

## **Proceedings of the U.S. Chess Federation Executive Board Meeting November 16-17, 2013 Louisville, KY**

This document is a summary of the proceedings of the meeting. It includes motions made, action items accepted and subjects discussed. Details of discussions, etc., may be obtained from the sound files online.

### **Saturday, November 16, 2013**

#### **Open Session 1**

At 9am President Ruth Haring called the roll. Mike Atkins, Mike Nietman, Allen Priest, Gary Walters, Chuck Unruh, Randy Bauer, Jean Hoffman and Franc Guadalupe were present creating a quorum. Haring then called the meeting to order.

Attending the open sessions at various times during the weekend were Pat Smith, Walter Brown and Frank Niro.

President Haring welcomed everyone to Louisville and thanked Allen Priest for making the meeting arrangements. Haring stated that this meeting was about getting back to basics. Officer and Management Reports were the first order of business.

#### **Vice President of Finance**

Allen Priest reported that the process of hiring a Senior Accountant is still underway and a new ad for the position will be run. Items of import since the last meeting include renewing the line of credit; the LMA Committee has asked that their assets no longer be used as security on the line of credit so a plan needs to be devised; cash flow is keeping up with expenses; the audit is still in progress and should complete by the end of the month. Priest said we need a lot of things to go right in the area of finance so we can meet the extra costs incurred due to the Executive Director transition and next year's Olympiad and World Team expenses. Regarding the 501(c)3 application approval, Priest is optimistic.

#### **Membership Trend Analysis and Recommendations**

Chuck Unruh briefly outlined his findings by stating the USCF needs to take steps to increase surplus; operate at 100% efficiency; unlock additional potential by working with the LMA; move ahead steadily and safely; reexamine publishing; simplify the dues schedule; and reassess the cost of membership discounts. Unruh said he is working with the LMA to enhance their investment portfolio.

The Board then took a 10 minute break to set up for the next report.

#### **Open Session 2**

##### **Executive Director**

Franc Guadalupe outlined his accomplishments as Interim Executive Director. He offered continuity, direction and leadership through his presence in the office, actively listening, and weekly office meetings. By focusing on the financials Guadalupe was able to save on the cell phone contract, building maintenance contract, catalogues.com agreement; kept World Team and World Youth budgets in line; limited marketing expenses; and coordinated collection of over-due TLA fees. Completed projects included the USCF Sales "light box" on the homepage; Rule Book 6<sup>th</sup> edition contract with Random House signed, first check received, E-version to be available late spring, and hard copy by

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summer; online play contracts with ICC and Chess.com are signed and soon to roll out. With Pat Smith's help a new feature now appears on the website linking to FIDE events and information. Guadalupe suggested that USCF needs updated policies for sending representatives to FIDE events. There was a brief discussion, in which Nietman, Walters, Guadalupe and Bauer participated, concerning the "plain language" version of the rule book.

Jean Hoffman, the new USCF Executive Director, started her presentation saying she was committed and convinced of the USCF's power to fulfill its mission. She thanked Franc Guadalupe and Pat Smith for their help in acquainting her with the inner workings of the Federation. Hoffman shared her amazement at the current number of main stream news articles about chess. She sees a worldwide interest in chess which presents great possibilities for the USCF. Hoffman distributed copies of department reports and briefly touched on the highlights of each. The status of pending Action Items was covered.

The next agenda item "Review of DM's" was prepared by Board Member, Mike Atkins. He was advised that the By-laws had been updated and posted to the website as well as the updated DACI list.

#### Committee Liaisons

Mike Nietman reported for the Scholastic Council. Referring to a revised regulations document, he asked for the Board's approval of the changes.

**EB14-010** (Mike Nietman) Move that the Executive Board accept the proposed changes to the National Scholastic Chess Tournament Regulations as proposed by the Scholastic Council. **Passed 7-0**

Nietman advised that he had not received feedback from the Scholastic Council about the National Team Coaches evaluation and coach feedback system requested by the Board. After discussion the office was tasked with creating a National Team Coach evaluation and feedback process.

U.S. Open entry fees for Denker/Barber/NGIT participants were discussed. Nietman, Walters, Atkins, Priest, Guadalupe, Walter Brown, Bauer, Unruh, Smith, Haring and Hoffman gave their views.

**EB14-011** (Mike Nietman) Move that the Executive Board approve for participants in the Denker, Barber, and National Girls Invitational Tournament a one half reduction in the lowest U.S. Open entry fee. **Passed 7-0**

President Haring reported for the Women's Committee that the U.S. Women's Open tournament has been moved. It will be held in Las Vegas with the National Open in June.

