

**US Chess**  
**Minutes of Executive Board Meeting**  
**January 20 & 22, 2017**  
**Atlanta, GA**

*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 audio files online.*

The following Executive Board members were present:

Chuck Unruh  
Allen Priest  
Anjelina Belakovskaia  
Mike Hoffpauir  
Mike Nietman  
Jean Hoffman

Gary Walters was not present for Open Session #1 and #2, Friday, January 20, 2017.

The following guests were present:

Boyd Reed, Assistant Director of Events  
Debra Robison, US Chess, Senior Accountant

**OPEN SESSION #1, Friday, January 20, 2017**

Vice President Chuck Unruh called the meeting to order. All Board members were present with the exception of Gary Walters. A quorum was established.

Allen Priest briefly commented on the schedule changes for today's Executive Board meeting.

**New Business**

Chuck Unruh called on Executive Director Jean Hoffman to discuss the 2017 Chessathon proposal. Jean Hoffman stated they will table that for now and move on to discuss the Women's Regional Championship.

Executive Director Hoffman stated that after speaking with Director of Events, Franc Guadalupe, about the Women's Regional Championships creating a series of national events, their recommendation would be to wait. The Board members discussed what support as regional events there would be throughout the country, the importance of following established procedures for the bidding process as a national event, and the continued support of women's chess. Assistant Director of Events, Boyd Reed, added to the discussion. Mike Hoffpauir introduced the following motion and a vote was taken:

**EB17-034 – Hoffpauir** – Move that US Chess encourages the growth of women's chess by facilitating the organization of regional women's events. The Women's Committee will recommend structure on this initiative and report to the EB regularly on its progress.

**PASSED 5-0 with Gary Walters absent and not voting**

Chuck Unruh opened discussion on having the Senior Championship at the US Open in 2017. He called on Mike Hoffpauir and Mike Nietman to comment on details of a conference call between the Senior and the US Open Committees. Concerns discussed with the Board members and Boyd Reed were the impact and cost for the US Open; entry fees; date to be held; additional hotel rooms; assigning TD; and time controls. Mike Hoffpauir stated he and Chuck Unruh will organize a conference call with the the Director

of Events, Franc Guadalupe, and Assistant Director, Boyd Reed, along with the Senior and US Open Committees to further discuss an acceptable structure for the Senior Championship at the US Open.

Vice President Unruh called on the Executive Director, Jean Hoffman, to report on any new business she had in open session.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Jean Hoffman reported on updates for action items referred to the "Office". The following items were discussed: the pilot program; continued search for locations and facilities for future large events; expanding and scheduling TD seminars and instructional opportunities; Scholarship programs and announcements; compliancy with the Americans Disability Act; administrative costs for appeals process; general policy of benefits US Chess provides to organizers of open national and international events held on US soil; monthly reporting of Invitational Ratings Lists; and the Chess Coach Certification program.

The first action item Jean Hoffman presented was the pilot program and reported on her discussions with the office staff and IT department. Their concerns were: how much time, technically, it would take to implement this program; logistical facts; the application process and liability for affiliates; Grand Prix exemption; and marketing. She presented statistics from Mike Nolan's Membership Report. Executive Director Hoffman recommended to extend the pilot program for a shorter period of time rather than permanently and expressed the need to collect more data.

Chuck Unruh called to vote on the New Member Recruitment Pilot Program motion. Secretary Mike Nietman read the following motion:

**EB17-035 – Unruh** – Move to extend the New Member Recruitment Pilot Program until May 31, 2018.  
**PASSED 5-0.** Please note: the wording was changed later in the meeting per EB17-037.

Vice President Unruh called for a brief recess.

### **OPEN SESSION #2, Friday, January 20, 2017**

Vice President Chuck Unruh opened the session stating they would continue with action items presented by the Executive Director Jean Hoffman. All Board members and guests were present except for Gary Walters.

The second action item Executive Director Hoffman presented was on the continuing search by the office and Events department for other locations and facilities that can accommodate future large events. She noted the expansion is being finalized by the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel located in Orlando, FL and the possibility for Supnationals and Scholastic events to be held there in the future. Allen Priest and Boyd Reed expressed the need to acquire accommodations and finalize contracts as quickly as possible for the year 2025.

