

**Minutes**  
**AGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**Sunday, May 22, 2011 – 8:00 PM EDT**

Meeting called to order by: Andrew Okun at 8:04 PM EDT  
Type of meeting: Regular Monthly Conference Call

Attendees:

Jie Li (At Large)  
Paul Celmer (Eastern Region)  
Chuck Robbins (Eastern Region)  
Lisa Scott (Central Region)  
Laura Kolb (Central Region)  
Andrew Okun (Western Region, Chairman)  
Gordon Castanza (Western Region)  
Allan Abramson (President)  
Pauline Pohl (Secretary)

Absent:  
none

**1. Approval of April 10, 2011 minutes**

Lisa Scott made a motion to approve the minutes of the last regular monthly Board meeting from April 10, 2011. Laura Kolb seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**2. Call for additional agenda items and new business**

a. None

**3. President's Report**

**a. Discussion item: FY2012 Budget Status**

- i. Abramson asked the Board members if they have questions or comments on the proposed budget.
- ii. Castanza said he had requested information on the 60102 line item from FY 2011, because he doesn't want the same overspending to happen again next year. Abramson said the reason it is over budget is because the work she has been doing was supposed

to be done on the website, but the delay in that has caused the work to continue to have to be done manually.

- iii. Castanza said he had officially requested details on the spending with a due date of April 22, but he has yet to have the details. Castanza said that the overspending of 211% should not have continued without Board approval.
- iv. Abramson said as a volunteer organization, it is hard to meet deadlines like that. The work represented in line item 60102 is getting the mail from the PO Box, answering phone calls, and entering credit card data. Budget item 60450 is Karen Zimmerman, who does the membership database. 60640 is Marilyn's work to handle equipment.
- v. Lisa Scott said she agrees with Castanza that the Board should have been alerted as soon as the cost went over the budgeted amount.
- vi. Castanza said he thinks the Board should establish a policy limiting the ability of the president to spend more than is budgeted.
- vii. Robbins said he thinks Abramson should be given credit for reducing the budget overall and not be penalized for a single line item.
- viii. Castanza said we don't actually have numbers past April, so the spending may go higher.
- ix. Abramson said he doesn't expect any major expenditures before the end of the fiscal year.
- x. The budget item 60200 spending is way under the budget, because we haven't been billed for the website upgrade work yet. The work isn't complete, and if a bill is submitted, we would have to see evidence of the hours spent and the work done.
- xi. Okun asked which budget line item represents the Board conference calls. Abramson said it is 60021. Okun said he has been meaning to look for a less expensive option and he needed to know what number he has to beat. Abramson noted that the AGF also uses our conference number, so those hours should also be included in the calculations.

- xii.** Abramson said he meant to add to his president's report that we will need a new webmaster shortly.
- xiii.** Abramson said that the Congress and Redmond cup organizers are unhappy with the reduction in support for the Redmond Cup. Abramson told the organizers he would report their opinion to the Board and ask if they would like to reconsider.
- xiv.** Castanza said he would like to see the final budget before committing more money to the Redmond cup. Membership is plummeting and revenue is declining, so he doesn't want to increase commitments before finding out if we have the money. Abramson agreed that was a good idea.
- xv.** Abramson said the Masters budget had been cut to zero because the plan was to get sponsors. He thinks the AGA should continue to fund the tournament until sponsors are found.
- xvi.** Jie Li asked why there are two travel line items, 60328 and 60380 with no budget for 60380. Abramson said all travel expenses should be combined to 60328.
- xvii.** Abramson said there will be another Mind Games in 2012, and we should start putting money aside or finding sponsors if we want to send people and avoid a major cost that was incurred last time.
- xviii.** Scott said she wants to make sure the spending for the Mind Games doesn't go over the budget like it did last time. Abramson agreed.
- xix.** Jie Li asked why we budgeted \$2350 in line 60600 for equipment, but we only spent \$55 so far. Robbins said he billed \$500 and was paid the \$500 for equipment storage, but it must have been misclassified by the treasurer.
- xx.** Scott asked where the money is coming from sending new membership cards. Abramson said it's not much and it comes from the president's reserve.
- xxi.** Okun asked what's next for the budget. Abramson said he would like to get final numbers for 2011 before approving the new budget.

**xxii.** Scott asked that the Board be given firm numbers for the fiscal year ending May 30 before the next Board meeting. Abramson said he would try to get those numbers by June 15.

