

# DRAFT

General Assembly, 2006

Aug 18, 2006, 7PM

Minutes

Michael Lash directing

Minutes (Barbara Burrall)

Roy Laird – Brooklyn Go Club, Board Chairman

Michael Lash – President

Chris Kirschnr – Executive Vice President

Willard Haynes -- Davis/Sacramento

Gordon Castanza -- Tacoma

Peter Gousios -- Milford NH

Larry Gross -- Go for you

Duane Burns -- Cleveland

Wanda Metcalf – Mass Go Assoc

Trevor Morris -- Greater Washington

Arnold Eudell -- Baltimore

Sam Zimmerman – Lancaster

Paul Celmer – Triangle Go Club: Board, Eastern Region

Glenn Peters -- Portland Or

Chi-Wai (Bill) Fung -- CCC/Hartford

Harold Lloyd --

Mark Rubenstein – Evanston

David Whiteside – Ventura Co

Eric Jankowski – Ann Arbor

Matt Bengtson – Penn

Todd Heidenreich -- Rockville

John Hogan -- Seattle

Jean DeMaiffe -- Sunnyvale

Cynthia Gaty -- Corvallis

Allan Abramson -- Nova

Rick Mott – Princeton

Larry Russ – Hoboken

Terry Benson – President, American Go Foundation

Chuck Robbins – Feng Yun Go Club; Lancatser Go Club

Peter Nassar -- Philadelphia

Barbara Burrall -- San Francisco

Keith Arnold --

Philip Waldron – Canadian Go Association

***Approval of 2005 Assembly minutes: circulated and edited, posted on web***

No further questions or issue noted

Approved, seconded, no objections

## **Board of Directors report:**

Roy Laird:

A year of change, 4 new members since last year

Thanks to departing members Zhou, Bull, and Shaevel

Allan Abramson served as chairman took us from difficult time to time of harmony.

Many new developments on the way. Examples: meeting with Kansai Kiin: sponsorship from Life Sports promotion foundation: Plan to grow to 400 schools and 500 children; want to organize youth tour group to the US Go camps next year. Cordial discussions with Chinese Go Assoc developing. Nearing point to establish a procedure to certify amateur ranks. Good time to participate; see how to help out

Volunteer coordinator Kevin Purvis, has been searching for new ways additional people can contribute.

New Board:

Chuck Robbins: East

Gordon Castanza: West

Roy Schmidt: Midwest

## ***Report from the President***

Michael Lash

Pleased to thank the board and the productive relationship he has had for the past two years. Overview:

### *Administration*

Next president now needs only new password to have access to all the info/documents the president must utilize.

First executive vice pres created: Chris Kirschner

Has worked with Terry Benson to sort out confusion between AGA and AGF equipment issues

Go Camps: Clarification about resources and funding sources.

May need a full time-paid administrator to run the AGA in the future as the AGA expands/grows.

### *AGA finances:*

- More chapters now than ever 150+
- Chapter reps will be like magnets to draw in new members
- About 2200 members, about 15 per chapter.

### *International:*

- China hosted international amateur tournaments last year. AGA participated. Had business meetings with Chinese Go Assoc. Had a 6 story building for their association. They are a great model for us. He hopes that there will be a physical building to house the AGA some day.
- Long term association productive with Nihon Kiin is a model for relations with overseas Go associations.
- Korean Baduk Assoc: announced a tournament in Korea at the end of October (mainly for youth). Instead of sending invitations, will have open qualifiers. American pros can compete in this way.
- Olympic scene: IGF has recently joined General Assoc of Sports Federations. Plan for international Olympiad of board games following the regular Olympic games: Go Chess, Bridge, Draughts.

*New Staff:*

Craig Hutchinson has stepped down as AGA Archivist for health reasons after many years of service.. Now a replacement, David Doshay (Bay area, CA) has taken over the post. He has space for housing the archives/memorabilia/books. He plans to spend the next six months cataloging and will report upon what is present. It will then be more accessible.

Arnold Eudell is the new elections director and has conducted one successful election so far. Arnold will also serve as chapter services coordinator.

Kevin Purvis: Volunteer director. Trying to get more individuals involved in small projects. He has many ideas for including and interesting more members in this.

