

**Minutes**  
**AGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**Sunday, January 31, 2010 – 8:00 PM EST**

Meeting called to order by: Roy Schmidt at 8:10 PM EST  
Type of meeting: Regular Monthly Conference Call

**Attendees:**

Jie Li (At Large)  
Paul Celmer (Eastern Region)  
Chuck Robbins (Eastern Region)  
Roy Schmidt (Central Region) Chairman  
Gordon Castanza (Western Region)  
Andrew Okun (Western Region)  
Allan Abramson (President)  
Pauline Pohl (Secretary)

**Absent:**

Laura Kolb (Central Region) joined at 9:30 PM

**1. Approval of minutes**

Andrew Okun made a motion to accept the minutes from the December 13, 2009 Board meeting. Paul Celmer seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

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

Jie Li asked to discuss the merge of Fujitsu tournament and the North American Masters Tournament (NAMT).  
Abramson said he will want to talk about the cost of software development for our website.

### **3. President's report**

#### **a. Information item: World Pair Go status**

There will be a big tournament in China to celebrate 20 years of pair go. There is one pair from the U.S. who satisfy the continuous membership and 10-game requirements to qualify to compete for the AGA as of the deadline, and they will compete in a qualification tournament with two pairs from Canada for the opportunity to represent North America. Jie Li asked if any professionals asked to compete. Abramson said none had applied. Li said some pros might not have applied because they could not qualify under the 10-game rule. Abramson said the Board could vote to waive the requirements if they choose to do so. Li pointed out that the registration deadline probably also needs to be extended and a new announcement could be put in the E-journal if we waive the 10-games requirement to allow more competition. Okun asked if they are talking about only the ten-game rule or also waiving the continuous membership. Abramson said he was only talking about waiving the ten game rule. Okun said he would prefer publicizing it widely and waiving both rules to get maximum participation. Li asked if Andy was talking about waiving the rules for only professionals or both pros and amateurs. Okun said he would open it up to all competitors.

Okun made a motion to open the competition for the pair go tournament to all pairs regardless of membership lapses or having ten rated games in the past year. Celmer seconded the motion.

The vote was four in favor (Schmidt, Okun, Castanza, Celmer) one opposed (Robbins) and one abstention (Li). (Li abstained because he may want to compete.) The motion passed. The president will take action immediately to invite more competitors.

#### **b. Information item: Congress status**

- i. 2010 Karen Jordan and the college have signed the contract.
    - 1. All rooms are singles with a cost of more than \$900.
    - 2. Per previous discussions with the Board, Abramson intends to invite only one pro from each association rather than two. Special invitations for foreign pros are being eliminated. These actions dramatically reduce our Congress costs.
    - 3. The Board asked for a break-out of costs for different types of rooms at the Congress. Li asked if the \$900 was only for adults or both adults and youth. Abramson said it would be cheaper for the youth but the details were not available yet.
  
  - ii. 2011-Los Angeles planning is proceeding.
    - 1. Okun said he has eliminated U.C. Irvine
    - 2. There is an official U.C.L.A. go club, so we could get a discount there.
  
  - iii. 2012 Boston is planning a bid for 2012
  
  - iv. 2013 Birmingham, Alabama is considering a bid for this Congress
- c. **Information item: AGA-AGF donations**
- i. The AGF raised the question of whether we have been properly crediting donations to them. After a detailed investigation, Mary Laird established that \$2,616 was owed to the AGF and the money has been transferred.
  - ii. The web site has been updated with a direct link to the AGF site for donations, so there should be no more confusion.
- d. **Discussion item: Letter to sponsors**

Steve Colburn, Andy Okun, and Phil Waldron have collaborated to produce a standard follow-up letter to potential sponsors. Abramson said it's an excellent letter and people are already using it.

- e. **Discussion item: Pairing software lifetime memberships**
  - i. Discussed under new business

#### **4. Old Business**

None.

#### **5. New Business**

##### **a. Waiver of 10-game rule for USYGC**

The youth organizers have asked that the 10-game rule for international competition be waived for youth players in the USYGC tournament. Abramson informed the Board that he and Paul Barchilon had agreed on a two-tier structure for the USYGC. The first tier would be the regional face-to-face tournaments, which would have none of the international eligibility requirements. The second would be the final qualifying tournament of 16 or 32 or however many players, which would take place online, and in the absence of action by the board, would be subject to the 10-game rule.

Andy Okun made a motion waiving the 10-game rule for youth members competing in the qualifying tournaments for the USYGC. Celmer seconded the motion.

Robbins said he is against waiving the rule unless the youth is in their first year of membership. Robbins said we want to encourage tournament play. Schmidt said Barchilon only wants to waive the requirement for the world youth championship.