Jean Hoffman presented the next action item on expanding and scheduling TD seminars and instructional opportunities for new TDs. She stated the Events department is hoping to schedule something at the US Open.

The next action item presented by Jean Hoffman referred to updating the Scholarship programs announcements on the US Chess website page. She reported she contacted the College Chess Committee in regards to any updates but has not received a reply yet. Scholarship offerings and sponsors were also discussed among the Board members.

The Executive Director's next action item referred to a Delegate's motion concerning the Americans for Disabilities Act. She reported that in her review with council, they stated it is the facility's responsibility to be in compliance with national disability laws. The Board's discussion focused on the responsibility of US Chess in providing appropriate accommodations in meeting spaces to those with disabilities and also hotel compliancy in contract negotiations. Jean Hoffman commented that the Events Department will reach out to the Special Needs Committee for recommendations.

The next action item presented by Jean Hoffman was the appeals process review with the TDCC, Rules, and Ethics Committees in reference to DM16-60 and the administrative cost. Board members discussed the suggested charges made by the committees and stated the Executive Director has the power to implement. The administrative cost and effective date will be announced by Executive Director Hoffman.

Jean Hoffman presented the next action item in reference to the general policy of benefits US Chess provides to organizers of open national and international events held on US soil. She also stated this was in relation to the FIDE World Junior U/20 for players with disability. Allen Priest commented that clarification on international events was needed in regards to those held in the United States. Jean Hoffman to further discuss with Franc Guadalupe and Boyd Reed.

Jean Hoffman reported on the next action item about monthly updates on Invitational Ratings Lists. She stated she spoke with Franc Guadalupe, Director of Events, has been doing this and has cross-trained the Assistant Events Director, Boyd Reed, to take over reporting the Invitational Ratings Lists moving forward. She commented that Franc Guadalupe is working on a simpler, easy-to-read version for Invitational guidelines which will be circulated to the Board.

The last action item presented by Jean Hoffman was the Chess Coach Certification program. She commented she spoke to Jay Stallings at the Grade Nationals. Jerry Nash is tracking his changes and updating all documents for that program having the post changes based on current rules and regulations. It will then be sent to the Scholastic Council and the Rules and TDCC Committees for review. She stated he is hoping to have this done by Supernationals.

Vice President Chuck Unruh moved to recess for lunch and until Sunday morning, January 22, 2017, for open session.

## **OPEN SESSION #1, Sunday, January 22, 2017**

President Gary Walters welcomed everyone. He announced they had the budget meeting on Friday and met yesterday for some sessions. He stated they will finish up today. He took roll call and all Board members were present with Boyd Reed and Debra Robison as guests. A quorum was established.

### **OFFICE AND MANAGEMENT REPORTS**

#### **President's Report**

President Walters stated that in June, he wanted to focus on some of the ideas the Board talked about in the past couple of days. He commented on how US Chess is transitioning into a more complex organization that has a charitable function and wants to discuss in more detail the 501(c)3 programs and how they can introduce some of the charitable activities into our programing. He addressed the need to define exactly what US Chess does and doesn't do so that everyone was of "one mind". He also commented on the Board's earlier discussion in regards to the "umbrella" and stated he would like to continue to talk about that now. He made the following statements: we are a governance organization; we facilitate competitive chess play; and we are information providers in the form of websites and in

magazines. He continued to express the need to clarify who it is we are and how we interact with the rest of our chess world which includes all of chess, in his opinion, within the United States no matter their connection to us as well as how we interact with other nations and with FIDE.

President Walters announced the June EB meeting will meet in Tulsa, OK on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> with the next meeting after that in Norfolk, VA. He called on Allen Priest to give the VP of Finance report.

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

Vice President of Finance, Allen Priest, commented that the Board met in closed session on Friday and talked extensively about the budget. He reported on the following items: November and December financial statements; budget position; the Regions savings account increase made by the office in accordance with the November EB motion; payroll and fundraising budgets; Spring National and hotel expenses; the new magazine contract; and the significant savings on printing and mailing cost from the magazine. He stated his goal was to have the budget approved and the financial report sent out with the Delegates' packets before the Annual meeting.