Key vacancy: Membership services: mostly an electronic service: answering questions, passing along information

*Comments:*

Zimmerman: sixteen new life members in this year

*Treasurers report:*

1. Operations ran at \$16,000 surplus
2. Budgets \$60-\$75,000 is the usual
3. No major unanticipated expenses
4. Additional non-operational funds received \$23,000 (\$15,000 life memberships)
5. Reduction in chapter reserves: Chapters are using their reserve money from prior congresses: We want these used to promote go
6. Accounting records have not been officially audited, but have been unofficially studied and look good. The board is exploring the need for an official audit.

7. Net cash outflow during 2006: Most is from USGC 2005: Page is not a profit/loss page: The 2005 congress is held in fiscal year 2006. June 1 begins the fiscal year and therefore we are now in the 2007 fiscal year. Therefore to get the true picture: look at the first page of balance sheet (after p 8) Total Go Congress 2005 profit was about \$30,000, though Benson points out that it is not reflected in the numbers. Difference is \$15,102 which should just be the congress AGA share. The Tacoma/Seattle clubs got approximately the same. It is also important to remember that there has been a change in accounting to the fiscal basis. The numbers do square up.
8. Ing contributions had typically been \$70,000-80,000. This has stopped for 2005 and 2006, though we spent money on events that were typically funded, using unspent reserves that were originally from Ing but we never spend. Those earmarked Ing reserve funds are not pretty much depleted – maybe \$20,000 left . We have been informed that we will likely receive \$51,000 immediately to retro-fund Ing events at this year's Go Congress. Benson: points out that some of the Ing funds were earmarked for general use as well as Ing events. There has not been a clearly established accounting of these uses. We are continuing to use Ing reserve funds to promote their events and procedures. It is now agreed that we will apply for specific grants for specific projects. Kirschner has submitted various proposal that would total over \$100,000 if funded. We cannot begin to execute future Ing-funded programs until we know the funds are there. Requests go through American Ing Goe and we don't know how that process will be finalized. He also sent in similar requests for next year. No feedback has been received. He did not build in a 10% management fee as is a typical corporation expectation.
9. Will be putting a request for combined Ing/ NAMT. It appears this is agreeable to AGA and Ing.
10. Paul: For this (2006 Congress) 222 sets of stones, and 222 vinyl boards/placemat like. Clocks-45: AGA bought 96 Excalibur clocks: Rick Mott pointed likes this clock – Paul Matthews collaborated with the manufacturer to put in go overtime functions. This is an unplanned expense and will come out of reserves.
11. A reminder to chapters that have received equipment from the AGA in the past, the expectation is that those sets will be made available if needed. This year chapters cooperated well and provided the organizers of the Congress with more than 200 boards.
12. AGA will not distribute equipment to chapters this year as in the past because of a change in donations. This may change if Ing Foundation donates equipment as in the past. AGF will continue to be in charge of dispensing the equipment needed for teaching, etc. AGA will no longer provide or sell equipment for these. We have an inventory of equip and

these will be available for AGA events. Those vinyl boards are adequate for teaching in schools.

### **SPECIAL REPORTS:**

*E JOURNAL: Chris Garlock: Acknowledges work of Chuck Robbins and Bill Cobb.*

Most covered in written report. Another yearbook. We're almost at 9000 for the E journal. Lists are being kept in really great shape. Content is expanding. Have posted many of the board 1 and 2 games from the Ing and the US Open, which were also broadcast live on the Internet.

Successful year. Many players (games and progress) are being followed by players on the Ejournal.

Abramson: Cost of hard copy yearbook. Objectively, this is about a quarter of the AGA budget. May consider eliminating this or adding this as a subscription cost. It should be discussed.

Robbins: People do look forward to it and it is valuable. The electronic part is more competition focused. The yearbook could be more club oriented.

John Hogan: Recommends continuing the hardcopy yearbook. Could consider putting it on bookstore shelves at some time.

Garlock: Recommends survey to determine what is really wanted by the membership.

Cynthia Gaty: Agrees with survey. May lose members if they do not get a yearbook at all or just get a pdf. file.

Garlock: There are 8000 online readers and 2000 members that get the yearbook. He is hoping that the Ejournal helps to increase membership. If the yearbook increases the membership, we should investigate this. Yearbook is a huge amount of work that is very time consuming. This is also time that doesn't go into other endeavors.

Laird: The physical yearbook is a good way to reach outside the current go community to others who might become interested in go. It is one of the few tangible ways that we exist. It makes us look good not only to members and supporters, but also to go VIPs, potential funding sources, etc.