As liaison to the Top Players Committee, Haring announced that Camilla Baginskaite will be leaving the committee. Baginskaite is recruiting other top players to participate on the committee and give input on rules and other topics of their concern.

Mike Atkins, Senior Committee liaison, commented on a report from committee chair, Bob Mahan. The committee has formed the organization "Chess for Seniors" and as such is seeking funding for senior events. They also asked to add three committee members.

Atkins also recounted recent actions by the TDCC including a motion with rationale to form a FIDE Events Committee. The proposal was deliberated by the Board.

Rationale: Within TDCC and Rules as presently configured, there is nothing specific for dealing with FIDE issues in USCF tournaments. These happen when an Arbiter makes mistakes or breaks FIDE rules. In order to better prepare for any future tournament issues a sub-committee of Rules/TDCC is

needed to deal with these possible events. The sub-committee should have full TDCC authority to sanction Arbiters in these events who are in the vast majority of cases also USCF TDs. The USCF requires Arbiters of USCF/FIDE events to also be Senior TDs or higher and FIDE requires that they also be licensed either as National Arbiter, FIDE arbiter or International Arbiter. This committee would also prepare USCF FIDE Arbiter Exams as the TDCC now prepares certification exams for USCF directors. FIDE expects federations to police their own events and this committee will function in that capacity.

**EB14-012** (Mike Atkins) Move for the creation of the USCF FIDE Events committee. It will have the authority to make decisions on FIDE rule infractions, Arbiter mistakes, and misconduct and also prepare FA exams when the USCF is the presenter. **Passed 7-0**

**EB14-013** (Mike Atkins) Move that the following USCF members be on the USCF FIDE Events committee, with the Chair listed first. Chair: NTD/IA Franc Guadalupe, NTD/IA Carol Jarecki ("A" level FIDE IA), SrTD/IA Sevan Muradian ("B" level FIDE IA and on the FIDE Arbiter's Disciplinary Sub-committee), SrTD/FA/IM John Donaldson, NTD/IA Chris Bird, ANTD/FA Alex Relyea, NTD/FA Ken Ballou, NTD/FA Tom Langland and NTD/IA Thad Rogers **Passed 7-0**

**EB14-014** (Mike Atkins) Move that Franc Guadalupe be added back to the TDCC committee effective January 1, 2014. **Passed 7-0**

As Finance Committee liaison, Allen Priest introduced a motion for a change of committee members.

**EB14-015** (Allen Priest) Move that Grant Perks be added to the Finance Committee and Grant Neilley be removed from the Finance Committee. **Passed 7-0**

The meeting was recessed for lunch.

### **Open Session 3**

President Haring called the meeting to order and introduced Frank Niro from the Chess Journalists of America.

Niro advised that he was part of an ad-hoc committee asked to assemble an exhibit for the Hall of Fame in connection with next year's U.S. Open in Saint Louis. He asked to come to the USCF library on this mission. Chess Journalists of America also offered to form a group of volunteers including library interns and re-catalogue the USCF library making it accessible to visitors and online.

Boyd Reed, Chair of the Website Advisory Committee then joined the meeting via conference call.

Reed offered the committee's written report which focuses on the site map and contains suggestions for organization of the site and design and technical recommendations based on committee findings. The intent is to improve navigation of the site and make it easier to find things. Boyd then answered questions and gave his vision for the future of the project and his committee's role.

### **Operations**

Mike Atkins presented a set of office procedures for handling FIDE-rated events. He opened a discussion in which Franc Guadalupe, Mike Nietman, Walter Brown, and Pat Smith participated.

Executive Director, Jean Hoffman, presented changes to the USCF Privacy Policy. She answered questions. Discussion followed. The new policy will be posted online November 18, 2013.

#### Members and Events

Gary Walters introduced the topic of lower priced tournament chess for new or non-members. The resulting discussion evolved into a broad consideration of the membership structure; the purpose of promotional memberships; financial considerations; and the importance of meeting our Mission Statement as a 501(c)3. All Board members contributed.