President Walters called on Jean Hoffman for the Executive Director's report.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director, Jean Hoffman, stated the Board went over the action items in Friday's open session. She commented she would like to touch briefly on the Director of Events and the Publications reports and go over some of these items in closed session.

Gary Walters commented on the Anti-cheating Committee. Mike Hoffpauir stated the committee is circulating a draft charter at this time.

### **New Business**

President Walters called on Anjelina Belakovskaia to present the 2017 Chessathon proposal. She brought attention to the Chessathons held in the past and commented on the following needs: organizational efforts, Grandmaster simuls, corporate sponsors, gifts, publicity, location and time, local support, and fundraising opportunities and advantages now that US Chess is a 501(c)3 organization. An extensive discussion ensued among the Board members with the Assistant Director of Events, Boyd Reed, also commenting. The Board's concerns were in relation to logistics with the lack of staff at US Chess to organize such an event and its cost effectiveness. Other events similar to Chessathons were also discussed. The proposal was tabled at this time.

Gary Walters called on Anjelina Belakovskaia to speak on the Women's Chess Committee review. She stated she spoke with Maureen Grimaud, Chair of the Women's Chess Committee, about their recommended proposals on the Women's Regional Championships. Board members discussed the following: budget for Women's Regional Championships; reimbursement of expenses; conflicts with other events; donations to the general fund; and creating a "bucket" specifically for Women's Chess. President Walters asked for a motion to be written for the Board to consider later in the meeting. Allen Priest volunteered to write the motion.

President Walters introduced Dr. Mark Glickman, Chair of the Ratings Committee, who spoke to the Board via a conference call about the Universal Rating System (URS). Dr. Glickman communicated what the primary purpose was for developing the URS, the differences between URS and US Chess rating systems, and the advantages of using the URS. Gary Walters thanked Dr. Glickman for his time. President Walters then stated he would like to further discuss the URS in closed session.

Gary Walters called on Anjelina Belakovskaia to continue with the Women's Chess Committee proposals. After another brief discussion among the Board, a suggestion was made for the Women's Chess Committee to make one proposal clarifying what they wanted. Anjelina Belakovskaia stated she will contact Maureen Grimaud for further discussion.

President Walters opened discussion on election reform. The Board conveyed the difficulty in managing elections every year, the affect and concerns of constant "reshaping", and the benefits of having a more stable Board.

Gary Walters commented he would like to have the deadline changed for ADMs so the Board can finalize them at the June EB meeting in Tulsa. Executive Director Jean Hoffman stated she spoke with the Director of Publications, Dan Lucas, concerning this; he would need to have the ADMs for the Delegates Call by June 5<sup>th</sup>. The deadline for ADMs was reset to June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

President Walters called for a brief recess.

## **OPEN SESSION #2, Sunday, January 22, 2017**

President Walters opened the session by calling on Mike Hoffpauir to address ratings uncertainty. Mr. Hoffpauir commented that an issue was raised in the Ratings Workshop at the US Open with concerns to how ratings uncertainty may be impacting the ability to section players in tournaments. Discussion ensued among the Board with Boyd Reed commenting. Mike Hoffpauir introduced the following motion and President Walters called for a vote to be taken.

**EB17-036 – Hoffpauir** – Move that the Ratings Committee discuss the idea of identifying a means to place some measure of uncertainty on player ratings based on various factors including but not limited to activity, previous progress, age, etc. The Ratings Committee will report to the EB on progress at an appropriate time. **FAILED 1-5** with Mike Hoffpauir in favor.

Gary Walters commented he would like to "clean-up" other motions. Secretary Nietman made other announcements in regards to procedures for email votes and email posts for appointments of regular committee members (non-chair or co/vice chair) presented by an EB member. The Board members discussed the procedures.

As a reminder, Mike Nietman read the following motion, EB16-044, made by Mike Atkins in regards to committee assignments:

**EB16-044 – Atkins** - Moved, that in between scheduled meetings of the EB, that appointments of regular committee members (non-chair or co/vice chair) will be presented by an EB member by e-mail who posts "Mr/Ms will become a member of committee in 5 days with no objections". These posts will continue to be all EB members, BINFO and Myron/Rachel Lieberman. **PASSED 5-1** with Ruth Haring opposed and Anjelina Belakovskaia absent and not voting.