### **International Go Federation**

Tom Hsiang represented the AGA at the recent IGF meeting. It gave us a voice and put us on the map in the discussion of rules/procedures. Thomas' report also updates on work to include go as an Olympic recognized competitive event, as chess and other intellectual games are, and to participate in an "Intellympics" to be held in conjunction with the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

## **NATIONAL YOUTH TOURNAMENT**

AGA will organize a new national youth tournament to select the junior and senior representatives to the World Youth tournament. This will replace the former method of selection related to the results of the Redmond Cup.

These proposed tournaments will be limited to US citizens as this is a requirement for the representation of the US at World Youth.

There will be 8 “ regional” qualifiers: Recommend 2 day (at least 5-6 round) tournament. Benson: Could use existing tournaments and this will likely make it more exciting for the kids as well as bring in more parents to participate in tournaments.

Lash: Will try for 3 east, 3 west, 2 central. Each will have a junior and senior winner. All attendants pay their own way to tournament. Each youth may only enter one qualifier in a particular year. Winners of the regional tournaments will get a \$400 discount (coupon) to go to Go Camp. All winners will be paid to attend the national tournament (may be played at different venues in different years) and will probably occur in May. Junior and senior winners of this national tournament will go to the World Youth.

## **CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP DRIVE: Contest**

Approved by board. Goal is to bring more new AGA members into your chapters. A budget is set: There are 3 regions and 4 chapters can win in each region. Two categories (10 or more members, and lower). The chapters with the largest increase in absolute member numbers and the highest percentage increase will get prizes. Aug 1, 2006 will be the baseline member number. Time will be about 6 months. Chapters must retain the existing members and add new ones for them to count. Each chapter winner will get \$600 good for use from US venter for chapter use. The balance of \$400 will be applied to the next year’s cost of Go congress for the club rep or for each member. New chapters can’t qualify for the percentage increase prize as they didn’t have numbers as of Aug 1, 2006. All memberships count including youth. Acquiring unaffiliated members counts.

We should not be counting a new member which transfers from one club to another.

Benson: proposed this rule, Seconded by many. Some disagreement voiced.

Expired AGA memberships also count if they renew.

Zimmerman: 50 chapters have no current full members. We also must have each individual member document with which club they are affiliated. It is needed to enforce this.

Lash: Requests further comments and further discussion about details.

**PAIR GO:** Abramson: would like regional or at least two pair go tournaments per year. Pandanet has a server that allows pair go play. Encourage exploration of the pair go. URL can be found on our AGA home page ([usgo.org](http://usgo.org)). On the pair go page there will be a link to the software. Have received \$824 from Japan Pair Go

Assoc for prizes, etc. This is not guaranteed every year, but we may apply for funds from them for trophies, prizes, etc.

**SELECTION PROCEDURE FOR INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS:**

(Pro/Am): Abramson will send out further questions to see how strong players and pros will react and what suggestions they may have. Heated further discussion expected.

**LIMITED MEMBERSHIPS:** Should it continue? If so, what will be the voting and other rights.

Rick Mott: Extensive discussion in the past, meetings at the Congress to continue discussion. Nearly one third of our memberships disappear every year. Limited memberships have been available for nearly 30 years. It was created when the quarterly journals used almost all the budget and this made people who were not interested in the journals, including those who did not read English, to feel that they were paying the full cost for not much return. Now publication costs are split among the Yearbook, the E-Journal and the web site.

Additional arguments expressed by many(pro and con).

- Most of the people that are able to come to the Congress don't have a problem with \$30. Those that may have a problem are less represented and it may be a significant factor for some, so their views may not be adequately represented in this discussion.
- In 2002 bylaws changed: only full members given voting rights after this. May not be fair as youth membership can vote. However, full members may feel that giving a full vote with limited membership is not fair to them. If reduced cost is considered an introductory membership with full benefits (yearbook and voting), then that will be the usual way for people to start. This will be a huge loss of revenue for the AGA. The loss of revenue will be especially large in that about one half of members that join will not renew within the first two years. Therefore, we do not have a problem with getting new members (about 500 per year or 25%), but a problem with keeping members renewing.
- There should be an incentive for chapter reps to encourage people to join at full membership and if reduced-cost members receive both printed materials as well as full chapter voting rights, there would be no incentive.
- Giving voting rights is not much anyway for an individual because voting weight is only one vote per 10 members.
- Giving 50% weight to reduced-cost voting would be one possibility, but may be difficult to track.