Young players competing with adults in other tournaments would have to meet the 10-game requirement. Jie Li said he thinks the Youth Go Championship is a promotional opportunity for go, and it is a good idea to open it up.

Robbins made a counter-motion to amend the motion so it only applies to youth members in their first year of membership. Castanza seconded the amendment. Okun did not accept the friendly amendment so it was voted on separately.

The vote on the amendment was two in favor, four opposed. It did not pass.

The Board then voted on the original motion by Okun that applies to all youth members. The vote was five in favor and one opposed (Robbins). The 10-game rule will be waived for all youth members wishing to compete in the USYCG.

## **b. Securing ChunLan Cup Invitation**

In the past, the APGA chose representatives to the ChunLan Cup. Abramson wrote to the organizers asking for the invitation to be sent to the AGA.

## **c. Hankuk Kiwon (Korean Baduk Association) rank certificates**

Okun said Mr. Kim Myung-wan 9P and the Hankuk Kiwon will begin issuing certificates in English for players from one Dan to 5-Dan at a cost of \$100 to \$500 increasing with rank. He has already issued certificates in Korean as prizes in tournaments. Okun said people like the certificates and seem to be motivated by them. Mr. Kim will determine the rank to be awarded after playing a game with the person and their ranking committee will sign the

documents. Celmer asked what Mr. Kim and the Hankuk Kiwon's actions have to do with the AGA. Okun said it is more an informational item than an AGA issue. Okun said these certificates differ from those that the AGA would issue, because it is not based on our ranking system. Schmidt asked if the Hankuk Kiwon, through Mr. Kim might be willing to donate some certificates as prizes at the US Go Congress. Okun said we can ask.

**d. AGA's rank certificates**

Abramson said when we get our new ranking system working, the process of awarding rank certificates will be automated.

**e. Fujitsu Qualifier and North American Masters tournaments**

Abramson said the idea for combining the two tournaments came from the strong players meeting at the Congress. Jie Li said he was at the meeting, but didn't get the idea that there was a consensus on the issue. Li said the Fujitsu has a more than 20-years history, and combining this tournament with the Masters tournament would lose a tradition. In addition, the Fujitsu qualifier has been held online for the last 5 years without costing the AGA money. Li also said the qualification requirements are different for the two tournaments, which would cause confusion. Schmidt said there could be problem if a non-qualified player knocks out a qualified player. Abramson said this is an issue we may want to poll the strong members about rather than make a Board decision. The Board agreed. Abramson said he will send a note to AGA members who are 5 Dan and up and report back to the Board with the results. Li said that the Fujitsu is in April, and choosing a representative in August the year before could be too

far ahead both in scheduling and getting the player in best shape.

Schmidt said relating to that issue, Feng Yun has sent a note objecting to the 10-game requirement applying to professionals. She said it is impossible for her to get ten rated games in any year. Okun said he would be happy to revisit the issue if more people object. Schmidt said there is not pressure to decide now, but we can seek more opinions and decide whether to reconsider the issue. Abramson suggested the Chairman reply to Feng Yun as a courtesy. Schmidt said he'd like to hear from more people before making a decision. Li said if asked, most people are against more restrictions as indicated in last year's poll. Abramson said it seems to be a policy question rather than one of collecting opinions. We have had a great deal of input and the Board should consider the question and decide: agree that the requirement is too restrictive and eliminate it, or agree that someone who wishes to represent the U.S. internationally should participate in the community by playing in two or more tournaments per year and retain the requirement. The Board agreed to consider the issue and discuss it again at the next meeting.

**f. Updating software**

Abramson said that the professional working on updating our website has asked for \$3000 to complete the job at a rate of \$20/hour for an estimated 150 hours. Chuck Robbins has been pleased with the quality of his work so far. Abramson is researching the scope of the work and will report to the Board if he needs to request a change to the budget.

**g. Discussion item: Pairing software lifetime memberships**

Abramson said he had announced the award of a lifetime membership to an individual who develops a pairing software program. A team of programmers approached Abramson asking if they could each get a lifetime membership. Celmer said if the product is good it is worth it, but he would suggest capping the number at five. Jie Li said if we offer lifetime memberships, would that mean we would get lifetime technical support from the developers as well? Abramson said the software could be modified by someone else if needed. Okun asked if there will be only one group or could there be more than one group competing. Abramson said there is a competition and multiple pairing programs could be accepted for use by the end of the year. He will ask for a reasonable amount of maintenance by the developers.

**h. Motion for Executive Session immediately following regular meeting adjournment**

Okun made a motion to have an executive session immediately following the conference call to discuss personnel issues. Robbins seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

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

The next monthly conference call will be February 28, 2010 at 8:00 EST.

**7. Adjourn**

The open meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM EST.

Minutes submitted by Pauline Pohl, AGA Secretary