

**Minutes of the USHA Annual Winter Board Meeting, Tucson, AZ
Saturday, January 21, 2017**

President LeaAnn Martin called the meeting to order at 8:03 AM

Present were: Martin, Secretary Tom Sove, Treasurer Steve Birrell, Board Members Steve Johnson, Jim Ward, Ralph Fregoso, Bob Nichols, Jared Vale, Alethia Mendez, Terry Nett, Ken Starcher, Jeff Wall, Carl Porter, Bill Kelly, and staff members Matt Krueger and Vern Roberts. Vice President Rob Pearse was attending via speaker phone and Martin had his proxy when he wasn't online. Steve Dykes sent his proxy with Kelly.

Martin called for the approval of the June 2016 Board Meeting Minutes from Fridley, MN. **Nett moved that the minutes from the June 2016 meeting be approved as posted on the USHA website. Pearse seconded and the motion passed 16-0.**

After board introductions, Martin called for candidates to declare their interest in running for an Officer's position. The election would take place at the end of Sunday's Meeting. Incumbents declared their interest in running.

Roberts reviewed Executive Committee decisions since the last Board Meeting:

The board approved the Hall of Fame Committee recommendations for:

Anthony Grimm to receive the Kendler Award.

Donn Curly Carswell to receive the Kendler Award.

Tom Gilbert to receive the Kendler Award.

Gary Cruz to be inducted to the Hall of Fame as a Contributor

Ed Maisonet to be inducted to the Hall of Fame as a Player.

The Board approved the fundraising effort for the Worlds to be held in Anchorage.

The Board suspended bylaw 16 for the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Region. Jared Vale ran unopposed.

The Board suspended bylaw 16 for the Southwest Region. Jeff Wall ran unopposed.

The Board voted to keep the split venues for the Four-Wall Nationals (June in Concord, CA for singles and September in Fountain Valley, CA for doubles)

The Board approved travel expense for President Martin to attend the four-wall Juniors.

Sove remarked that he'd share the vote counts of email votes concerning Executive Committee and Board Decisions with the full board once they're completed.

Roberts noted that elections for Board positions are unopposed too often. Martin and others noted some didn't want to run against good board members. Johnson asked about the nomination process and Roberts noted the state and regional representatives are part of the nominating committee.

President's Report: Martin reviewed her first year as president. Martin attended three National tournaments: the National Collegiate Championships, Junior Four-Wall Nationals and the Four-Wall Nationals. Martin spoke about this year's splitting of the Four-Wall National singles and doubles and that she has received positive feedback. Martin noted her attempts at establishing connections with WPH, U.S. Racquetball, Positive Coaching Alliance and other national organizations.

Treasurer's Report: Birrell reviewed the 2016 year-end financials. The board asked about the National Singles and National Doubles entry expectations and the budget implications.

Game Committee: Sove noted recent issues with synthetic material being used for handball gloves and the inability to determine if the gloves are wet since wetness wasn't visible to the referee. This came to the USHA as a result of pro events and the WPH asked for the USHA ruling in order to be in concert with the USHA rules. Under Rules 2.3 Gloves B. Style, **Sove moved that the rule read: The usual hitting surfaces of the gloves must be light in color and made of a soft material or leather with wetness easily detected by visual inspection. Nett seconded and the motion passed 16-0.**

Sove then reviewed an infraction and the state of the probation.

Investment / Endowment: Wall reviewed the success of the USHA portfolio and Endowed Legacy Fund. Jim Ward reviewed funding and other possibilities for future revenue.

Membership / Services: Johnson reviewed the notes from the committee meeting and a desire to offer a "risk-free" trial membership.

Johnson motioned to begin exploring and pursuing details on implementing a "test drive membership" with auto-renewal for approval by March 1 and to be implemented by May 1 for the remainder of 2017. Mendez seconded. Motioned passed 15-1. Wall mentioned his opposition was due to concern of cannibalizing membership.

Mendez motioned that the board commits to securing a minimum of \$500 per region for additional advertising revenue in 2017. Nichols seconded. Motioned passed 15-1.

Sove motioned to create a special area in the magazine for Outdoor Handball. Kelly seconded. The motion was withdrawn with the staff directed to include a one- and three-wall section in the magazine.

The board broke for lunch at 12:47 and convened again at 1:29 p.m.

One-Wall: Mendez talked about the One-Wall Awards Banquet, Wallball Nationals, One-Wall Nationals and the Summer USHA Board Meeting, scheduled to be held with the one-wall nationals. Mendez and Vale were asked to clarify status of a proposal from the One-Wall Committee.

The USHA committees shall meet on Sunday, August 6, with the board meeting on Monday, August 7.

Mendez spoke about rules differences for one-wall and wallball, specifically the “call and confirm” handling of hindes. Sove noted that the USHA rules are the same for small ball and big ball in this area and that the One-Wall Committee should be consistent with the official USHA Handball Rules.

Collegiate: Martin reviewed the Collegiate Committee’s accomplishments over the past year and the upcoming event to be held at ASU. Starting this year, the All-Tournament Awards will replace what has been given as All-American. The All-American awards will go to the top four U.S. finishers (who must finish in the top 16), in singles and top two in doubles. In the case of a tie(s), multiple awards will be given out.

