

Minutes

AGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Sunday, February 27, 2012 – 8:10 PM EST

Meeting called to order by: Andrew Okun at 8:10 PM EDT

Type of meeting: Regular Monthly Conference Call

Attendees:

Jie Li (At Large)

Chuck Robbins (Eastern Region)

Paul Celmer (Eastern Region)

Lisa Scott (Central Region)

Daniel Smith (Central Region)

Andrew Okun (Western Region, Chairman)

Gordon Castanza (Western Region)

Allan Abramson (President)

Chris Kirschner (AGA Congress Liaison)

Absent: none

1. Approval of minutes

Andrew Okun: The minutes of 1/4/12 not done.

1/21/12 minutes

Daniel Smith moves to approve by e-mail. Lisa Scott seconds. Approved unanimously.

Chuck Robbins and Chris Kirschner join.

With regard to the November 2011 minutes, Lisa moves to correct the date from October to November, Daniel seconds. Approved unanimously.

2. New business:

- Mike Malveaux
- President search
- Chunlan

3. President's report (out of order since Paul Celmer has to leave call soon and since Chris Kirschner has already joined.)

a. Congress finances

Chris K: No shows and Non players higher than usual

Allan Abramson: we must look at deviation between expected and actuals.

Chris K: 451 actual physical attendees.

Lisa: a lot canceled after registering. What we were expecting from earlier projections didn't pan out.

Paul: This attendance is high historically

Lisa: low compared with 2007, 8, 9

Paul not a huge diff between 450 and 490

Lisa: enough to make the difference

Chris K. Also a high percentage of youth discounts

Lisa: with no Ing money.

Allan: If the breakeven was 90% of estimation, how does 90% figure against actual receipts.

Chris: Not sure off top of head.

Lisa: Expecting breakeven at 435. Loss this high was surprise to me. Partly due to university bill arriving November 4.

AA: Anything else Chris?

Chris K.: Operating congress high stress event that people aren't prepared for the first time. After 2008, a Congress director told us we need to centralize it. We didn't act on it. Peter Freedman was right. With other stuff going on, like no actual onsite group this year, it was too much. Also till now, not paid attention to liaison role, either oversight or advice. Moving toward oversight but not there yet, and there were oversight things I overlooked.

Paul: How certain is deficit? Also how typical is late bill?

Chris K. Not typical but not unprecedented. In this case they were later than average.

Paul: Can we dispute the bill?

Chris K.: Looks pretty reasonable. Hard to dispute.

Lisa: I have not gone over carefully. Can't until March 17.

Chris K: this is a straight up bill.

Paul: In Rochester we were able to get it down

Allan: in this case, nothing jumped out.

Chris K: In Rochester, it took me 10 minutes to figure out it was wrong

Paul: Just hoping.

Allan: As far as deficit, look at the spreadsheet. Pretty certain.

Lisa: Did Chris consider the electronics assets?

Allan: No. Cash sheet, not asset/liability.

Chris K. Several accounting issues could be argued, but makes no different to cash. It is an academic argument.

Allan: In the interest of full disclosure, there's another item. The board policy is to guarantee \$2,000 to the local organizers.

Paul: I'm in favor.

[No disagreement; as one of the local organizers involved, Okun declines to express an opinion.]

Paul: Co-director. Kind of cryptic: what happened to him?.

Gordon: A week or two before the Congress, Andrew Jackson met with Lisa Scott. Because Andrew saw that Lisa was doing the bulk of the work, he suggested that they change his title to that of assistant director. (Personal correspondence with Andrew Jackson 2/12/12) – **[Gordon, was this said during the meeting? Andy]**

Lisa: He became assistant director.

Andy: Do you want us to endorse centralization of finances and registration process?

Allan: Yes, please endorse.

Chuck: I don't think centralization is answer. We don't leave enough margin for error. Too thin margin and that's how these errors arise. If I ran my business with this this a margin for error, I would have gone out of business long ago.

Allan: We can centralize the finances, and do a better job on the margin for breakeven.

Chuck: The local flavor has its benefits. Financial disasters is one issue, local flavor is another.

Allan: Happy to put breakeven discussion off till next month.

