

Minutes

AGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, August 4, 2011 – 2:00 PM PDT

Santa Rosa Courtyard, UCSB, Santa Barbara CA

Meeting called to order by: Andrew Okun 2:08 p.m. PDT

Type of meeting: Annual Congress Meeting

Attendees:

Paul Celmer (Eastern Region)

Lisa Scott (Central Region)

Laura Kolb (Central Region)

Andrew Okun (Western Region, Chairman)

Gordon Castanza (Western Region)

Daniel Smith (Member Elect Central Region)

Allan Abramson (President)

Susanna Pfeffer (Note-taker)

Absent:

Chuck Robbins (Eastern Region)

Jie Li (At Large)

Guests:

Chris Kirschner (VP)

Andrew Jackson (VP)

Chris Garlock (VP)

Terry Benson (American Go Foundation President)

Mike Malveaux

Ke Lu

Paul Barchilon

Eric Jankowski

Todd Blatt

Les Lanphear

Winston Jen

Larry Gross

Fritz Balwit

Matt Mallory

None Redmond

Steve Colburn

Roy Lash

Mike Lash

1. Requests for new business:

Approval of minutes

[Abramson] TAP proposal

[Mike Lash] Discussion of better benefits/services for members (if have time)

2. Minutes from previous meeting, July 6, 2011. Castanza moved, Kolb seconded. Passed.

3. President's report. Item 1 – Virtual Office.

[Abramson] Reviewed budget looking for cost reduction. Administrative service in NYC. Number of hours servicing PO box now is 4-5/month - \$1200/year – the telephone does not ring, so we can make it online. We need to have #, but don't need to have it on webpage.

Virtual office option. Two companies – will maintain/check mail box, scan envelopes (plus the contents if requested), send scanned items electronically for review (hard copies if requested); Option #1 = \$15/month, option #2 = \$30/month. (In the case of option two, some key AGA people live near the company.)

The mail box options have street addresses, so can be used for bank accounts.

For legal correspondence, we have an official AGA PO Box; for day-to-day contact, all other correspondence, we can have another address. The legal PO Box has to be in New York or AGA would need to reincorporate

Option one, 4 person staff, no BBB complaints, less expensive; Option #2 is in Seattle, 20 person staff, no BBB complaints, more expensive plus per piece fees (if greater than =>20/mo)

[Castanza]: Prefer Earth Class Mail, option 2, don't mind \$30 per month (they have a longer track record, better response to economic conditions).

Group consensus: Earth Class Mail

4. President's Report Item 2 – Pro System

[Okun] Korea Baduk Association ambassador Kim Myung Wan 8p (who lives in Los Angeles) has proposed a system of American professional certification, which KBA will sponsor by helping to select new pros. American certified pros will have rights to play in pro tournaments in Korea.

[Abramson] KBA to provide \$10,000 to run face-to-face tournament – 5-7 days – prefer intensive, open but no conditions imposed – Kim Myung Wan 9p will referee to judge quality of players – in next 2-4 weeks Allan will consult with others in AGA including strong players before moving to more specific proposal.

[Okun]-Kim Myung Wan thinks our young players are in better position to start now than young Koreans were when their pro system was started. There is no prize money right now, but one has to start with certification. One to two to be named each year – KBA anticipates continuing to support financially in future years.

[Okun] The board should take supportive action at this meeting so Kim Myung Wan can report our decision.

[Abramson] We will try to keep venue costs low and help subsidize participants' costs.

[Mike (?Lash)]: Will there be regional qualifiers?

[Abramson] Not yet but the pro tournament will be open, so don't need qualifiers.

[Question] Can we use US Open?

[Okun] It should not be during congress, there is too much going on.

[Question] Will green card holders be eligible?

[Abramson] Probably not – We should restrict it to citizens to prevent influx of Asian players looking for easier certification

[Castanza] Tacoma Go Club will volunteer to hold first of these tournaments

[Kirschner] The Seattle Go Center may also bid on a regional qualifier.

[Colburn] Impact changes for Americans to go overseas for tournaments?

[Not sure but I believe someone answered it would not, since pros going overseas would do so on their own dime.]

[Not sure] Another idea for pro test is to attach it to go congress, making a 2-week congress.

[Celmer] Teaching/teaching history/interest in teaching as criteria? Should give back to AGA and community

[Abramson – is this correct. I didn't think you agreed.] agree, but there are implications. American/Canadian pros get \$2000 fee for congress – if we add 30 pros, breaks congress bank – Could we use community contribution as way to decide who gets pro fee? Needs more discussion – email Allan.

[Abramson] Canada and Mexico would be included – Mexico has recently shown inclination to participate more in North American events

Motion to instruct Allan to accept KBA offer and draft plan of action - Scott moves, Castanza seconds – passes unanimously.