**EB14-016** (Allen Priest) Move that Three Month Trial Memberships will no longer include any mailed copies of magazines for trial memberships sold after 12/31/2013. **Passed 7-0**

**EB14-017** (Gary Walters) Move that the Office develop a per-game non-membership participation fee that will be tested in at least two states, the purpose of which is to grow chess and allow non-members to play USCF-rated chess without a USCF membership. This test will be prepared for implementation not later than January 15, 2014. **Passed 6-1 with Allen Priest opposed.**

#### Open Session 4

Gary Walters brought the topic of Prize Fund Policies to the floor. After discussion it was agreed that the policies in place do not need revision.

Walters then asked for deliberation on ways to involve top players in USCF programs and in growing chess in the United States. Many ideas were shared. Executive Director Hoffman's suggested asking top players what they would like to do to help. As an Action Item, Jean Hoffman will contact the Top Player committee in this regard.

The meeting was moved to closed session.

#### Open Session 5

Open session resumed and the next item of business "Making BINFO Work" was introduced by Gary Walters. After discussion it was agreed that ease of access must be improved and a clear authorization procedure was needed. Action items were referred to the Office. President Haring suggested the office come up with a solution on how to notify all Board members of all BINFO posts. The Office was also directed to email all Board members the confidential BINFO URL and the confidential BINFO access list.

Walters expressed his concern over the tardiness in posting financial documents. Priest reported that steps were being taken to improve the situation.

Affiliate fees were then considered. Discussion touched on membership trends, financials, and various models in which Unruh, Nietman, Walters, Haring and others took part. Unruh agreed to put a plan in writing, then assemble a taskforce or committee to consider it and propose a new structure.

It was determined that since Chuck Unruh was serving as Election Committee liaison there was no Board conflict with the 2014 election.

President Haring asked the Board to schedule a Strategic Planning Session. It was agreed members would lay the groundwork ahead via phone and email for a one and a half day meeting at which they

would determine the core values of the organization, write a vision statement, and re-write the mission statement. Tentatively the meeting was scheduled for January 18-19, 2014 in Nashville.

Setting a date and time for the next Executive Board meeting, usually held via conference call, was discussed. Haring suggested the Board try a running list for agenda items and deal with them via interim-conference calls, thereby shortening the usual winter Board teleconference. The date would be determined at Sunday's meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.

#### **Sunday, November 17, 2014**

President Haring called the meeting to order. Secretary Nietman read the motions from Closed Session into the minutes.

**EB14-018** (Mike Atkins) Move the Executive Board accept the TDCC's recommendation for sanctions to the affiliate in the following two decisions.

Taylor vs. Gupta

Inform affiliate Metropolitan Chess Inc. (A60333300)

The EB requires the organizer to follow FIDE rule 1.16 and supply onsite FA's and/or IA's of the FIDE required level for all future events, that require FA/IAs.

The EB requires the organizer to follow FIDE rule 1.17 that states arbiters in FIDE norm events cannot also be players in those events, not even as single-round-fill-in players.

Constance vs. Coleman

Inform affiliate International Chess Academy (H6014810)

The affiliate is informed that it has systematically violated the player's right to an on-site TD and all such tournaments run with no on-site TD show extremely questionable judgment on the part of the officers of the affiliate.

The affiliate is warned that if it runs any further events with no on-site TD then it risks immediate suspension or revocation.

**Passed 7-0**

**EB14-019** (Chuck Unruh) Move that the USCF shall replace the Three Month Promotional Trial Membership with a membership fee of \$10 per event without printed magazine. Furthermore, the membership is only offered through the TD/A. The Tournament Membership is not applicable for any National events. The effective date for the amended membership change is January 1, 2014. **Passed 7-0**

**EB14-020** (Allen Priest) Move that the Executive Director is authorized to execute new bank supplied board resolution forms to add Jean Hoffman to the authorized signers for all USCF bank accounts and line of credit. **Passed 7-0**

President Haring stated that the date and time of the Executive Board's winter teleconference meeting would be discussed through email and announced.

The meeting was adjourned.

#### Action Items

Office: Develop a process for National Team coach evaluations and feedback.

Tech Team: Is there a "stop" built into the web store and TD affiliate membership areas that locks the system after a certain number of attempts on a birthdate?

Jean Hoffman: Contact Top Players committee and determine what they will do to help the USCF promote chess.

Office: Create way for all Board members to be copied on all BINFO postings and email the solution to the Board for consideration.

Office: Create an "easy access port" to confidential BINFOs for EB members.

Office: Email the Confidential BINFO access list to all Board members.

Office: Email Confidential BINFO URLs to all Board members

Chuck Unruh: Put a plan in writing, then assemble a taskforce or committee to consider dues and propose a new structure.