

**US Chess
Executive Board Meeting
January 13, 2019
Orlando, FL**

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

OPEN SESSION 1

Executive Board members present:

Allen Priest, President
Chuck Unruh, VP of Finance
Mike Hoffpauir, Member-at-Large
Ryan Velez, Member-at-Large

Randy Bauer, Vice President
Mike Nietman, Secretary
Hal Sprechman, Member-at-Large
Carol Meyer, Executive Director

Staff Members Present:

Geoff Isaac, Director of Development
Dan Lucas, Director of Strategic Communication

Boyd Reed, Director of Events

Executive Board President Allen Priest called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Secretary Mike Nietman called the roll. A quorum was established.

President Priest noted at the beginning of this session that the board had been in budget and strategic planning workshops and closed sessions on Friday and Saturday. The budget discussion will continue at the March meeting.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

President Priest commented on the *Ethics Committee's* progress on the Henderson Middle School Case, stating that the Ethics process is independent of the Executive Board since that committee is Delegate-appointed but that the board is being kept abreast of their progress. He added that the Ethics process should not be rushed based on upcoming events.

EB19-044 – Nietman – I move to add Alex Onischuk to the College Chess Committee and remove Rade Milovanovic as Rade is retiring from UT-Dallas. **PASSED 7-0**

EB19-045 – Nietman – I move to add the National Collegiate Rapid and Blitz Championships to the list of national events and directs the College Committee to draft a set of guidelines to run the event. **PASSED 7-0**

The National Collegiate Rapid and Blitz Championships will only occur when a successful bid is awarded.

Director Velez reported that the *Accessibility Committee* was making progress on their goal of creating an accommodations guide for tournament organizers and that the new *Clubs Committee* chair was drafting a committee charter, with a secondary goal of creating a guide for starting a chess club. President Priest noted that there is such a guide already but that it needs to be updated. He also recommended that if the board didn't see action on that soon the entire committee should be replaced with a small working group dedicated to that task.

VP of Finance Chuck Unruh reported on the *PPHB & Reserve Fund Investment Committee's* adjustment of an earlier strategy to one that is more conservative which involves laddering funds into CDs. He reported that the preferred index strategy implemented in December has worked well in part by virtue of timing.

EB19-046 – Unruh – I move that the Executive Board approve the recommendation of the Reserve Fund Committee to increase the cash deposit allocation with FDIC banks from 25% to 35% of the entire fund. The new purchase allocation is accomplished through cost averaging FDIC Insured Cash Deposits with expiration dates between one and three years. **PASSED 7-0**

STAFF REPORTS

Director of Strategic Communication Report

The Rule Book's text editing has been completed and it is now entering the graphics phase. It will be printed through Kindle Direct Publishing with an expected date of availability in both print and e-book formats by the end of March.

Director of Events Report

1. A conservative attendance projection and budget for the US Open prevented the housing shortage at the event from having an adverse financial impact.
2. Director Reed gave estimates of the cost of live streams and discussed his strategy of covering only the final, more competitive rounds rather than all rounds. He suggested that the invitational events of US Open week only be streamed if someone is willing to sponsor the service.
3. The Memphis Convention Center, will not be ready to host the 2020 High School Championships, will not charge cancellation fees and will offset any costs incurred by US Chess for having to relocate the event on short notice.

President Priest encouraged Director Reed to pursue his attempts to bridge the divide presented by the Illinois High School Association, which holds its own state-wide chess events outside of the US Chess rating system.

2019 US OPEN & 2025 SUPERNATIONALS FACILITIES

President Priest confirmed that the board took a walk around the Orange County Convention Center on Saturday to assess the facilities' use for the 2025 SuperNationals. He indicated that the time between rooms and the playing areas at the Rosen Centre would be roughly equivalent to the Gaylord. The primary difference between the two venues are that the facilities are separate (but connected).

President Priest moved to take a break.

Open Session 2

President Priest opened by reminding board members of their obligation to declare any conflict of interest they might have that is before the board.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

1. The search for a new part-time Chess Life Online Assistant Editor, replacing Vanessa West, has garnered several good resumes with the expectation of a hire within 3-4 weeks.
2. Members have been making contact with her and considering her accessible.
3. More media inquiries have been coming in and she credited the efforts of the Director of Strategic Communication for generating new interest in US Chess.
4. Her analysis of surveys from the Women's Committee led her to believe that actions such as having a separate girls' room at events has a positive impact on retaining girls in the sport.
5. Based on positive experiences and comments at the 2018 K-12, she encouraged Director of Events Reed to consider the venue for future events.
6. She brought Director of Strategic Communication Lucas and Director of Events Reed together to discuss the need for more regular strategic communication about events.
7. The Information Systems Request for Proposal is expected to be finished in about a month.
8. Working with Director of Development Isaak has been valuable because of the unique perspective he brings to Development as a long-time member who does not play rated chess.

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Recent Results:

1. The response to the Giving Tuesday email campaign at the end of November was better than expected.
2. A year-end appeal had a respectable response rate with several donations larger than expected and some people interested in setting up planned giving.

Current Priorities:

1. Creating mission and vision statements for materials
2. Creating an inspiring case statement to give to potential donors.
3. Continuing with current methods of finding donors by mailings and visitations.

Future Needs & Strategies:

1. The ability to send out solicitations using first names only.
2. The purchase of data mining software to refine targeting within US Chess's large database of members.
3. Having many people give modest amounts rather than relying on larger gifts from a few generous people.

Director of Development Isaak noted that the input of the Development Committee has been valuable. He further discussed the fundraising approaches he plans to employ and pointed out the role of the board in fundraising as well.

