there.

On the membership dues restructuring, for the memberships that do not include the publication, we will see the cost saving benefits in the last half of the membership, which should have a very significant impact on next year's bottom line.

Grand Prix and Junior Grand Prix sponsor ship has been worked out with Chess Live.

We have a near complete January financial. I will send it out to the Board by the middle of next week.

Bauer: One thing that should be mentioned in regards to our recouping some of the legal fees from our insurance company is that we're going to have a significant increase in the cost of our insurance next year.

Hall: Yes, we'll have fairly substantial deductibles. We'll have to look at what level of coverage we can afford. It will be drastically more expensive with drastically less coverage. There's going to be significant financial impact from this for years.

Berry: How would a SuperNationals super success impact the budget?

Hall: We budgeted for 5,000 hoping for 6,000. We staffed it for about 5,500. There might be marginal additional expenses, but you'd definitely be dealing with increased profitability. Any other questions?

I'd like to take a moment to thank the Saint Louis Chess Club and Scholastic Center. Not only are they sponsoring it with a significant dollar value, they are also committed to sponsoring the U.S. Women's Championship with a prize fund of \$65,000. Also the over all championship prize fund was increased to \$130,000. I heard they have one or two additional special prizes they're putting up. This is going to be a very exciting event.

General Discussion on the Saint Louis Chess Club and Scholastic Center venue, including it being the site of the May 16-17 Executive Board meeting. Also this might be the largest prize fund ever.

Goichberg: Computer Programming is next on the agenda. (Bill Hall) do you want to report on that?

Hall: OK, we're very excited to have a new employee, Phil Smith, who will be wearing many hats. His background is in networking and he's working closely with Mike Nolan, on hardware in the office, email issues in the office, and the projects Mike wants to transfer to him.

He's a very experienced TD and runs the backrooms at all of our national scholastic events. He's a tremendous asset.

Discussion of Phil Smith's background and experience. Agreement he is a good hire. Details of compensation in Closed Session.

Goichberg: OK, Bequest Funds.

I assume everyone has received the emails with the proposals from the LMA committee. The original proposal runs too big a risk we'll run out of cash. Proposal number two, I think is very good. It would involve us paying between \$100,000 to \$150,000 toward the mortgage and the LMA Committee will give us a line of credit if we need it. We can borrow up to what we put in. This way we can completely pay off our bank line of credit. We wouldn't borrow from the bank any more, we'd borrow from the LMA Committee at the bank rate of interest minus 1%. They can make money and we're happy too.

General Discussion on accepting LMA Committee Proposal II and what amount to pay on the mortgage.

Goichberg: Motion?

EB09-031 – Goichberg, Bauer, Hough, Berry – Operations will use part of the LeCornu bequest by some amount in the \$100,000-\$150,000 range. The LMA Committee will make available the same sum from the Oberweis account as an ongoing line of credit to Operations. It can be drawn from starting June 1 of each year and must be fully paid down, including interest, by May 1 of the following year. This will be a fixed, ongoing arrangement. Operations will pay to the LMA an interest rate 1% less than the prevailing bank rate to a line of credit (last I heard it was about 8%). The prevailing rate will be determined by agreement between the staff liaison to the LMA (currently Joe Nanna), the Chair of the LMA Investment Sub-Committee (currently

Fred Townsend), and either the Chair or the Vice-Chair of the LMA (currently Redman and Dubeck). The further advantage of this arrangement is that we're paying interest to ourselves, instead of to a bank. **PASSED 4-2** with Susan Polgar and Paul Truong opposed

Goichberg: The next item on the agenda is Life Member Letters. Before we get to that, the Audit Committee has suggested that we change auditors. When asked why, they said they were not satisfied with the performance of our auditors. The problem with making a change now is we're already into the second part of the fiscal year and we'd have to do a search for new auditors, and it will be even later when we hire someone. The bylaws say the Board shall engage the auditors in the early part of the fiscal year. I think we face the criticism that we're not following the bylaws. I told Grant Perks, in my opinion, if they still feel that way in August, and they made the request then, I would support it. But, right now I don't think we should change at the last minute.

General Discussion on changing the auditors at this time.

Goichberg: OK, I don't think we need a motion unless somebody wants to make one. We can just tell the Audit Committee we decline to take action. I already told them I'd support action in August if they still want it.

Bauer: I think we can tell them our concern for the bylaws. This is not the early part of the fiscal year, and it's our approach to follow the bylaws.

Hall: I think we're very fortunate to have an active chair of the Audit Committee. He will definitely be involved in the audit process and make a firm evaluation of the auditor's performance.

