

Minutes Special Meeting of the USFA Board of Directors

July 2, 2006, 7:30 am Atlanta, GA

The Board of Directors meeting is divided into three major phases:

Information: Minutes of the previous meeting; officer, director and committee reports; and general announcements.

Budget: Approval of the budget, requests for major changes in it including staff or executive actions that may involve budget changes.

Decision: Motions before the Board (excluding those directly related to the budget) are divided into three categories:

URGENT: Motions that have not had a First Hearing but must be acted upon by the Board for time or other considerations.

SECOND HEARING: Motions that have had First Hearing at the previous Board meeting; Second Hearing motions must be voted upon as presented, with only minor changes permitted (if a motion requires major changes or fails completely, it must be re-presented as a First Hearing Motion at a subsequent Board meeting).

FIRST HEARING: Motions that are new to the Board, but for which decisions are not urgent. A First Hearing motion may not be voted upon unless the Board moves it to the Urgent category; instead, it is automatically placed in the Second Hearing category at the next meeting unless the sponsor withdraws it.

Every motion must have an individual sponsor identified in the agenda and in attendance at the meeting. The sponsor presents the motion, answers questions, takes notes on suggested changes, and shepherds the motion if it is referred to committee. Committees that are presenting motions must assign a member to fulfill this duty.

I. Information

Attendees: George Masin, Jerry Benson, Jon Moss, Brad Baker, Greg Dilworth, Dave Micahnik, Marshall Hibnes, Michael D'Asaro, Joseph Streb, Bill Becker, Scott Rodgers, Felicia Zimmerman, Alex Wood, Gerrie Baumgart, Ron Herman, Ed Wright, Ro Sobalvaro, Donald Alperstein, Nancy, Sam Cheris, Derek Cotton, Linda Merritt

Guests: Jane Carter, Steve Cooper, Brad Circone, Suzie Paxton, Sunil Sabharwal, Carla Mae Richards, Stacey Johnson, Michael Massik, Andrea Lagan, John Heil, George Kolombatovich, Joe Sasek, Michael Morgan, Carol Buerdsell, Kathy Schifferle, Cathy Zagunis, Bob Largman, Jeff Bukantz, Kalle Weeks, Alan Kuver, Dave Blake, Peet Sasaki, Jim Page

A. General Information and Organizational Items:

- Presentation from marketing committee, three videos to present to sponsors
- Presentation from fundraising – Joe Sasek – offer by Michael Morgan to underwrite the cost of Hall of Fame for coming year
- New board representatives from congress. Brad Baker, Greg Dilworth, Alan Kuver, Evan Ranes. David Micahnik will be a presidential appointment.
- Appointment of Parliamentarian George Masin. Approved, one opposed.

B. Minutes of the February 19, 2006 Special Meeting of the Board of Directors

Motion (Ms Merritt): To approve the minutes of the February 19, 2006 Special Meeting of the Board of Directors (the minutes are attached to this document). Motion approved.

C. Officer and Director Reports: (Please refer to the Index of Appendices) Motion to accept. Motion approved

D. Committee Reports

1. Executive Committee Reports of Action

Motion to accept committee reports. Motion approved

II. Budget Phase

A. Financial Reports: The complete financial reports for the Budget Phase will be mailed to the Board under separate cover in advance of the meeting

Budget vs. Actual report for period ending June 30, 2006.

Motion (Mr. Cotton): To approve the Budget report as submitted to the Board. Motion approved.

Motion: To approve the proposed Budget for the 2006-07 year as amended. Motion approved

Motion: to change the budgeted amount for line item 111 - bylaw amendments to \$4,500 and adjust the bottom line accordingly. Motion approved.

Jim Page was introduced and Stacey states that reports will be submitted to the board showing how money is being spent by weapon squads.

Nancy recognizes the work that the IPSC did during the very difficult time. Expresses appreciation to Jane Carter for her work on that committee. Andrea Lagan has resigned from the board due to working at HQ in Colorado.

III. Decision Phase

A. Second Hearing

- 1. Motion (Mr. Baker):** Starting with the 2006-2007 season each division and section chair must sign a statement stating that, to the best of his/her knowledge, all USFA guidelines and regulations have been followed for each national qualification-path tournament. This statement should be submitted to the National Office along with the results-reporting paperwork for these events. In the event that the policies have not been followed, the division/section chair is required to enclose a brief account of what policies were not properly enforced and a rationale or explanation for why that was the case. A summary of these guidelines and regulations should be made available to all division/section officers. This summary will be created and updated, as needed, by the Divisions and Sections Committee.