Compromise proposed by Mott committee:

1. Re-name to "Chapter Builder" membership, must affiliate with a chapter and do count 100% in chapter voting weight.
2. Time limit two years unless special circumstances: chapter representatives can request extension.

3. Still require two full members for the chapter to vote.
4. Current limited members may become “Chapter Builders” for the same period as new members.
5. Consider giving these a one-time yearbook.
6. One time playing fee retained but raised to \$10.

Additional comments on this proposed compromise:

Haynes: A different way to approach: Members, everyone is a member with all privileges, but different rates. General, youth, chapter builder.

Gousios: Since the AGA is a federation of chapters: need incentive to promote full rate payment. It would be more incentive to the chapter rep to push them to go to full rate.

Jankowski: In terms of work of tournament director would recommend one membership privilege to decrease confusion.

Lash: Could have just Youth and Full. Hardship rates could be negotiated through their chapter rep.

Benson: Asian audience that does not care about English yearbook. Lower level membership was created for these members (as well as for those with economic problems) as they may not see how membership is useful to them at a higher level. Additional bylaw requirements include: Limited members can't be officers and can't go to international tournaments.

Abramson: Doesn't like Chapter Builder name. He thinks this is just “Introductory membership.” Limit this to 1-2 years. Can still attract new people and it gives the chapter a chance to “hook them.”

Hogan: Can't call it “introductory” as all would join as that and be a huge revenue loss. Also, People will often buy it when offered online. Therefore, should only allow full membership registration on line. Chapters should sell “Chapter Builder” memberships.

Lash: Currently: 2002 total members and 269 limited

Abramson: Wants to eliminate the “day fee.” Have the introductory membership.

Haynes: Of the limited members (359) 35% are 2 dan or stronger, 75% are 12K or stronger. They are not new members. They have been limited members for years.

Many: felt that it was desirable to attract more of their local Asian population. Several people gave evidence that the lack of attracting this group has nothing to do with the presence of a lower cost membership. (Hogan brought up that the Seattle Go Center has many Korean community players that pay \$5 per day to play at the Go Center. Yet few of these have actually joined the AGA). Many participants feel that other ways should be attempted to attract these players to the AGA. Others reiterated that the problem is not as much attracting members, but keeping them.

It was moved and seconded to vote on the Proposed questions for the Assembly concerning Reduced-cost Membership.

1. Should the AGA retain the Limited membership category (\$15, no yearbook, no time limit)? Vote taken: 32 yes, 58 no

2. Should the AGA retain a reduced-cost adult membership category?

Vote taken: 49 yes, 41 no

3. Should the reduced-rate be time-limited to two years?

Vote taken: Overwhelming yes

4. Should it be extendable indefinitely for economic hardship, based upon approval of their chapter representative?

Vote taken: Overwhelming yes

5. In the case of a) new reduced-cost or b) extended reduced-cost for economic hardship, should the annual yearbook be included?

Vote: Overwhelming yes on both votes

6. Reduced-rate membership may only be sold at tournaments or through tournaments or chapters (exclude online reduced-rate memberships)

Vote: Overwhelming yes

7. Should Reduced-Cost members count in a chapter's voting weight?

Vote: Yes 58, carries

8. Should reduced-cost members count at 100%?

Vote: Yes 41, No 37

9. Should the one-time non-member tournament fee be retained?

After a lively discussion by Zimmerman, Arnold, and others, Abramson moved to table the discussion and this was enthusiastically passed by a large majority.

10. Should the one-time tournament fee be raised to \$10?

Vote: Yes carries

## **GO CONGRESS 2007**

Peter Nassar, Sam Zimmerman, Chuck Robbins will host the next Go Congress in Millersville University, Millersville, PA (Moved, seconded, overwhelming yes)

Sat, July 28- Sat, Aug 4, 2007

Registrar: Sam Zimmerman

US Open: Duane Burns

Pro Coord: Marilyn Campbell

Tentative costs:

Adult reg fee \$225

Under 18 reg fee \$125

Under 22 reg fee \$175

Non-player reg fee \$75

Meals \$225

Double occupant room \$255

Air conditioning in all rooms, campus is dry, wheelchair access excellent

Banquet \$30

Will consider reduced rate for seniors (further inquiries will be made)

Cafeteria is more like a food court, not a one menu line

Internet access excellent on campus, unclear if available in dorm rooms