**b. Discussion item: Credit Card Launch choice**

- i.** Abramson said he and Scott have completely different views on issuing the credit card. He thinks the main motivation to the AGA is the \$50 that the AGA gets from each card. Scott thinks we should promote the card by offering a free membership for a year to encourage members to get one.
- ii.** Robbins said this is a generational issue. Young people always need to get something back for doing something. People Robbins' age who buy life memberships don't do it for the value, they do it to help the AGA.
- iii.** Scott said she knows there are 30 or 50 people who will get the card without the incentive, but she would like to see 100 or 200 people sign up which would only be likely if there is an incentive.
- iv.** Robbins said he thinks there are 50 people who will definitely do it, but we don't know that there are 100 people who would sign up if a free year of membership is offered.
- v.** Scott said she thinks some people who may let their memberships drop might get the card for a free year.
- vi.** Robbins said if a free year of membership is offered, life members will feel like they don't want to buy a card because they aren't getting the benefit others are getting. If the cards don't sell well initially, we could always offer a promotion later.
- vii.** Scott said she thinks people will make a decision the first time they hear about it, and would ignore a second announcement.
- viii.** Abramson said he doesn't like thinking about it in monetary terms, but if we give members a benefit it will reduce the benefit to the AGA.
- ix.** Jie Li suggested offering sustaining membership level to people paying for a full membership plus owning

the credit card. Sustaining membership level comes with automatic recognition in the yearbook.

- x. Robbins asked if we get any percentage of money spent on the card. Abramson said the AGA gets 1% back. Robbins suggested offering 0.5% off a Congress registration fee if it is paid with the card.
- xi. Okun asked if the other Board members have an opinion on which way to go.
- xii. Celmer said he tends to agree with Robbins and Abramson.
- xiii. Jie Li said he would like to offer the title of sustaining membership rather than full membership for the year. It gives credit for the \$50 without costing the AGA extra money. Abramson and Robbins liked Jie Li's idea.
- xiv. Kolb said she is concerned about losing membership revenue, but she likes Jie Li's idea. She noted that there is currently a promotion offering issues of Go World to members who join or renew. This promotion also doesn't help those who are life members. Robbins said he doesn't like that promotion either.
- xv. Abramson said it sounds like there is a modest plurality against giving memberships away. Jie Li's idea of offering sustaining memberships to people who buy the credit card was liked by everybody. Abramson will proceed with that plan.

**c. Information regarding Sam Zimmerman recognition**

- i. Sam and Karen Zimmerman have been doing the membership database for 20 years and they think it is time to let someone younger start. Justin has offered to take over on a temporary basis, since he is working on the website. Castanza has an idea for someone to work on it.
- ii. Abramson said the new position will be less work and it should be done by a volunteer and we will save casual labor expenses.

- iii. Abramson said the contribution from Sam Zimmerman because of his long time volunteering is incalculable, and he deserves to be recognized in some way at the Congress.

**d. Information item: Membership Promotion**

- i. As of Wednesday night the number of memberships under the promotion is 166. Most of the participants are getting 5 year memberships to get the most magazines.
- ii. Okun asked if we are keeping multiyear membership accounts as liabilities for future years. Abramson said the accounting is correct and the income is recognized in each year.

**4. Appointment of Treasurer, Recognition of outgoing treasurer**

- a. Okun said the Treasurer serves two year terms ending in June in odd number years, so it is time to get a new treasurer.
- b. Roy Schmidt's name has been mentioned for the job and he is willing to do the job. The start date would be September 1 so there is a three month transition period.
- c. Okun proposed that the Board offer its thanks and perhaps a gift to the current treasurer, Adam Bridges, in recognition of the work he has done over the past four or five years in a difficult and time consuming job. Abramson and Okun said they would consider what form the recognition should take.
- d. Robbins made a motion to appoint Roy Schmidt to a two year term as AGA treasurer. Castanza seconded the motion. The motion was approved with one abstention (Celmer).

**5. New Business**

- a. None

**6. Executive Session**

- a. Scott made a motion to go into executive session to discuss personnel matters.

b. Castanza said that according to the AGA bylaws passed in 2008 there are only three reasons to go into executive session: finances, personnel, or legal issues.

c. Castanza seconded the motion. The Board entered executive session at 9:23 PM EDT.

**7. Establish time and date of next meeting**

The next regular monthly Board meeting will be Wednesday, July 6, 2011 at 8:00 EDT.

**8. Adjourn**

Castanza made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Celmer seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 PM EDT.

Minutes submitted by Pauline Pohl, AGA Secretary