The Collegiate Committee was asking for an increase of \$1,800 in the budget for tournament funding. Instead of a direct increase in money, Roberts suggested the USHA or donor provide the balls. **The board agreed by consensus.**

Promotions Committee: Roberts presented Pearse’s notes from the committee meeting and reviewed the tournament schedule. **Birrell motioned to approve the Promotion Committee’s minimum Prize Money allocation schedule for 2017, with the proviso the first additional unrestricted money raised will first be allocated to women’s doubles. Nett seconded. Motion passed 15-0-1.**

Starcher presented the Awards committee recommendations for Coach, Volunteer and Organization of the Year. **Starcher motioned to approve the Awards Committee’s selections for Coach, Volunteer and Organization of the Year. Kelly seconded. Motion passed 15-0-0.**

Mendez motioned that the Promotions Committee establish a task force to raise funds for Team USA for the 2018 Worlds. Starcher seconded. The motion was withdrawn since committees and task forces serve at the request of the President. President Martin proceeded to establish the Team USA Funding Task Force, with the first two members being Birrell and Kelly.

Pearse moved that the USHA offer Big Ball Open Divisions at the Three-Wall and Four-Wall National Championships. Johnson seconded. Motion passed 15-1-0.

First Ace: Starcher reviewed youth handball programs and shared the First Ace Committee’s recommendations for development grants. **Martin motioned to accept the First Ace Recommendations for Development Grants in 2017. Fregoso seconded. The motion passed 16-0.**

Planning Committee: Martin reiterated the emphasis of the committee at this time is to grow handball. Martin is also asking committee chairs to review ideas generated and prioritize or eliminate items.

Hall of Fame Committee: Martin gave the Hall of Fame Committee report. There was some discussion of awarding rings for Hall inductees as well as the blue blazer; no decision was reached. Martin will forward information on Hall of Fame rings to the Hall of Fame Committee. It was noted the One-wall Committee is in the process of developing alternative criteria for Hall consideration for players in handball disciplines that do not have a history of objective measures.

Technology Committee: Wall gave this report, starting with the need for a new chair. Wall was appointed chair by President Martin. Wall continued, noting our web site provider has been changed with some problems. The committee is exploring videos with links to the web site, including the UTube channel. On the subject of live streaming they are exploring improving our own experiences. There is much more interest in live streaming, plus it is now much easier than ever.

Personnel: Nett presented the board and staff evaluations of the Executive Director, which were viewed as positive. Roberts reviewed staff salaries and the board met in executive session without staff to end the day's meetings. **A motion was made by Nett for an increase in the salaries and wages line item in the budget. Mendez seconded. The motion passed 15-0-1.**

In preparations for the Sunday's budget discussion on how to balance, the board then moved to raising the cost of membership dues to help meet the various items causing the budget shortfall. **Motion was made by Porter to raise the annual adult base dues to \$55.00, effectively immediately. Vale seconded. The motion passed 14-2-0.**

Martin adjourned the meeting at 5:17 p.m.

Sunday, January 22, 2017

Martin called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

Martin spoke about finalizing the budget and noted the many challenges in balancing the funds.

Roberts and Birrell reviewed the ideas presented in order to balance the budget. Included was the increase in adult dues by \$5 and a contribution of salary that negated the overall increase.

Birrell summarized the other changes in the 2017 budget beginning with the operating account. To reach the budget numbers, each board member agreed to get five new USHA members. The board also agreed to use some of the Endowment Fund's increase in funds over 4% for operating.

Mendez motioned that Handball Magazine go to full four color pages and adjust the budget accordingly. Starcher seconded. Motion passed 14-0-2.

Porter motioned to allocate the remaining additional gains above the 4% threshold from the endowment funds to the contingency fund. Sove seconded. Motion passed 8-5-3. Kelly asked to have his no vote recognized.

Martin thanked Birrell and Roberts for their diligence and hard work to balance the budget.

Martin asked the board if there were any other potential changes to the budget.

Vale discussed participation at the Wall Ball and Small Ball events. Participation has been minimal and he discussed raising prize money for the National events via contributions.

Martin motioned that the board approve the operating budget for 2017 as presented. Wall seconded. Motion passed 16-0.

Next, came balancing the promotions budget. There was a commitment to raise additional prize money from sponsorship contributions to balance. It was also noted there is no budgeted prize money for the new big ball events in the respective 4-wall nationals. **Pearse motioned to approve the Promotions Budget as presented. Vale seconded. Motion passed 16-0-0.**

For the First Ace budget, including grant awards, a balanced budget wasn't necessary due to the funds left over from previous years. **Sove motioned to approve the First Ace budget as presented. Starcher seconded. Motion passed 16-0-0.**

Martin reviewed the upcoming board elections for 2017: Bill Kelly and Rob Pearse are the expiring at-large members. Martin tasked the other at-large members to find suitable candidates to contest the election at the summer board meeting in New York.

The upcoming Regional Elections in 2017 are: Central Region, Rocky Mountain and Mid-America. Martin tasked Steve Dykes as the nominating chair for the Central Region, Jeff Wall as the nominating chair for the Rocky Mountain Region and Steve Johnson as the nominating chair for the Mid-America Region. Roberts requested candidate statements for the ballots by August.

Election of officers other than President ensued. Martin asked if there were other candidates for any office. None came forward. **Martin motioned that the officers be elected by acclamation. Nett seconded. Motion passed 16-0-0.**

Next was the Executive Committee member election. The board was looking for three to make a committee of seven (with the four officers). Porter, Mendez, Fregoso and Johnson ran with Porter, Mendez and Johnson elected to serve.

Committee makeup was next with Martin asking committee chairs if there were any changes. Then she asked board members, especially the new members, where they wanted to serve.

Martin thanked everyone for their participation, especially the new board members. Parting remarks were made and Martin again thanked everyone for their hard work and is very excited about the future of the board. Martin stated she would participate in every conference call that she can, be visible at events and be a representative of the USHA. Martin asked that other board members are visible as well. Martin asked the board to remember the goal of membership and the commitments made during the meeting. Martin is excited about the new magazine and split nationals format.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Tom Sove
Secretary