VP OF FINANCE REPORT

1. November was a good month and US Chess is operating within budget.
2. He is pleased with the direction of the budget being developed with Carol and the staff.
3. A downturn in the value of LMA investments resulted in a minor loss at the end of December, with recovery in January.
4. The LMA received its largest dividend to date.
5. US Chess is in the 7th month of its budget cycle and is \$157,000 ahead of budget, primarily due to non-spend on upgrading US Chess information systems.

President Priest added that for the next fiscal year US Chess will budget separately for capital planning and operational expenses so that planning for long-term capital investments in larger organization infrastructure and facilities do not interfere with the evaluation of the efficiency of day-to-day operations.

FIDE

On Friday, GM Darcy Lima of Brazil, the Deputy President of the Americas Continental Association, presented US Chess with a gift acknowledging the untimely loss of Ruth Haring on behalf of the FIDE Americas Continental Association. The gift will be passed along to Ruth's family. President Priest said the board appreciated this expression of how highly Ruth was regarded.

President Priest advised appointing Franc Guadalupe to the post of FIDE Zonal President for the remaining duration of Ruth's term. His recommendation was based on Franc's past experience in that role.

EB19-047 – Priest – I move to name Franc Guadalupe as our FIDE Zonal President. **PASSED 7-0**

REVIEW OF DELEGATE MOTIONS REQUIRING ACTION

The Transgender Policy has cleared attorney review and is ready to be posted online.

The Spectator Code of Conduct has new but not substantive language and will be sent out via email after the meeting after approval from an organization from whom US Chess would like to borrow language. The expectation is that it will be presented at the 2019 Delegates' Meeting.

JTP Home School Inclusion

The potential for abuse of the program in the current proposal was discussed but it was determined that existing scholastic regulation definitions of home schools and the requirement of appealing through the scholastic council for some form of home school participation circumvented the potential for abuse. President Priest requested further work on the JTP home school inclusion document toward the end of including some of the definitions and stipulations in currently existing scholastic regulations.

It was further suggested that determining whether a JTP program should be required to have a certain number of the players in their tournaments who have a valid US Chess rating should be a topic for a US Open workshop.

Hiring a Technical Director

The Executive Director said that this is not financially feasible at this time but that she saw the need for the role and hoped that it would be viable to add it as a staff position in the future. It was noted that the functions of such a role are currently covered by Director of Events Boyd Reed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Equipment Certification

Mike Hoffpauir reported that he had revised the electronic notation device standards review document taking into account some feedback from Mike Nietman and making some changes of his own. He asked for one last review by board members.

There was a discussion regarding whether it would be useful to provide similar documents for other devices to provide to manufacturers wanting to create chess-related equipment. Though some standards are available in the Rule Book, it was agreed that Directors Velez and Hoffpauir would create guidelines for equipment that did not already have them. It was stressed that none of the guidelines being developed are intended to “certify” equipment or to imply automatic or special US Chess approval of equipment that meets the guidelines.

The Current EB Election

There was a discussion of instituting an electronic voting option for the 2019 Executive Board election because, at the time of the January board meeting, it appeared that there were only two candidates for two positions. The Bylaws don't allow for forgoing an election but allow for ~~they~~ write-in candidates so the election must be held regardless of the appearance of no competition. The Executive Director added that she has been in contact with Ken Ballou, chair of the Election Committee, regarding an electronic election tool that provides an adequate level of validation. It was suggested that voters should be given the option of either the paper ballot or voting electronically since not all voting members may have an email on record. President Priest also noted that there is a DACI (40) that requires regional tabulation of results, which requires knowing the address of the voter.

President Priest moved to adjourn for lunch.

OPEN SESSION 3

President Priest announced that this open session was to vote on motions developed during closed session.

EB19-048 – Meyer – Move that T's Cleaning Service be awarded a 3-year contract beginning 1/1/2019 to perform janitorial services at our Crossville office. **PASSED 7-0**

EB19-049 – Board – The Executive Board moves to accept the Finance Committee charter as presented. **PASSED 7-0**

President Priest noted that the next motion derives from the current committee, as presently structured, not proving particularly functional and possibly having too broad a scope. The motion is not to be misconstrued as a disinterest in scholastic chess, which is integral to one of US Chess's 501(c)3 goals and for which another committee already exists.

EB19-050 – Board – The Executive Board moves that the Chess in Education Committee be eliminated as it is presently constituted. The Executive Board will review the tasks presently assigned to the current committee and decide how best to accomplish those organizational needs. That may include the formation of several smaller more narrowly focused groups, the assignment of tasks to other existing committees, or assignment to US Chess team members. **PASSED 7-0**

EB19-051 – Board – The Executive Board moves that Stephen Shutt be banned from the sites of US Chess organized and contracted events. **PASSED 7-0**

EB19-052 – Board – The Executive Board moves that the US Chess membership of Stephen D Shutt (10159504) is suspended pending further resolution of published allegations of misconduct at US Chess events and in conjunction with chess education. **PASSED 6-0-1** with Mike Nietman abstaining.

President Priest announced that the next meeting would be in Nashville with the exact location yet to be determined. On Friday, board members who are available will travel to the Crossville US Chess home office to visit with staff. All board business, however, will take place in Nashville. The focus of the March meeting will be on a close examination of the purposes and direction of US Chess communications. The board is also expecting reports from the Connecticut State Chapter Committee and from the Government Task Force Committee.

He also noted that the June 1-2 meeting has been moved to The Reserve at Augusta in Augusta, Missouri. Board members will arrive on Friday for the Hall of Fame exhibit on US Chess in St. Louis. Awards will be on the agenda. The board will also consider whether it will make any advance delegate motions.

President Priest moved to adjourn and thanked the board members and staff for their participation.