

REPORT OF THE D.C. CHESS INTERIM BOARD

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April 2024

SUMMARY

The D.C. Chess Interim Board (DCIB) was created by a resolution of the US Chess delegates at the August 2023 annual meeting to establish a new state affiliate for Washington, D.C. Members of the DCIB were selected by board members of US Chess following an open call for participation. The DCIB met biweekly over several months to address the tasks in the US Chess resolution.

After extensive discussion, the DCIB supported selecting the District of Columbia Chess Association (DCCA or DC Chess Association) as the new D.C. state affiliate. However, the DCIB required certain changes to the DCCA bylaws, including (1) the creation of members with representation on the DCCA board of directors, (2) the creation of a board position elected by members, and (3) the enlargement of the board to include more participation from across Washington, D.C.

The DCCA board of directors adopted the DCIB's recommendations. *All participants in the DCIB process who expressed interest in joining the new state affiliate were unanimously elected to the DCCA board of directors.*

CREATION OF DCIB

Following applications and interviews, US Chess Vice President Kevin Pryor wrote to 14 individuals who expressed interest in the D.C. The D.C. Chess Interim Board to invite them to join the DCIB. Mr. Pryor explained the duties of the US Chess delegate-appointed committee, the duties of the interim board, and the duties of the new D.C. state chapter. One person failed to respond and an offer to one person was withdrawn.

A preliminary meeting was held to review the process and mandate for the DCIB. Participants were asked: *What do you want to see happen as a result of your involvement in this process?*

Following the announcement of the DCIB, two of the participants launched an aggressive attack on one other member of the DCIB. Their actions led to their removal from the DCIB and delayed the start of the committee. Eventually, things settled down and work got underway.

The DCIB established a process to:

- Establish biweekly meetings
- Survey the interim board members
- Create board committees

DCIB MEETINGS

DCIB PRELIMINARY MEETING (DECEMBER 5, 2023)

The first meeting of the DCIB was held on December 5, 2023, with US Chess Vice President Kevin Pryor presiding. The agenda included the following items:

1. Call to Order/Welcome
2. Roll call (bios sent separately)
3. Ground rules
4. US Chess Article VIII and DACI 1991-27
5. The mission

Following the meeting, there was some confusion about how the DCIB would move forward. Marc Rotenberg, who had been active in the Washington chess scene for many years, had lengthy discussions with representatives from DMV Chess, the DC Chess Association (DCCA), and the DC State Chess Federation (DCSFC), and came back to the US Chess representatives on the DCIB with a proposal to facilitate the work as the interim chair of the DCIB until May 1, 2024, when the work was expected to be completed. In the proposal to the DCIB, Marc emphasized:

- Biweekly meetings
- A survey of the interim board members
- The creation of the board committees

Marc also said there were at least two big challenges to resolve before the D.C. Chess proposal was finalized. Marc wrote:

Bylaws – Both the DCCA and the DCSFC have created viable organizations that could be the next D.C. affiliate. Both are functional non-profit organizations, properly incorporated in Washington, D.C., with an active board of directors. Both have also obtained non-profit status and have appropriate names for a US Chess D.C. state affiliate. A lot of time and effort could be saved if we could build on one or both of these structures rather than start over. This ad-hoc bylaws committee should assess the various options and make a proposal to the interim board.

Membership – US Chess has also urged us to create a membership structure. For various reasons, this may not be a realistic expectation. But if there is support for a membership organization, then we will need to work through the administrative requirements. The ad-hoc membership

committee should assess the various options and make a proposal to the interim board.

There followed a remarkably vicious attack on Marc by representatives of the DC State Chess Federation and DMV Chess. Both Vaughn Bennett (DCSCF) and Steven Jablon (DMV Chess) were eventually removed from the DCIB, and the work got underway.

DCIB MEETING #1 (JANUARY 7, 2024)

The DCIB reviewed the sources of the DCIB mission. These are:

- US Chess Delegates resolution, Aug. 2023
- US Chess Bylaws, Art. VIII, Sec. 2 (Functions of a State Chapter)
- US Chess DACI 1991-27 (Responsibilities of a state affiliate)
- US Chess VP Kevin Pryor email, Nov. 22, 2023 (Establishment of D.C. chess)

The DCIB reviewed the US Chess Delegates' resolution and identified three key objectives as indicated below.