Bauer: Grant Perks and Alan Priest are both CPA's on the Audit Committee and great assets to us.

Goichberg: OK let's go on to Life Member Letters. The notice we've been giving up to now is that the Premium Benefits are guaranteed through 2010. The intent was that's we'd continue extending that.

General Discussion on extending premium benefits including length of extension, concerns of Life Members over possible large surcharge, need for clarification of message and intent.

Hall: I think you and I need to develop a new Life Member Letter and present it to the Board. There are a couple of other issues we want to put in there – bequests and they could target bequests or donations to specific funds. This needs to be part of an overall campaign to get bequests.

Goichberg: OK, sounds good. If we're through with this lets move on to Benefactor Membership. This is an idea that was discussed at the Finance Workshop and approved there. However at the time, we were talking about it being a substitute for Life Membership. The Benefactor Membership was to cost \$3,000 and would be a type of Life Membership where the

member would have the option of premium membership, which would be absolutely guaranteed. After we decided to keep the Life Membership, but raise the dues to \$1,500 for Life Membership, the Benefactor Membership was kind of forgotten. There has been some discussion of it lately. I think it's a good idea and that we should have it as an additional form of membership. Besides making a donation to USCF with the Benefactor Membership you would get Premium Benefits for life and you'd get some recognition. There'd be a list of the Benefactors on the website and that list would appear now and then in Chess Life. We could give them some sort of very impressive membership card. One source of Benefactor Members would be Executive Board candidates. I suggest that the Benefactor Membership for \$3000 if you're already a Life Member, the cost would only be \$1,500. Another part of this Benefactor Membership suggestion is that for every \$3,000 we collect, we'd split the money between operations and LMA. Any comments?

General Discussion of the Benefactor Membership suggestion.

Goichberg:

EB09-032 – Board - USCF initiates a Benefactor Membership at cost of \$3000, which will be a life membership including a permanent hard copy of Chess Life option. The revenue from Benefactor Memberships will be split evenly between Operations & LMA. Benefactor Members will be listed on the USCF website and periodically in *Chess Lifemagazine*. Existing Life Members will be credited with \$1500 toward a Benefactor Membership so they can convert from Life to Benefactor Membership for \$1500. **PASSED 6-0.**

Goichberg: OK, we're now up to Computer Programming. This is still Open Session. I put this on because there are always so many projects that we have for Mike Nolan. He's never able to do all of them. Now that he'll have some help it seemed like a good time to discuss what programming oriented projects that we think should be done or emphasized.

Truong: At the last meeting we had an Action Item for Bill Hall to complete the migration of the website. Is that part of this or is that something separate?

Goichberg: This is certainly an appropriate time to ask that. Bill?

Hall: We have a handful of little things that the current website people are working with us on. We have Phil in communication with them to finalize any and all transitions. Within two weeks I expect complete and total control of all website operations to be in-house.

Truong: As of right now, it's not done yet. Right?

Hall: Right. As of right now I know they're still copied in on some of the web inquiries and there's one or two areas – placing ads in the rotation- we don't have full capability of. And there's one other small area.

Truong: In terms of Mr. Phil Smith, I know him. He's a great guy. Is he going to be involved in programming, or running the website? Exactly what does he do?

Hall: Mike and I are still working with Phil to define what roles or where. I don't know if we should get more specific than that in Open Session.

Goichberg: This will enable more programming to be done between Mike and Phil. Right?

Hall: Certainly. Obviously it takes a lot of networking stuff off Mike's plate. Mike you might want to comment on this.

Truong: Do Phil and Mike do the coding in the same language?

Nolan: Phil has worked in PHB, the primary language that we do stuff in. ____ and ____ are the two languages we use on the website. I'm working with him on several issues, to show him how I do things. So, he and I can interchange skills. I want to work with him to become more familiar with data base queries. In that respect he will be serving as my backup. In other areas, such as the website, he has been named the USCF Webmaster. So hopefully that will take a number of things off of my plate and give us more of an administrative focus to the website that we have not had.

Truong: Great. Thank you, Mike.

Goichberg: Mike, I think this might be a good time if you could, give us some idea of what your most important projects are coming up in the near future.

Nolan: The project that has been consuming the most time, and this has been true for several months, is a re-write of a large portion of our membership system, which also will involve a rewrite of our membership web store. This is something we have needed, but became absolutely necessary with the changes that were made in the membership structure last August. I was in Crossville a couple of weeks ago, and we had some discussions on how to do this. It ties in with some changes in how we prepare information for the accounting department. We're making good progress in that regard. I will be down there either later this month or early in March, hopefully to do the next set of installations of the new membership program, which involves retraining the people on how certain things are done. I'd like to tie that with bringing out the new version of the membership web store at the same time. There's already a portion of that new web store out there if you go to www.uschess.org/voucher. You'll see the way we handle membership vouchers, which is how we handle group memberships. That is the style and structure of the new web store. Bill and I have had numerous discussions on this in terms of the direction we want to go. Part of what we're doing is making some changes to the way we code addresses. Some are changes requested by our printers. It's not quite a ground up rewrite of our membership system, but it's pretty close.

