

# Board Meeting Minutes

American Go Association

Meeting Date and Time: May 16, 2021, 7:00pm EDT/4:00pm PDT

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# Overview

## Summary

The AGA board treated a number of hot topics, including the recommendations of the Fair Play Committee regarding online play and AI use, as well as a framework for providing guidelines to go organizers regarding in-person play in light of information concerning the COVID-19 pandemic. The board also preliminarily approved a budget, to be finally approved electronically. The board also considered financials and the status of the Strategic plan that was approved in November 2020.

## In Attendance

### **Current Board**

Lisa Scott (Chair, Central Region)  
Devin Frazee (Central Region)  
Chris Kirschner (Western Region)  
Les Lanphear (Western Region)  
Stephanie Yin (Eastern Region)  
Dan Ritter (Eastern Region)  
Ted Terpstra (At-Large)

### **Executive Officers**

Andy Okun (President)  
Samantha Fede (Secretary)  
Nate Eagle (Incoming VP Ops)

### **Other**

Valerie Lewis (Berkeley Go Club)  
Bob Gilman  
Steve Colburn

## Notable Motions and Decisions

1. Nate Eagle appointed VP of Operations, to replace Andrew Jackson. Board approved unanimously.
2. Board to consider recommendations by the Fair Play Committee regarding online play and AI use.
3. The board approved the framework presented for the executive or designee to publish documents advising organizers on how to run in-person events in light of public information concerning the COVID pandemic.
4. The board approved the budget, pending affirmative vote over email within one week of this meeting. The affirmative vote was not made, and the budget still remains to be approved.
5. Board recommends to chapter assembly that dues for chapters and members remain the same.
6. The board forms a committee (consisting of Ted, Chris, and Lisa) to formalize the policy of requiring foreign go association members to be members of their organization (if such exists) or the AGA, but not requiring both.

# Minutes

## 1. Call Meeting to Order

- a. 7:11pm EDT.

## 2. Opening Approvals/Confirmations/Notices

- a. March Minutes for approval here: [AGA Board Meeting Minutes 3/14/2021](#)
  - i. Unanimous, **March Minutes Approved**

## 3. President's Report

- a. International updates
  - i. Russian go event has received permission to go ahead, with an exception to the international ban on play in Russia.
  - ii. NAGF: Will hold pro qualification at NGC in August, pending COVID. Plans to have an additional transatlantic competition, which has received sponsorship from Deepmind. NAGF board has set up a pro promotion system, promoting several individuals (Ryan Li to 3p, Eric Lui to 2p). Has applied to receive a seat on the IGF board. AGA/CGA are still the formal entities and financials process through individual org accounts; AGA funds things 100% so far, except that funded by outside donations.
- b. Finances
  - i. This year's results (overview) sent to board via email prior to meeting
  - ii. Current status with Jitasa and treasurer
    1. Will need to divide expenses based on sources and types for the purposes of Quickbooks (accounting classes). Will need to spend \$125/mo to use Quickbooks in the future, so that will be part of the next year budget.
- c. Miscellaneous operational matters and appointments
  - i. INAF- AGA has three board members on INAF, which has a \$2 million endowment. The NGC has gotten funding for an east coast go center in the past, their funding was renewed.
  - ii. May be getting a second well-funded 501(c)4 related to the Seattle Go Center (building and foundation).
  - iii. Dan Ritter will be the AGA Education Coordinator (per March meeting).
  - iv. Nate Eagle will be taking over from Andrew Jackson as VP of operations. **Chris moves to approve Nate Eagle as VP of operations pending written notice**, Devin seconds. Unanimous, approved.
- d. Update on Fair Play committee rules work
  - i. Document has been shared with the board via google docs; great work has been made. Applies to both online and in person play, prevention of cheating in terms of committee creation. Ideally, we hope it will be approved by July. President asks the board to read and comment over the following 2 weeks.
  - ii. Devin: Would be nice to have a public facing version in the future.
  - iii. Devin: I was approached by a company that offers a software tool for determining cheating based on affect

#### 4. COVID recommendations and reopening plan

- a. Per Chris Kirschner's research and work with Chess and Bridge organizations: recommends requiring vaccine cards, but not suggesting mandated policy; wearing masks, playing outdoors
- b. Determine what recommendations the AGA would like to make at this time.  
Andy: Will there be conditions on which we based the rating of tournaments? (ie safety)

Lisa: Specifically, we've had some submission of self-paired games at chapters, versus tournament games.

Devin: Do we have an official policy stating we will not rate tournaments? [Lisa: We strongly discouraged it, but we have had a few submitted recently.]

Les: Does sanitizing stones and boards damage them?

Chris: The data is saying that touch transmission is negligible, but you could clean with mild sanitizers.

Lisa: I would also say, don't touch your mouth, do wash your hands, use hand sanitizer. These are best practices and so they should be the most conservative recommendations. That being said I think we can return to in person play safely with the proper precautions.

Ted: With so many different guidelines, how are tournament directors going to parse all the information? There's a lot of discretion for tournament directors, and the CDC is saying it's okay to be without masks.

Devin: I think this is just guidelines; we can choose what we want to use as organizers. If we want to encourage play, we should give people the resources they need to help them feel safe.

Chris: Yes, that's how I see it. I just don't want local organizers to feel like they have to do a deep dive, and the CDC doesn't specifically refer to Go playing. But there is no way we can accurately update it, so I think of this more as a framework.

Dan: I think Chris has done a great job and I just want to encourage us to emphasize that these are recommendations and also they are for the specific activity of playing Go.