Mike Nietman introduced the next motion by Mike Hoffpauir in reference to previous motion EB17-035 presented by Chuck Unruh earlier in the meeting. President Walters called for a vote.

**EB17-037 – Hoffpauir/ Unruh** – Mike Hoffpauir moves to substitute the following language for motion EB17-035 from earlier in the meeting to "Chuck Unruh moves to re-initiate the New Member Recruitment Pilot Program (NMRPP) that began in mid-June 2015 and ended a year later. The NMRPP shall receive an additional time beginning March 1, 2017 and ending May 31, 2018." **PASSED 6-0**

Secretary Nietman introduced the following two motions and votes were taken:

**EB17-038 – Nietman** – Move to add Mike Hoffpauir to the Board's Personnel Committee. **PASSED 6-0**

**EB17-039 – Hoffpauir** – Add Tracey Vibbert to the FIDE Events Committee. **PASSED 6-0**

Mike Nietman brought attention to an error in last year's EB16-038 motion made by Mike Atkins. There was a brief discussion about the error in reference to "2100 levels" and it was stated that it only effected the first of the three (3) clauses. Secretary Nietman moved to amend the motion as follows and a vote was taken:

**EB17-040 – Nietman** – Move to remove "and 2100 levels" from the end of the first item in EB16-038. **PASSED 6-0** Please note: The maker of the motion, Mike Atkins, was consulted and agrees that this portion of the motion was in error as he believed that there was a 2100 rating floor and he was trying to match the money rating floors to that list.

Mike Nietman introduced the following motion submitted by Allen Priest for the Women's Chess Fund previously discussed. A comment was made that this will create a "bucket" for donations to the Women's Chess Fund. President Walters called for a vote.

**EB17-041 – Priest** – Move that US Chess creates a Women's Chess Fund. The fund seed money will be \$5000, which comes from an anonymous gift US Chess has already received. The Women's Chess Committee is authorized to spend up to this amount in support of volunteer activities at US Chess events as outlined in the committee report presented January 22, 2017. The committee is not authorized to spend in excess of this amount. **PASSED 6-0**

President Walters called for a brief recess and stated they will resume in closed session.

### **OPEN SESSION #3, Sunday, January 22, 2017**

Gary Walters welcomed everyone back from closed session. He called on Mike Nietman to present the four (4) motions made in closed session. Secretary Nietman introduced the following motions and votes were taken:

**EB17-042 – Belakovskaia** - Anjelina Belakovskaia moves for US Chess to provide travel stipend for US Chess Senior Team to participate in the FIDE World Team Senior Championship starting in 2018 and in the amount not to exceed \$15,000. The EB recommends that the Top Players Committee designs invitational requirements and reports to the Executive Board by March 31, 2017 for review and approval. **FAILED 3-3** with Anjelina Belakovskaia, Mike Hoffpauir and Mike Nietman voting Yes

**EB17-043 – Belakovskaia / Priest** - Anjelina Belakovskaia, as amended by Allen Priest, moves that the EB directs the Scholastic Council to develop a plan for US participation in the FIDE U-16 Olympiad to be presented by the June 2017 EB meeting. The plan should include the player selection criteria, the timing of the selection of players, the number of players to be included, coach and other adult selection criteria, the year in which we might be able to begin participation in this event, and proposed funding level and possible funding sources. **PASSED 6-0**

**EB17-044 – Belakovskaia** - Anjelina Belakovskaia moves for US Chess to refer to Top Players and Women's Committees to propose details of organizing an annual US Chess camp for Top 10 women players. The plan is to be submitted by May 31, 2017. **PASSED 5-0-1** with Allen Priest abstaining.

**EB17-045 – Belakovskaia** - Move that the EB directs the Top Players committee to develop a plan for US participation in the World Team Senior Championship to be presented by the June 2017 EB meeting.

The plan should include the players and coach selection criteria and the timing of the selection, the year in which we might be able to begin participation in this event, and proposed funding level and possible funding sources, as well as recommendations for team players' participation in promoting chess around the U.S. **PASSED 6-0**

Gary Walters announced again the next EB meeting date and location is to be in Tulsa, OK on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017.

The meeting was adjourned by President Walters.