5. [Okun] We received an offer of 80 boards, 15 sets of nice bowls for Congress from anonymous LA person, who wanted a receipt for tax purposes. If we couldn't, he wanted the amount of tax savings he would get otherwise, about \$1,500. Investigated donating to c3, but concluded that it would then be inappropriate to use for Congress. Instead, Okun bought them for \$1,500 and they now are being used for strong players in 2011 Congress – will AGA buy them from Okun? If not, no problem, can use them for Cotsen Tournament and other LA activities rather than future Congress, but Okun preferred AGA to have them – they would be good as strong player boards – and they could be shipped to NC for next year directly from Santa Barbara.

[Scott] Yes – Congress has World of Weiqi boards and these new boards, and that's all – no extra – Congress needs these boards (There are more World of Weiqi boards in Tacoma and other places (500 total) but the Lancaster boards don't get shipped)

[Kirschner] The expectation is that each Congress pays shipping 1 direction and storage for 1 year.

[Kolb] Do we need to approve separate \$1,500 item?

[Abramson] Yes \$1,500 to equipment budget – money from reserves. The board needs a motion to amend budget by \$1,500.

[Castanza] Reserves have been depleted over the years, Mind Sports Games and other items, small reserves compared to earlier years . Not sure money from reserves is good idea, rather re-budget other places.

[Abramson] Well over \$100,000 in unrestricted reserves. The surplus this year has made up previous deficits. We are optimistic about getting sponsorship this year and can also appeal to membership.

Kolb moves to amend budget to allow \$1,500 for boards; Scott seconds.

[Castanza]: Out of reserves or budget transfers?

[Abramson] Recommend out of reserves. Early to move things around in the budget, will see how things go and make adjustments. Castanza and Kolb move to amend the motion to clarify that the money will come from reserves. All in favor, except Okun abstains. Motion Passes.

6. –Zimmerman and Bridges.

[Abramson] Sam & Karen Zimmerman announced intent to phase out of handling membership database – Chris has prepared a trophy and we are considering further recognition, compensation or other tangible recognition. The board has already formally thanked them at last meeting.

Adam Bridges served four years as treasurer. Roy schmidt has agreed to take on position – transitioning now, position continues through September – board has suggested extending membership for as long as he was treasurer (4-5 year extension). Other options are being considered.

[Castanza]: How to recognize past presidents. A past presidents' dinner hosted yearly?

[Lash]: Why? Would have to do it for all past officers – [Benson agrees] – Don't establish precedent; a plaque or board is fine

[Okun] Treasurer position is different from other officer roles. Nothing to do with go, no reward except for pleasure of bookkeeping. Recognition of contribution is appropriate.

7. [Celmer] With surplus equipment, is it time to get back into equipment business?

[Lash] should work on getting back boards that have disappeared into clubs across the country – reestablish signing for equipment? – not opposed to equipment business, but

equipment has to come from somewhere, is expense – let's look at internal resources first.

[Okun] There is no single inventory of equipment – should have list, including what is where/has been loaned to whom.

[Abramson] When warehouse moved, good inventory was made – shouldn't be too difficult to make a full and current one – not enough to go back into business of shipping equipment to clubs – opposed – significant overhead costs –

[Celmer] Perhaps starter sets?

[Benson] Do we want to compete with vendors in providing full-sized equipment? AGA will have to order new equipment at some point – Chinese source for cheap sets, could make order 3000 instead of 1000 – but need to decide how to service chapters vs. schools vs. how to exist in relation to vendors

[Lash] World of Weiqi boards were free (special promotion)

[Okun] Would chapters be ok with the boards we have in LA?

[Scott] Yes – they just want boards to play on.

[Lash] Yes – more transportable. Capters also feel they don't get much out of membership

Castanza moves that we take 400 sets (World of Weiqi) at drop points throughout US, in storage and draw on them when chapters need cheap sets

[Scott] Disagrees. If we do that, then congress has no boards – all we have are the ones we are using for this congress

[Abramson]: Reluctant to get into that business – Does not agree that AGA should be responsible for providing equipment to chapters, especially when it would undercut vendors.

[Scott]. Spent four weeks visiting 30 clubs in 13 states last year – general consensus was: what do we get from AGA? Where can I get stuff? Why should my members join? Many people are trying to start/restart clubs, but need equipment – need help with that when membership is still small.

[Okun]: Make old business for next meeting?

[Castanza] Ok

[Scott] Give one board for becoming chapter? One board per five years as chapter?

8. Timeliness of agenda. Board members have been getting agenda sometime in 3-30 hours before meeting – need agenda earlier – tell Andy when deadline is and who should get notice (website? Among us?)