Hall: On the address one of the things is getting the structure in place to where Mike can automate updating memberships, flagging bad addresses, a data base management process that can save us money. I have to brag on Mike about the voucher program. When we sell a group membership, now, we produce vouchers. It automatically produces a voucher number that's secure. A lot of work went into this and it is a very slick system. It streamlines the project program we have.

Mike: We'd like to extend that voucher program to the Chess Trust. Obviously we'd need the permission of the Chess Trust to do that. I'd like to see it done for the next school year.

Hall: I think we need to get that finalized by the U.S. Open.

Goichberg: Are there other projects that are ongoing, besides that?

Nolan: I'm working behind the scenes on some changes to the way we collect information we put on the website. This will eventually lead to a rewrite of the MSA pages. I don't know when and need to coordinate that with Phil. He will be more involved with the presentation and I will be more involved in the data generation. I'd like to see data base generation and presentation become related tasks.

There are some changes to the rating system.

I am working of putting together a list of all of the outstanding projects and when we have that completed will circulate it to the Board.

Hall: Mike's also been looking into the best way to offer affiliates email service.

Nolan: I've looked into three services and they all have the same problem. They want complete control of our mailing list. I don't think we want to do that for a variety of reasons. I'll be working with Phil on this to create a fee for email service revenue generator.

Another thing we'll be looking at the servers in TN for a correspondence chess server.

It's time we looked at the next generation data base server. We last replaced the data base server in April 2007. It would give us a much faster backup system, allowing us to use it for research.

Hall: One of the smaller projects would be setting up a modality for staff to be able to enter old cross tables that we do not have electronic records of and be able to put them up on the website.

When we switched the server over to the dedicated server in NE, the material on the old, old website, a lot of the links were broken.

Mike explained the three generations of the website and the need for a comprehensive plan to get all of the stuff out of generation 1 and into generation 3. The TD page and some of the other subgroup population pages need to be updated. The TLA system needs to be improved.

Goichberg: Thanks, Mike. I want to say something more about the emailings. I've been talking about selling emailings to Affiliates for a long time, but maybe more important we need to send the emails to our members when their membership is going to expire or has expired. The plan was that the people that bought the memberships without the hard copy magazine would get an email each month saying your online magazine is now available with the link. I think those things are very important, and that all these things get a very high priority.

I am puzzled about the 3rd party emailing system drawback is that they would have complete control. What do you mean by complete control? I'm using one of these systems. I type in my addresses or people go on the website and type in their addresses. It's true the database is stored online, but I can also export it. I don't know what you mean by control. I guess they could run off with our database and sell it, but that wouldn't be legal. I was wondering what it is, exactly, you're afraid of.

Nolan: The way they work is, if you want to update your email addresses which is a continuous process the service wants to put an icon on our website, that if you click on it you go to their website. So the information is changed on their website, then we have to get that information back to our website. We already have two email files. One in membership and a different one on the website which is less than optimal. Privacy policy issues are involved.

Goichberg: OK. It sounds like the way these services work is people do their own corrections and it's difficult to get these corrections imported automatically into our system.

Nolan: Exactly.

Goichberg: I don't have this problem, because I don't have email addresses stored anywhere else. I only have one database. For me it seems very convenient. With the Federation you have some other issues involved that I don't have

Nolan: We're trying to coordinate this with an 80,000 member data base that we use for a lot of other purposes. There needs to be better coordination between that information. If we have an email address for a member it needs to be the same wherever we have an email address for them unless there is a valid reason. For example the public contact information field which is excluded from our privacy policy. We need a coordinated system.

Polgar: I think that's a great idea.

Goichberg: My concern is that the process is taking so long, I think we're missing out on very substantial benefits.

Nolan: I think our writing the program and using a 3rd party email generating program, so that the email comes from us and through us, has significant advantages. I think we can keep from being labeled as spam. We need to have appropriate opt-out or opt-in strategies in place.

Goichberg: All right. It sounds like the 3rd party emailers are not necessary. We'd save the cost associated with them. I'd be very happy if something would happen within a few months.