Paul: To put board at ease, the 2012 Congress, at 400 attendees we expect \$30,000 surplus. We'll have a safety net.

Lisa: The problem in Southern California is how ridiculously expensive So Cal is.

Chris K. We took a risk with our eyes open.

Andy: My club is one of the local clubs and I had visible role.

Jie: How are we going to publicize this issue to members?

Daniel: Unless someone says not to, I will be putting into the board press release.

Jie: Maybe it would be good to put in a spreadsheet. We should have more transparent accounting.

[Paul Celmer leaves the call.]

Allan: Lisa, Chris K. with input from Jie, will draft something for EJ.

Chris K. Happy to cooperate.

Allan: The four of us by email.

Chris K. Is Garlock aware?

Allan: Not yet.

Jie: I think Chris' statement to the board is very good. We can condense it.

Chris K. We do want to release something. Garlock should have free hand to edit.

Chuck: I recommend going to the school and making our loss clear and see if we can't renegotiate the bill. It can happen even if there is no error by the vendor. They may be wanting to keep future business and may be open to adjusting. May be able to get rid of half of the loss.

Lisa: Ok.

b. Go Camp

Allan: Two volunteers to run at congress location in North Carolina. They have multiyear experience with go camps. They will be tough on registration deadlines. They understand about deficits. I think we should give them a chance.

c. Ratings system delays.

Allan: Basic problem is Mike Malveaux's job. He is a snowboarding instructor in Colorado and has been unreachable for a month and a half; the ratings information goes through him first. Sam Z. pitching in and we are sending information directly to the ratings coordinator. The databases not updated, but ratings are now being updated. There are loose ends but handling it. Left voice mails including on cell phone.

Gordon: I know where he works and can try to get in touch.

- d. Credit Card. Only 15 people have signed up so far, but income of \$1,500 dollars, pretty cool. Hard sell, have to keep advertising.

Andy: Do board members have it?

Dan: No

Lisa: No

Chuck: No

Allan: The button was removed from our home page. Going to be fixed. That will help.

Andy: Are board members going to get it?

Lisa: I don't need at this point

Dan: Never finished process.

Chuck: no interest in credit card.

- e. Appointment of AGA guest officials for foreign events.

Gordon: [referring to earlier e-mail exchange about whether AGA insiders are eligible]

My first question is, are you attempting to establish a precedent with the word cronyism? You and predecessors appointed directors, why not now?

Allan: There are two kinds of appointment. One is AGA business purpose. It is longstanding policy to send whom we feel best, including AGA officials. The other is under the guest official policy. I have interpreted that as not applying to AGA officials and staff. Rewarding others who are not in the hierarchy for services to the go world. If we did not have a business reason for sending an official, I believe we'd be criticized for cronyism.

Gordon: That is your interpretation of policy. You're not prepared to defend the decision if charged with cronyism

Allan: I'm prepared, but in my view policy does not apply to officers and directors.

Gordon: You're denying me the benefit of what comes to me as a member. My being a director doesn't make me not a member.

Allan: I think it puts you in a different category.

Lisa: It does open us up for criticism.

Gordon: Why does it come up now? Charges of cronyism were the exact reason for this process. Now you seem to say that was the matter.

Andy: Have you submitted name before, Gordon?

Gordon: Yes, I have.

Jie: No reason to exclude Gordon since you went to China, Andy.

Andy: [referring to Gordon] If it's earned by the official, it's not cronyism.

Dan: Ok with Allan's approach.

Chuck: No strong opinion. Allan as day-to-day manager should be picking most qualified.

Gordon: When I submitted my name, I gave a list of what I've done for AGA since 2003, volunteering and working on 3 go congress, dozens of tournaments, writing a curriculum and working in schools.

Chuck: Have you been on trips for AGA?

Gordon: Just one.

Chuck: Me too, just one in a 15-year period. You sound a bit bitter.

Jie: Chuck, did you sign up and ask for it?

Chuck: A president just asked me to go.

Jie: Different from Gordon, who is asking.

Allan: We have very few ways that we can reward people outside hierarchy and this is one.

Chuck: who asked.

