

2018 Summer Board Meeting, Aug. 29.

Toledo, Ohio

President LeaAnn Martin called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Present were Martin, Vice President Alethia Mendez, Secretary Tom Sove, Treasurer Steve Birrell, Members Bill Kelly, Ralph Fregoso, Denis Hogan, Jim Ward, Terry Nett, Ken Starcher, Steve Birrell, Carl Porter, Jamie Simon, and Executive Director Vern Roberts.

Martin led the introductions and asked each board member to explain what they had done to grow handball since the last meeting. Several board members were playing catch up with their ad and membership sales. Most had been active in attending, running and/or playing in events in their region. There has been an effort to follow up with expired members in their respective regions.

**Mendez moved and Starcher seconded approving the minutes from the January Meeting as posted on the USHA website. Motion passed 15-0.**

Martin reviewed the Executive Committee Decisions since the last meeting. She announced the candidate statements were in the packet and that Ben Van Arsdale would be addressing the meeting later in the day.

Martin gave an update on her efforts as president, including the worlds and collegiate efforts. She noted the World Handball Council's new executives with Raquel Murphy as President. Martin is working to keep up and improve the communications amongst the board; as well as with other constituencies such as the WPH.

Kelly reported a good response for the at-large positions up for election.

Martin invited Birrell to present the Treasurer's report and thanked him for the monthly summaries. The Auditor's report was presented. Birrell reported there were two comments from the auditor, both of which have been addressed successfully. Martin noted the need for board members to follow through on their commitments to garner memberships and advertising. Birrell suggested new means of revenue generation were also needed, stating the Go Fund Me attempt this year was disappointing and the Amazon Smile is coming in below budget.

The board dismissed for a break at 10:15 and resumed at 10:30.

Porter and Roberts updated the board on the President's Club and this year's projects. Roberts invited members to join the group and come up with good ideas.

Sove presented info on the Game Committee and that he had contact with a potential new ball manufacturer. Sove also noted the need for new rulebooks and suggested the board request help from the Presidents Club in paying for them. Wall noted the potential for selling ads. Vale asked for more info on keeping players from entering future events for unsportsmanlike conduct. Vale asked about one-wall rulebooks and Roberts and Mendez would join Vale in getting those reprinted.

The Game committee also addressed prize money in non-open events. **Sove suggested that the USHA promotions fund money only be used for prize money in Open skill level events. Porter moved and Nett seconded. The motion passed 14-1-0.** Mendez noted that donated funds specified for other events would still be accepted for the intended events/purposes. A new referee evaluation form will be

developed. Rules tests for different levels would be looked at. A new towel rule was presented that would help alleviate the abuse of towel timeouts during play.

Sove proposed to add a Rule 2.1 C. Towels:

*In tournament play a towel should be made available for wiping moisture on the court surfaces. Reasonable time should be allowed by the referee for this purpose only. Players should obtain a towel and proceed directly to the surface to be wiped, then directly return the towel. Players are not to interrupt this procedure to dry themselves. The referee shall request the towel and declare "play ball." The receiver would then have 10 seconds to take position, after which the score is called and the server has 10 seconds to serve.*

**Sove moved the new rule would become part of the rulebook. Porter seconded.** Vale asked about the process and confirmed the 10 seconds for the receiver and then the server. **The motion passed 15-0.**

Sove then explained the addition of some verbiage to the collegiate event's on-site infractions committee.

**Sove moved to approve the specific recommendations below to the Jurisdiction of the Code of Conduct at Collegiate and USHA events. Birrell seconded. The motion passed 15-0.**

- 1) For Collegiate events, the USHA Collegiate Committee has the authority to appoint an on-site infractions committee before the start of the event which will make on-site decisions regarding violations of this code of conduct. Such decisions shall be reported to the USHA Game Committee.
- 2) For all other events, the Tournament Director and/or the USHA representative has the authority to make on-site decisions regarding violations of this code of conduct. Such decisions shall be reported to the USHA Game Committee.

An appeal to an earlier infraction was discussed as new information was recently presented. The Game committee denied the appeal as the new information was not relative to the USHA's jurisdiction.

The board broke for lunch at 11:44 a.m.

The board reconvened at 12:42 p.m.

Mendez supplied the one-wall committee report. The dates for next year are set: June 28-30 for wall ball and first week of August (1-4) for small ball. The players want to use a different big ball and recommend R2 be used for registration for 2019. Paid referees are needed. The committee is making progress with the other New York organizations. Updating a sponsorship package for the committee would be helpful. A new format will be suggested for running the Juniors and will be presented in January.

Sove gave the Promotions report. First, he noted the Toledo-group's disappointment in the dates for the worlds this year being just a couple of weeks prior to their 3-wall nationals. They asked for the board to keep national events a month away from the traditional Labor Day Weekend. The board agreed to make every effort to do so.