While we're on the subject of your list, I had some other things I wanted to see if they're in the plan. Another thing is the special features of the rating system, similar to what they have at Chess Express. People in Oklahoma say they are so happy with Chess Express and we don't have the features they do. Such as an analysis of how well the player plays white or black. How

well he plays if he's paired up or paired down. I don't think this is the most urgent thing, but I think it should be on the list somewhere.

Nolan: I think those would be a part of what I'd call a rewrite of MSA. We don't currently know if you played white or black. Until we have a way to collect that data we can't analyze it. But how you do paired up, paired down, head to head, your most frequent opponents, are the sorts of things that would be nice to have.

Polgar: I have a couple of quick questions for Mike. One question is, when I'm submitting a TLA for Chess Life is there an option for online only or is it both online and Chess Life?

Nolan: At this time, online system and the print system are basically separate. We would like to merge them together. Our first trial was pretty unsuccessful. We started with managing Chess Life TLA's and then trying to merge online with them hopefully fairly soon. Now submitting a print TLA is kind of a clunky process. It has to go through two or three different systems. We need a more seamless interface. One thing you can do now is pay for your TLAs online.

Polgar: Would there be a way to separate the online and the print TLA's?

Nolan: You can submit online TLA's through the TD affiliate area, now, and they're free. What I'd like to do is unify that with the print TLA's so you create basically a TLA and you say "yes I want to print", "yes, I want it online" or "I want both". It's something that definitely needs attention. Hopefully we can get Phil involved in a couple of ways.

Hall: This is very complicated and a very, very difficult project, and it's going to take quite a bit of time. We'd love to have it tomorrow, but unfortunately we have other projects that are higher priority.

Polgar: OK, I have a second question. When somebody submits a tournament report online, I see there are theoretically three options – pay by credit card, send a check, or send a check in advance, kind of like a credit line, and apply that. The third is not available when you click on it.

Nolan: Right. We had it set to go and then we ran into some legal obstacles, which we've pretty much surmounted. I had a conversation with our CFO in August and explained to him what we want to do and how it would work and he's pretty much signed off on the concept. That's on the planning boards. To really do it right would involve a rewrite of the tournament submission process and we need to do some of that anyhow. As you may know WIN-TD has an option to create a more comprehensive rating report, which includes color information. We need to support that version of WIN-TD. So, yes we need to work on that.

Goichberg: Meeting adjourned until 2pm Central time.

February 7, 2009 USCF Executive Board Meeting – Conference Call – Open Session 2

NOTE: Minutes of Open Session 2 were lost due to a recorder malfunction. Motions from this session are as follows:

EB09-033 – Goichberg - Moved that the following forum guidelines be adopted. **PASSED 4-0-2** with Susan Polgar and Paul Truong abstaining. Please note: The new guidelines can be found in the revised Appendix B.

EB09-034 – Goichberg – Add Harry Payne to the Forum Oversight Committee (FOC) **PASSED 4-2** with Susan Polgar and Paul Truong opposed.

EB09-035 – Goichberg – Joshua Snyder will be added to the Forum Oversight Committee (FOC). **PASSED 6-0**

EB09-036 – Goichberg – Allen Priest is appointed to serve as Chairman of the FOC. **PASSED 6-0.**

APPENDIX B – USCF FORUMS – ACCEPTABLE USE GUIDELINES AS REVISED FEBRUARY, 2009

Be respectful of the community and its members

The Forums are provided to be a constructive resource for the USCF and its members. All users share in the responsibility to maintain its decorum. The following are examples of acceptable and unacceptable conduct. They are not meant to be an exhaustive list, and users should continually be guided by the need to respect the community and its members.

Do not make personal attacks or defamatory or disparaging comments about anyone in the chess world. Factually oriented posts critical of a person, group or company are generally permitted, at moderator discretion. Criticism of those outside the chess world, if relevant to the discussion, may be permitted without supporting evidence.

Do not post suggestions, without specifically identified substantial proof, that a person may have committed an unethical or criminal act.

Do not post allegations without checking your facts first. If your post is about USCF, the governance section of uschess.org is a good source to consult, and you may also ask the USCF office or an EB or committee member for information. Search engines can also be valuable. If facts you post are challenged, address this before making further Forum posts.

If you refer to someone by name, use their actual name, not a made up or sarcastic name.

Do not use vulgar, violent or obscene language. Do not flame or troll. No bullying, threats, or intimidation. No libelous, defamatory, offensive, bigoted, racist or sexist remarks. No name calling. Do not post in all capital or all bold letters.

No advertising, no chain letters, no threats to take legal action, no impersonation of others.

Do not post phone numbers, email addresses or other personal information of others. Do not post private correspondence without permission. Posting a link to a website or document is not automatically prohibited because someone's phone number is there; the moderators should use judgment.