Allan: Bill Cobb, Richard Dolen, Wayne Nelson, Adam Newshan, Gordon.

Jie: I'm in favor of Gordon being eligible.

Andy: Can we ask sponsors for second spot if the second person is paying their own way?

Gordon: I paid my own way to Hangzhou 2005, WYGC team leader in 2007. Anyway, I don't want to be expunged from the list. Chuck, I respect your contribution but I've done lots.

Allan: I would to notify the board rather than have the board approve the selection.

Daniel and Jie: I think we already changed that.

f. TAP proposal.

Allan: We got 40 comments, all thoughtful. You've seen digest. Many pros and strong amateurs were opposed. Many strong amateurs and members in favor. We don't have consensus and there is a plurality opposed. I recommend we delay at least year; I do not want to stress the organization now.

Gordon: I would suggest we rescind altogether and not bring up for some considerable time, because we're just going to run into the same kind of opposition.

Chuck: I remain strongly in favor.

Lisa: As am I. In the coming year, we'll take time to discuss in more depth.

Daniel: Happy to leave it on books and have Allan decide whether to enforce it. Still in favor.

Jie: still against.

Andy: So, leave it on the books, Allan?

Allan: I'd say leave it on books. You said not to implement until public input. I'd say direct me not to implement for a year and not without board permission.

Chuck: Let's not do this without Paul.

Jie put issue to rest as soon as possible.

Andy: On agenda next month.

4. Board policy document.

Andy: Please read and make sure

Gordon: Please someone find reference for change in representation policy to inform from consent.

Daniel: Are any from Gordon's proposals?

Gordon: No. All done in past board meetings.

5. Pro System Update:

Andy:

- Talking to resident pros going well.
- LG Cup, : hope to run finals in Las Vegas in late Fall.
- Cotsen: hoping for Korean pros to attend; April time frame.
- Looking for staff to run the pro-certification tournament.

Jie: Resident pro on committee yet?

Andy: not yet. Still want one

Jie: I-han's son and Steven Burrall's son are strong players. Conflict for them being on board committee.

Allan: Not a problem in my opinion, because while the committee sets up procedures, they will be run independent of committee.

6. Presidential search:

Andy: No action yet.

Jie: Deadline

Allan: Aug 31.

Lisa: Usually vote in June.

Jie: We should get started.

7. ChunlanCup:

Jie: With regard to e-mail exchange, I intended no blame, my comments were suggestions not critique. Karoline did her best in circumstances.

Two Canadian players in finals. All American eliminated by round 3. Feng Yun did not play. The Canadians were very strong contenders 8.9 only four US players qualified as citizens who are higher rated. None played in qualifier.

It is very important to try to provide our strong AGA players with most support possible. If we exclude our strong players, Canadians will win. To be honest, Canadians don't have strong pros like we do. Most of our pros have teaching commitments over the weekend. I think if possible we need to recognize that and provide them with the asked flexibility. TD can't be present at flexible match, but we don't need TD at such high level matches. If people try to match own schedule, we should accommodate them.

Lisa: Even if TD isn't required, a TD should be available if there is a tournament going on.

Jie: No need to be same person every time.

Lisa: We have to go with number of volunteers.

Jie: Just a few games that have to be rescheduled.

Andy: Are we intending to provide flexibility?

Allan: We always have. Just in this case, we felt we couldn't.

Jie: It has always been the case that if it cannot be rescheduled with mutual agreement, happens at scheduled time.

Andy: I think we can try to maximize opportunities for everyone in North America to play, not specifically to advantage US over Canadians.

Jie: We have limited number of strong players. They couldn't play in this qualifier. Very important to provide the strongest players whether US or Canadian. Especially in the case of pros who need to teach over weekend. Again, suggestion not critique.

Daniel: I spoke with Karoline yesterday. I think Allan's memo shielding her, and requesting criticism be sent to him was a good thing to have.

Allan: Critical volunteers need to be protected. Criticism needs to come to board and president. Thank you Daniel.

Next meeting time and place: March 18 8 pm est.

[Chuck moves and Lisa seconds motion to adjourn. Unanimous.]

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 p.m. EST.