The tournament schedule was discussed. Future events that don't have hosts will be advertised in Court Shorts. USHA's 25<sup>th</sup> year in the Hall of Fame building will be celebrated at the Hall of Fame event with

the Masters singles and Women's Classic, hopefully March 6-9. Sove described the LifeTime presentation for a three-year contract, noting the proposal could be similar to our current nationals' agreement. Sove also noted that John Wilinski suggested putting wall ball courts in their LifeTime facilities in the New York area to promote a series of events.

The board considered the potential of a three-year run at one site compared to the traditional goal to move the event around the country, etc. Martin noted the Planning Committee suggested not pursuing a three-year contract but did want to explore the wall ball potential for one-wall. Also, the committee looked at moving the event away from the Midwest in 2019 to serve the rest of the membership. There is potential to host at Los Cab and the board would like to pursue that in the next 30 days. Roberts suggested a tournament team be put together to make the event a success at Los Cab and then again at U of Minn. The board agreed to work with a two-year schedule to go to Los Cab in 2019 and then possibly back to Minnesota again in 2020.

Martin presented the collegiate committee report. A Spirit of Handball Award was suggested for the collegiate nationals. **Simon moved to approve the Spirit of Handball Award at the Collegiates, Kelly seconded. The Motion passed 13-0-2.** The Collegiates are scheduled for Minn., in Feb., 2019.

Starcher gave the First Ace report. All mid-year reports are in and Starcher and has sent them out to committee members. Roberts reported on the annual First Ace reception that wasn't held this year but the renewal did just go out to help remind contributors of the annual renewal period.

Kelly is looking to restructure the Membership committee and gave ideas for growing membership. Committee members can be removed if they don't respond to requests in a timely manner. Kelly noted his and Ward's letter to expired members in their regions that Ward is willing to send out for the board members. The goal is to send a letter to expired members in the respective regions from the appropriate board member to remind the members to renew.

Kelly noted the timing for a campaign that would start in January with the letters going out from Ward's office. The campaign would be to sell and service members with the "play it forward" motto. Kelly asked each board member to follow through with the membership in their regions. What do USHA membership fees accomplish? Kelly wanted a flyer to promote membership services. Listing new members in Court Shorts and asking members what we can do for them. Surveys could be placed in Court Shorts for targeted info. Kelly didn't want to raise dues until at least January and after other opportunities are explored for new income.

This flyer for "Here's what USHA does for you," and a new media kit would be developed.

Simon asked about combining committees of similar responsibilities.

Porter presented the Hall of Fame Committee report. The committee recommended David Chapman, Lisa Fraser and Vince Munoz for induction as first and second readings. **Sove moved that the board accept the nominations en masse. Porter seconded.** Birrell asked why there wasn't a second reading necessary. Porter noted that strong nominations are often given first and second readings at the same time. **Motion passed 14-0-1.**

The board broke at 3:09 and reconvened at 3:19.

Nett gave a personnel report that started with the Board of Directors Self Evaluation. Nett noted some of the lower performing survey questions. Then he read comments that centered on improving membership. Fundraising efforts were also noted to help meet the needs of operations. Nett noted the need for the board members to be 100% on-board with any fundraising effort. There was a suggestion to have more brainstorming and focus work rather than committee work at the board meetings. Bringing in new players through one-wall is likely the future for growing membership.

Wall presented the USHA's investment portfolio status with some investments in positive territory with some in negative territory. Roberts reported that he recently learned of a new gift to the endowment from the estate of Bill Bohr. Sove suggested the USHA promote the Endowed Legacy Fund more aggressively and Martin agreed. Birrell reminded the board of the general endowment excess (income generated above the 4% threshold) being used to supplement the current year's budget. Roberts will be transferring those funds in the next month.

At this time, Ben Van Arsdale came in to address the board as an at-large candidate. He's a four-year collegiate player and now president of the Illini Handball Club. Van Arsdale plans to offer insight into keeping college players playing. He's also on his second-year on Collegiate Committee.

Other candidates include: LeaAnn Martin, Alethia Mendez, Matthew Kubrick, and Jay Spooner. Elections were needed for the Martin and Mendez three-year positions as well as the vacant Rob Pearse position that has two years remaining. The first two elected would fill the three-year positions. The third person elected would take over a two-year term.

Martin and Mendez were re-elected to three-year terms. Ben Van Arsdale was elected to the two-year term.

A review of the September elections was presented: Rob Nichols chairs Nor Cal. Jeff Wall will chair the Southeast region and Nett will search for candidates in the Northwest. Ballots are due by Sept. 15, so that elected members can make plans to attend the January meeting.

At this time, Martin asked board members to keep the momentum going and asked board members to offer what they'd do to grow handball by the next meeting.

Committee updates:

Sove asked about having someone fill the women's commissioner position.

Starcher will not seek a board position and wants to stay on Game Committee. Starcher needs a replacement for First Ace and Awards.

Simon offered to serve on Promotion, Membership, and First Ace committees.

The Board meeting was adjourned at 4:48 pm.

Tom Sove  
Secretary