Do not accuse anyone of lying, telling a lie, or being a liar. This is considered a personal attack, even if true. You can get the point across just as well by saying, and supporting with evidence, that statements are false, untrue, incorrect, etc. or the person you think is lying is wrong, mistaken, careless with facts, insincere, etc.

Posts critical of and quoting statements made by chess leaders or candidates are generally acceptable, even if such statements would violate the AUG if posted directly. Moderators may reject such posts if they feel their objective is to publicize the statement rather than to criticize it. Do not post material that could constitute or encourage a violation of copyright or other law. Do not sign your posts with commercial web sites or company names. You can put the link to your website in your profile. Do not use your signature for messages of a political or argumentative nature.

No solicitations of funds. However, appeals for funds for worthy charitable causes may be permitted with advance approval by the USCF Executive Director.

Posts unrelated to Chess are discouraged. Keep your posts to the topic of the thread. Do not post the same or a similar message more than once in a forum or in multiple forums. Start new topics for a new discussion.

Dealing with moderators

Moderators have the right to remove, edit, move or close any topic at any time as well as to issue warnings. Send a PM to a moderator if you have a question about a post or wish to report a violation of the guidelines.

Moderators are not investigators, and should not be expected to decide on the truth of posts, except in obvious cases.

Do not post a complaint that a post was removed, as those who can't see the post will not understand. Posts complaining about moderation in general may be acceptable if not repetitive.

Moderation Actions

Any moderator may remove material, propose a sanction, issue a warning, and/or request the editing of material.

The Moderation Committee (MOC), consisting of 3 persons, is appointed by the Executive Director. At least two are current moderators, and the third a current or past moderator or another person with relevant experience. There is also one alternate, a current or past moderator or someone with relevant experience. A committee member who is unavailable shall be replaced by the alternate.

The MOC may issue sanctions at its discretion. For relatively minor violations of these guidelines, the MOC may take no action, or issue a warning instead of a sanction.

The MOC chair is expected to try to conclude voting on each proposed sanction within 10 days of the removal or rejection of the most recent associated post. After 10 days, if the vote is in favor of or against the sanction with at least two votes for the majority position, the appeal is decided. If the sanction has less than two votes, and not all have voted, the chair should extend voting for another 5 days. After 15 days, if the sanction has less than two votes in favor, it shall not be imposed. The MOC may restore a post. In voting on restoral, the moderator who removed the post, if on the committee, shall be replaced by the alternate.

Sanctions may be appealed to the Forum Oversight Committee (FOC). In the event of an appeal, the sanction does not go into effect until the appeal is decided. MOC decisions regarding the removal of posts are not appealable.

Standard Sanctions

Level 1: Suspension of posting privileges for 3 days. May be assigned to any poster.

Level 2: Suspension of posting privileges for 7 days. May be assigned to any poster with a sanction level of at least 1.

Level 3: Poster is placed in a moderation queue, requiring prior approval of posts. May be assigned to any poster with a sanction level of at least 2. This status may be rescinded at the discretion of the MOC. If queue status is rescinded, the poster reverts to level 2.

Level 4: A poster in a moderation queue who repeatedly submits posts that violate the AUG may be suspended from posting for 30 days. May be assigned to any poster with a sanction level of at least 3.

Maximum sanctions: Longer or indefinite sanctions may be imposed by the USCF Executive Director.

All sanctions must be imposed in the order in which the posts were made.

Special sanction: In the event of an especially flagrant violation of the AUG, a poster with sanction level below 2 may be given a level 3 sanction.

All decisions of the Moderation Committee are by majority vote, except for the special sanction or the Level 4 sanction, which require a unanimous vote.

Except for maximum sanctions, each sanction is removed from the poster's record after 6 months. The poster's sanction level is equal to the highest level of sanction received during the past 6 months.

Forum Oversight Committee (FOC)

The FOC's role is to consider appeals to sanctions enacted by the MOC. The FOC is intended to have 7 members, but may have fewer on occasion. The FOC and its chair are appointed by the Executive Board.

The FOC chair is expected to try to conclude voting on each appeal within 10 days. After 10 days, if the vote is in favor of or against the appeal with at least 3 votes for the majority position, the appeal is decided. If the vote is tied or both positions have less than 3 votes, and not all have voted, the chair should extend voting for another 5 days. After 15 days, if the appeal has less than 3 votes in favor or does not have more in favor than opposed, the appeal is denied.

The FOC may either approve a sanction as issued, deny it, or approve it at a lower level.

When comparing previous posts in order to evaluate moderator consistency, the FOC should not go back further than 30 days.