[Kirschner] Is that in bylaws?

[Okun] I don't think so.

[Benson] In the by-laws is two week notice for annual meeting

[Celmer]: 1 week?

[Scott] Earlier than 7 days, no one will be ready to discuss new business – publish agenda and chapters list same way as minutes?

[Abramson]: send notices to chapters?

[Lash] yes to chapters.

[Okun] So advance notice of agenda 7 days prior to meeting – proposed agenda Gordon moved, Lisa seconded – unanimous

9. Cataloguing of board actions & documents.

[Okun] Gordon suggested numbering system – year/date of action – formal book – 1+ officers going back and documenting past actions – get a volunteer?

[Gross] Do we have archive?

[Okun]: Minutes only.

Castanza volunteers, Abramson will help. Documenting policies still effective

[Abramson] – Easy to index by date, harder to organize by (date? topic?)

[Scott] Can we make it sortable in that way on website? Concerned with retrievability

[Castanza] Would use the Board Policy, BP, Administrative Regulation, AR, and Exhibits, E. cataloguing system I instituted with the proposed board policies & date - not to *supplant* but to *supplement* bylaws.

[Okun]: no action needed.

10. Go camp.

[Abramson] Latest news not good – reported loss of nearly \$4000 – about 15 participants when 20 was break even (how do 5 students make \$4000 difference? Needs investigation) - \$2000 to be split between AGF and AGA.

[Barchilon] When deciding whether to cancel camp at 14 students AGF had decided to cover \$1800.

[Abramson] The last 3-4 go camps have lost money – envisioned as break evens, but aren't. Some of the benefits – encouraging kids to get to know each other, have fun – happen at go congress – go camp as separate item not as urgently needed – several directions to go in, further discussion at AGF meeting – In response to Barchilon's argument, should no longer guarantee go camp – if there are camps or organizers who want to try holding camps, etc., ok –

but needs to be budgeted separately by congress or freestanding organizations – AGA will not back if there is a loss

[Scott] if there is a gain, it would go to whom? – organizers? – scholarships?

[Abramson] Make deadlines strict - if people haven't paid to attend by May/June, camp is cancelled.

[Benson] Scholarships have recently gone to kids who have participated in certain events and are need-based as determined by essay – lots of donations, but those are not enough

[Abramson] Further discussion at AGF meeting.

[Barchilon]: 2012 congress at site used for summer camps – could easily attach a camp to that event – informally: who thinks we should continue trying to organize camps?

[Okun] Yes but AGA should not underwrite.

[Scott] There is a good potential organizer for next year – if he is willing, then yes.

[Castanza]. Agree with Scott – previous go camps in Pacific Northwest – Jiang Mingjiu would come, and others – a way for kids to learn from practicing pros – that contact is important part of go camp especially if we are trying to get pros from this generation.

[Scott] More oversight, advertising – in favor of camps, but not in favor of AGA covering losses.

11. Taps proposal.

[Abramson] Thomas Hsiang (international VP) notes that prizes are getting bigger in international competitions – Mind Sports Games, etc. and wants AGA to tap prize money at 20%

[Abramson (please check)] should be floor under which we don't tap – irritating – floor should be ~\$2000 (or \$1000) – Thomas found out that for next mind games, European go federation will tap 50%. This has been accepted by European players and pros – Feng Yun wrote an e-mail very strongly against this – Mingjiu also strongly against (history of irritation between AGA and these two something to take into consideration) – Asian organizations tap, but there is precedent there. There are those strongly in favor and those strongly against – online survey to find out opinions?

[Benson] Is Feng Yun/Mingjiu's objection to tap or to 50%?

[Abramson] They are objecting to tap.

[Castanza] Asian organizations are funded by government – ours are not – their system is totally different and not necessarily a legitimate precedent for us to follow.

[Abramson] This is an informational item – continue at next meeting – Abramson will gather information and report to board.

12. [Lash]: Members & benefits – topic for review – thanks for taking lifetime members to lunch – has never before been a special benefit/appreciation for lifetime members – not expecting it, but AGA should expend human resources on strengthening benefits for paid members, particularly longterm/lifetime members – no good reason why one should join the AGA – need better answers – recurring issue.

[Scott]: New membership database allows for possibility of more chapter/member services that are not public.

[Blatt] Please put a picture on your database page.

[Abramson] Want to use database for tournament registration – players will register online, TD will pull list from database.

13. Date and time of next meeting:

A consensus was reached on having the next AGA Board meeting on Sunday, September 25th at 8:00pm (EDT)/5:00pm (PDT)

At 3:40pm – Scott moved to adjourn; seconded by? Passes unanimously.