Les: I support this general recommendation approach.

Nate: There's also the issue of the large youth population, who haven't gotten the chance to get vaccines yet.

Stephanie: And in some places, there are still mask mandates (ie NY).

Samantha: These guidelines might also enable some organizers to feel that they have the right to require masks, when their local area might not require it.

Andy: Part of this should be that the AGA gives them permission to be conservative, even if it angers a member of the go community.

Ted: What about clubs?

Chris: I use the word "organizer"

Lisa: I think they should be treated separately, since tournaments pull from a wider area.

Stephanie: If someone tests positive for COVID, will the organizers be responsible? Or should the players sign something in advance?

Chris: We recommend that when you announce the tournament you state that in the event someone tests positive, their contact info will be transmitted to the public health department for contact tracing.

Lisa: We could make a waiver if we wanted to provide a model.

Andy: If the board wants me to run anything past a lawyer before we go public, we could do that.

Chris: I think that's a large burden. I think the announcement would suffice, and we are not saying there is zero risk, just that it is "lower" risk.

Devin: **I move that the board approves the framework presented for the executive or designee to publish documents advising organizers on how to run in person events in light of public information concerning the COVID pandemic.**

**Dan seconds, discussion proceeds (notated below), 6 ayes - 1 nay (Ted), Passed**

Devin: I don't necessarily agree with every element, but I am not 100% informed on this topic. I want Chris, Andy, and those who have researched it well to make the appropriate recommendations.

Les: Did we remove reference to CoC?

Chris: That's an issue, but I want to empower local organizers to use their authority to enforce whatever rules they're using.

Lisa: Yes, and they may use AGA aparati to enforce. And there are differences between tournament violations and CoC violations.

Andy: I hope that by making these recommendations it's clear that it is the TD or organizer's business to make these types of rules and they can enforce them, and we'll stand behind them.

Ted: But the TD can deal with it himself, without having to put it through the CoC committee.

Devin: Not every TD is going to know about CoC, though it's a good tool.

Chris: I have that there because it is a violation of all the players' rights to not follow the rules. So if they are asked to wear a mask and they refuse, it can be reported as a code of conduct violation.

Lisa: Not everyone feels empowered on their own to kick someone out of a tournament. Everyone regardless of status in the community or privilege can feel empowered based on these rules.

Ted: I support this in general but I think the board needs to approve the specific things that are approved.

Lisa: What if we say that the board needs to be notified (with a week to comment) to review recommendations published? And that we will explicitly say TDs and organizers "may" do these things.

Dan: I don't think we should require proof of vaccines, and I don't think we should refuse to rate games.

Andy: We all agree that we shouldn't refuse to rate games. But I think we would like to allow that TDs may ask for proof of vaccination if they would like to do so.

## **5. Financials (annual review process)**

- a. Preliminary financials
  - i. Significant surplus over the previous year.
  - ii. Much more modest spending this year, and numbers may change slightly due to membership deferrals related to pandemic
- b. Investment report
  - i. Increased by approximately \$15,000 in gains.
- c. Budget

[Line by line review of the budget]

Andy: There's some risk of a significant drawdown of reserves. Thoughts?

Chris: Considering COVID, that's not unexpected.

Ted: If this is just for one year, it's probably fine.

Devin: Are we confident that this will not affect the budget going forward?

[Some discussion of various hypotheticals]

Ted: Are we doing okay?

Andy: Yes, we could operate for about 10 years without a financial crisis. I think that's a little too much to have on hand, actually.

Ted: Where did all our money come from?

Andy: One is the Deepmind grant of \$90,000. We've had major surpluses from congresses.

***Devin moves to approve the budget.***

**Ted would like to have time to review further before approval.**

**Lisa: Can we amend that to approve via affirmative vote over email within a week.**

**Ted: I second under those conditions. Motion passes unanimously.**

## **6. Proposed reworking of membership categories, as noticed in 2019 Chapter Assembly Meeting (delayed due to Covid-19)**

**Ted: I move that we recommend to the chapter assembly that dues for chapters and members remain the same.**

Chris seconds, discussion (below); unanimously approved.

Devin: If it was up to me, I'd restructure it to be monthly and have yearly options, and have a free tier to invite more people into the AGA and understand them and ultimately convert them into paying members.

Ted: It would be interesting to try for a year and see how that worked, and then go back to pay.

Lisa: I think that would be a bait and switch.

Ted: But we could do it as a pandemic policy since we didn't give them much last year.

Lisa: We gave them the e-Go Congress.

[Cross-talk regarding e-Go Congress policies on foreign players not requiring AGA memberships, which is practice but not formally codified as it should be.]

**Ted, Chris, and Lisa volunteer to serve on a committee to formalize this policy.**

Nate: On the subject of free membership, counter intuitively offering things for free tends to result in them being devalued. [Samantha: As a psychologist, I echo this. It's a well known phenomenon.]

Devin: What about the idea of increasing dues?

Andy: I floated this and was met with many negative reactions, between the pandemic and having a large surplus already.

7. **Status of [Strategic Plan](#) items for Fall 2020, Winter 2021, and Spring 2021**
  - a. Most projects from Fall and Winter are overdue, Lisa encourages everyone to work on the projects they volunteered to do.
8. **Next meeting and announcements:**
  - a. July 24, 2021 (Congress) Board Meeting
  - b. July 25, 2021 General Assembly
  - c. Solicitation of volunteers to help with Annual Report
9. **Adjourn**

Devin moves to adjourn, Dan seconds, unanimous, 10:13pm EDT.