"In the interests of the District of Columbia chess players and community, the Delegates appoint a four (4) member committee consisting of David Grimaud (SC), James Hodina (formerly IA, now SC), Kevin Pryor (FL), and Executive Director Carol Meyer to work with and guide the three Applicant-organizations for a new D.C. State Chapter, and others through cooperative efforts. The Committee will involve players and other organizations in an effort to (1) *improve the overall quality and quantity of chess activities and services in D.C.*, and (2) *heal the chess community through cooperation, promotion and activity.*

"In cooperation with the existing State Chapter for D.C., the Committee will facilitate the performance of duties and responsibilities of the D.C. State Chapter for 2023-24, including the provisions of US Chess Bylaws Article VIII Section 2, Article V and DACI 1991-27. Not later than May 1, the Committee will conclude its work and issue a report to the Board of Delegates for publication in the Delegates Call. The Delegates shall take further action as appropriate. The goal of this Committee will be to (3) *facilitate consensus on a new state chapter that is representative of the broader interests of the chess playing community in the District of Columbia.*" — US Chess Delegates, Aug. 2023

The DCIB reviewed US Chess Bylaws, Art. VIII, Sect. 2.

The DCIB Reviewed the activities of a state chapter (DACI 1991-27). Those are:

Required Activities

1. Pay affiliate membership
2. Select a US Chess delegate
3. Sponsor state championship
4. Establish bylaws to promote opportunities for participation and membership

Optional Activities

1. Sponsor state scholastic championships

2. Promote chess tournaments in the state
3. Disseminate a periodical
4. Promote chess activities
5. Act responsibly
6. Designate a coordinator for women's chess

The DCIB reviewed the message sent to all DCIB members from US Chess Vice President Kevin Pryor:

"The Committee cannot stress enough how important it is to work cooperatively and to look to serve the best interest of the chess community of your city/state over any personal agendas." — Kevin Pryor, US Chess Vice President, Nov. 27, 2023

The DCIB identified several participants in the process.

After reviewing all of these materials — and revising the second goal provided by the Delegates to be more positive — the DCIB adopted a mission statement:

1. Improve the overall quality and quantity of chess activities and services in D.C.
2. Promote an active, inclusive, and positive D.C. chess community
3. Facilitate consensus on a new state chapter that is representative of the broader interests of the chess playing community in the District of Columbia
4. Work cooperatively and serve the best interests of the D.C. chess community over any personal agendas

The DCIB agreed to complete work by April 15, 2024, so that the committee could prepare a final report by May 1, 2024.

The DCIB also adopted meeting ground rules:

- We will pursue our mission.
- We will treat one another with respect.
- We will listen thoughtfully to others.
- We will encourage diversity and new voices. No person should dominate the discussions.
- Our comments and our work will be positive and constructive.
- We will focus on the future. The past is past.

DCIB MEETING #2 (JANUARY 23, 2024)

At the second meeting of the DCIB, there was a presentation concerning the lack of chess tournaments in Washington, D.C. As of the date of the meeting, there were 10 listings for Maryland, 27 for Virginia, and zero for Washington, D.C. Washington, D.C. had only six affiliates listed by US Chess, whereas Maryland had 12 and Virginia had 26. D.C. also had fewer active tournament directors (15) than Maryland (37) or Virginia (45).

Insight from the presentation:

- D.C. chess is not providing chess tournaments in D.C.
- This impacts chess players generally and scholastic chess players.
- The anticipated number of tournaments is approximately equal to the number of clubs and affiliates in the state.
- D.C. chess should have about six tournaments posted at this time; about three would be scholastic events.
- Challenge: to organize and promote more tournaments in D.C.

What are the obstacles to organizing chess tournaments in D.C.?

- Finding a TD
- Finding a location
- Managing registrations
- Promotion
- Parking and transportation

What can we all do to promote D.C. chess tournaments?

- Notify US Chess
- Send email blasts through US Chess (\$\$)
- Send to mailing lists
- Post on websites, Instagram, Facebook

The participants in the meeting agreed to do more to promote D.C. chess activities. The participants also identified the need to finalize the state title events.