Rationale: From complaints received in an individual capacity, it is clear that some divisions are routinely violating such national policies as having at least one national-level referee present at qualifiers, requiring safe (legal) uniforms of competitors, checking USFA membership at events, etc.

In a specific situation from this season's JO qualification process, a fencer from a near-by division submitted a written protest to his division's officers concerning the manner in which the tournament was conducted. The response that he received from two of the three officers made it clear that not only were the officers aware of the regulations, they were aware that the regulations were not followed, and that the division officers thought it in the best interest of the division to continue to ignore these regulations in the future. Rather than apologize for these failings and commit to ensuring no future repetition, the officers in question defended their actions as appropriate and chastised the young fencer for having the audacity to complain about how a volunteer organized and ran the competitions.

It is clearly in the best interest of fencing and the USFA that those guidelines passed down from the national level are actually adhered to at the local level by all divisions, under all circumstances, but most especially during any national qualification-path tournaments. Without adherence to these basic policies we end up with problems with both safety and fairness in our events.

Brad feels that this is for people unaware of rules and/or people who habitually ignore the rules. Will leave it to the board or EC to determine appropriate sanctions on a case by case basis.

Motion fails. National Office will work with Brad and come up with language for qualifying forms so that we can reach the same goal by changing the forms.

2. **Motion (Joseph S. Streb):** duly authorized member of the Board of Directors of the United States Fencing Association, Inc. ("USFA") and hereby moves for adoption of the following resolution regarding the minimum age for participation in USFA fencing competitions: BE IT RESOLVED that the rule regarding the minimum age requirement for participation in USFA fencing events shall be:

To compete in USFA nationally sanctioned Div. I, Div. II, Div. III, Junior, and Cadet fencing competitions or any qualifying competitions for said nationally sanctioned competitions, all fencers must be at least 13 years old on January 1 of the competitive season in question; however, this rule shall not be construed to prevent fencers under the age of 13 from competing in divisionally sanctioned fencing competitions, unless otherwise restricted by the sanctioning division.

Rationale: The minimum age rule, as interpreted in a January 24, 2006 national publication, has as its underlying logic "an attempt to give young athletes appropriate competitive bouts as they grow." However, this is a determination best left to coaches and parents. Because in many areas of the country, it is not possible to provide any meaningful fencing competition without operating an "open" event, to deny any young fencer the opportunity to participate is to deny that fencer the right to improve through competitive fencing. The proposed revised rule leaves the decision regarding who is ready to fence in purely local "open" competitions to those best able to judge based upon specific facts and circumstances, but it leaves unaltered the rule with respect to national events and national qualifiers. The Revised Motion is designed to clarify the existing rule regarding age limitations for national sanctioned fencing tournaments and qualifiers and create an exception for divisionally sanctioned fencing tournaments, not otherwise restricted.

Mr. Streb only wishes this to be changed at the local divisional level not the national level. Jerry feels that the reason for the rule is safety for the younger fencers. Can be abused and someone could get hurt. Felicia strongly believes we should be looking at the safety of the athletes. Suggest we find better way to find opportunities for young fencers.

Motion failed; 5 in favor, 11 opposed.

B. First Hearing

1. **Motion (Mr. D'Asaro):** Fencers should earn points up to the 32 whether they make the Direct Eliminations or not.

Rational: This is not a quality of skill issue. It is an issue of numbers. The only weapon that is affected is Woman's saber. NAC points are given to qualify for Nationals. Currently there are 42 women on the points standing. If they all go to Nationals, here is the breakdown: 60% advance 25; 60% advance 15; only 15 women would get points.

Refer to appropriate committees for further recommendations and comments.

2. **Motion (Mr. Baker):** to direct The USFA National Office to establish a procedure such that clubs may request the removal of club representation/affiliation status from non-members.

Rationale: This issue was brought to me by a club operator/coach. His club has a

number of former members that continue to report themselves as representing his club. For a variety of reasons he would prefer that this association were not continued and especially that it did not remain officially recognized by the USFA. While fencers can report to the USFA their club representation status – subject to limitations on switching clubs mid-season – there doesn't seem to be any official method for a club to provide input. While I anticipate this being a relatively rare and minor issue, it would be useful to have a process set up to deal with such requests from the club level.

With this motion I anticipate the National Office Staff establishing the process that most easily accommodates the goal, while minimally impacting their workload and that best fits with the membership and competition database(s).

Moot issue to discuss while proponent is not here. Suggest that this is first hearing item in September as proponent or a designated person should be present when motion is presented and discussed.

C. Good and Welfare

1. The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors September 17. Place TBD.
2. Task Force Handout – please submit comments by end of July

Motion to adjourn: Approved. Meeting ends at 9:23 am