DCIB MEETING #3 (FEBRUARY 6, 2024)

There were nine participants in the third DCIB meeting.

Robin Ramson reported on the 2024 state title tournaments, including the Rockefeller, Barber, Denker, Haring, and state championship. Locations and dates were confirmed. TLA was sent to US Chess.

The DCIB also created committees and asked individuals to take responsibility for individual committees:

- Community (Reginald)
- Finance (Salvador, Aaron)
- Scholastics (Robin, David)
- Tournaments (Oladapo, Sal)
- US Chess (Zev, Robin)
- Women (Ruth)

There was discussion about the need to engage the Hispanic community.

DCIB MEETING #4 (FEBRUARY 20, 2024)

The fourth meeting of the DCIB focused on membership management.

This was the issue that posed a challenge for all of the applicants for the D.C. state affiliate, as none of the organizations were operating as membership-based organizations.

US Chess VP Kevin Pryor provided an overview of Wild Apricot, the membership management program used by the Florida Chess Association (FCA). The participants were impressed by the program and how well it integrated functions for the FCA.

There was also discussion about membership eligibility, with several people recommending that the new D.C. state affiliate should welcome all as members but could limit voting and board participation to those who were actually D.C. residents.

There was also discussion of dues levels, with the FCA again providing a model for the new D.C. affiliate.

DCIB MEETING #5 (MARCH 5, 2024)

At the fifth meeting of the DCIB, the group took action on two specific proposals following discussion at the preceding meeting. The DCIB unanimously adopted two resolutions:

Proposed Recommendation #1. We recommend that the new D.C. chess affiliate adopt Wild Apricot for membership management. The program works well for state chess associations, is reasonably priced, and the FCA model could be adapted over time to serve the needs of the D.C. chess community.

Proposed Recommendation #2: We recommend that the new D.C. chess affiliate require all active members to (1) be current with dues payments and (2) comply with a code of conduct. We also welcome non-D.C. residents to join as members but recommend that only current D.C. residents should be eligible to vote.

There were several committee reports.

There was also an extensive bylaws discussion on the following topics:

- Who are members and who should be eligible to vote?
- How do we select board members going forward?
- Should we have a dues requirement?
- Should we add committees to the bylaws?
- Are there other topics we should cover in the bylaws?

The DCIB members looked at the DC Chess Association's bylaws as a starting point. There were several suggestions to include new provisions for:

- Filing vacant board positions
- Establishing committees
- Collecting dues
- Providing for the election of board members

DCIB MEETING #6 (MARCH 19, 2024)

The DCIB received a report from US Chess VP Pryor, who explained that there will be a Special Delegates meeting on June 1, 2024, to designate a D.C. state chapter, pursuant to motion DM23-50. The work of the DCIB

must therefore be completed by April 15, 2024, to ensure that a report can be prepared by May 1, 2024, and circulated to the Delegates.

The DCIB received reports on the recent D.C. scholastic events and updates to the website of the DC Chess Association, which now includes a blog with D.C. tournament results, a listing of D.C. chess instructors, and information about a dozen chess organizations based in Washington, D.C.

The DCIB unanimously adopted a resolution.

Proposed Recommendation #3: The DCCA bylaws, as the basis for the new D.C. state affiliate, should be modified to include specific provisions for (a) filling terms for vacant board seats, (b) creating committees, (c) collecting dues, and (d) allowing dues-paying members to select a representative on the board of directors.

The DCIB also considered, if the DCCA were to become the D.C. state chapter, how to ensure broad participation from the participants of the DCIB. Salvador Rosario and Sharma Siddarth, two active members of the DCIB, expressed interest in serving on the board of the DCCA.

The DCCA board meeting, originally scheduled for April 23, 2024, was subsequently rescheduled for April 9, 2024, to (1) consider the nominations of Salvador Rosario and Sharma Siddarth and (2) consider proposed bylaws changes that would be recommended by DCIB.

DCIB MEETING #7 (APRIL 2, 2024)

At the seventh meeting of the DCIB, the participants discussed detailed amendments to the DCCA bylaws that would be required. The topics covered included:

- Board composition
- Board vacancy
- Board quorum
- Officers
- Committees
- Membership
- Code of Conduct
- (Renumbering)

There was extensive discussion of the proposals, and some changes were made during the DCIB discussion.

After the seventh meeting of the DCIB, the DCCA held a separate and independent board meeting in which the DCCA:

1. Adopted bylaws amendments, as proposed by the DCIB, to expand the size of the board of directors, to create an at-large board member who will be elected by the members, as well as other clarifying changes proposed by the DCIB.
2. Added three new members to the board of directors, all of whom are D.C. residents and active participants in the DCIB. The DCCA board is now remarkably diverse, representing different regions of Washington D.C., different age groups, and different communities. The list of the DCCA board members is available here:

DC Chess Association, Board of Directors: <https://dchessassociation.org/about-us>

3. Adopted a dues resolution to set dues for Regular, Youth, Senior, and Life members similar to other state affiliates.

DCIB MEETING #8 (APRIL 16, 2024)

At the eighth and final meeting of the D.C. Chess Interim Board, the group first reviewed the mission statement, which was based on the original US Chess resolution that established the DCIB. DCCA President Robin Ramson then presented a report to the DCIB.

She explained that the DCCA, meeting independently, had adopted all the recommendations presented at the seventh meeting of the DCIB. These included:

1. Bylaws amendments to craft membership levels for the organization.
2. New board members
3. A fees structure similar to other state affiliates

The DCIB welcomed this report and thanked Robin and the DCCA for adopting the recommendations that the DCIB had proposed.

There followed a presentation and discussion of the draft DCIB report. The aim of the report, as Marc explained, was to provide a summary of the work of the DCIB, the steps that were taken to address the objectives set out in the US Chess resolution of August 2023, and the outcome that resulted. The group thanked Marc for the report and also made various suggestions. Marc said he would incorporate the changes and then send the final version to Kevin prior to the May 1 deadline.

There was a brief reminder about the upcoming D.C. state title events.

The final meeting of the D.C. Chess Interim Board concluded on the evening of April 15, 2024.

OUTCOME

The mission set out by the DCIB at its first formal meeting was:

1. Improve the overall quality and quantity of chess activities and services in D.C.
2. Promote an active, inclusive, and positive D.C. chess community
3. Facilitate consensus on a new state chapter that is representative of the broader interests of the chess playing community in the District of Columbia
4. Work cooperatively and serve the best interests of the D.C. chess community over any personal agendas

After extensive meetings, discussion, and outreach, we believe we have accomplished our mission.

ABOUT THE DC CHESS ASSOCIATION

The DC Chess Association (DCCA) was formally established by Washington, D.C. residents who are active organizers, players, and

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promoters of chess in the nation's capital. Our board of directors includes the founder of Chess Girls DC and current and former D.C. chess champions. The mission of the DCCA is to promote chess in the Washington, D.C area through classes, tournaments, and events for players of all abilities, fostering a love of the game and its educational and social benefits. The DCCA is a non-profit, educational organization and a recognized 501(c)(3) charity. The DCCA is a fully accredited US Chess affiliate and maintains a current D.C. Certificate of Good Standing.

- Identified and promoted all chess clubs and organizations in Washington, D.C.
- Identified and promoted all chess tournaments held in Washington, D.C.

MEETING PARTICIPATION - DCIB

See table below.

INITIAL MEMBERS - DCIB

Oladapo Olutola Adu	Reginald E. Lockett
<i>Ruth Adu-Gyamfi</i>	Robin Ramson
<i>David Alpert</i>	Salvador A. Rosario
<i>Vaughn Bennett</i>	Marc Rotenberg
Zev Burton	Siddarth Sharma
Michael Joseph Carr	
Joseph Golding	
<i>Stephen Eric Jablon</i>	
Aaron Lemon-Strauss	

Meeting Participation - DCIB

Name	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
Oladapo Adu	X	X	X		X		X	X
Ranae Bartlett	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Zev Burton	X			X				
Michael Joseph Carr	X							
Joseph Golding	X							
David Grimaud		X	X		X	X	X	X
James Hodina	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Aaron Lemon-Strauss	X	X		X				
Reginald Lockett		X	X	X	X			X
Kevin Pryor	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Robin Ramson	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Salvador Rosario	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Marc Rotenberg	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Siddarth Sharma	X		X	X		X	X	