

**USA VOLLEYBALL  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OCTOBER 13, 2021  
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO  
ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**Presiding:** David Gentile

**Directors Present:** Sara Hughes, Brent Rasmussen, Nicky Nieves, Penny Lucas-White, CiCi Rojas, David Eldridge, Elizabeth King, Kawika Shoji, Cassidy Lichtman, Jenny McGhee, Dain Blanton, Steve Kenyon, Dave Peixoto, Donna Donaghy, Bob Baker, Tri Bourne (arrived after roll call)

**Directors Absent:** Steve Bishop

**Treasurer:** George Thompson

**Recorder:** Suzanne Crespo, Recording Secretary and Legal Counsel

**Staff Present:** Jamie Davis, Chris Vadala, Rachael Stafford

**NOTE:** Information is reported according to topic in order of placement on the agenda and not necessarily in the chronological order of discussion.

**I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS**

- A. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum.** The meeting was called to order by Mr. Gentile at 1:08 p.m. Roll was taken, and a quorum was declared.
- B.** Mr. Gentile asked for a moment of appreciation for the players, staff, and coaches for their performance at the Olympics and Paralympics.
- C. Conflict of Interest.** Mr. Gentile asked if any Board members had a conflict of interest to declare at this time. None raised.

**II. BOARD ADMINISTRATION**

- A. Approval of minutes.** Mr. Gentile stated, and Ms. Stafford confirmed, that the June 2021 Minutes were approved electronically.
- B. Approval of Agenda.** **Motion #1: To approve the agenda. Made by Mr. Peixoto, seconded by Mr. Baker, motion approved.**

**III. BOARD CHAIR REPORT**

- A. Results of electronic voting between meetings.** Mr. Gentile confirmed there were no electronic votes since the last meeting to report.
- B. Chair activities – verbal report.** Mr. Gentile stated that he has sent three updates to the USAV Board in the middle of each month. Mr. Gentile has been very busy working on a host of topics. There are a few significant topics today. One is the changes to the Bylaws; the Board is going to be asked to approve those. The Personnel Committee will report in the executive session. And the Board will hear about the regions performance standards that Mr. Baker is going to provide.

## **V. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT**

Mr. Davis stated that he uploaded the CEO report last Wednesday for the Board to review. He discussed the Tokyo Olympics. USAV is very excited about the team's success. This was the first time any country has won gold in all three disciplines. Mr. Davis also discussed the Covid situation in Tokyo. It was very difficult on everyone. On the way over, Taylor Crabb tested negative for Covid and then positive twice, and it was ruled he could not compete, so Tri Bourne stepped up to compete as Jake Gibb's partner. Mr. Gibb and two other athletes had to isolate because they were considered close contacts with the Mr. Crabb and were only allowed out for one hour a day. Fortunately, there were no issues with Covid on the indoor side at the Olympics. One assistant coach tested positive but then got a negative test. On the women's indoor team, an assistant coach was deemed a close contact while in Tokyo and was going to have to quarantine, but Mr. Davis was able to work with FIVB and the IOC to get the coach released with restrictions.

The women's sitting team had the most challenges. They had two players test positive who were unable to compete. The entire team was deemed "close contact" and then had to quarantine for 14 days in the U.S. before leaving for Tokyo. Most of the team landed in Tokyo either two days or the night before their first match after not really being able to practice at all. Everyone is really proud of them.

Mr. Davis provided an update on USA Volleyball's DEI initiatives. In 2019, USAV made a \$400,000 grant to the SIAC and six HBCUs to start six D2 men's volleyball programs at HBCUs. The money was paid into escrow and released as the schools and conference met different milestones. That program was interrupted by Covid, but now \$209,000 has been released so far to the schools, and there will be a conference this winter and interconference play. Some of these teams will also play outside of the conference. From April 21-23 will be the SAIC men's volleyball conference championships in South Carolina. USAV is very excited to see play start and to have six new teams at the D2 level.

Mr. Davis discussed transgender issues. He believes this will be the largest issue that USAV and amateur sports will face over the next five years. USAV has partnered with an outside group who specialize in this to help develop transgender policies. For international rules, USA Volleyball will follow the FIVB rules. For the rest of USAV competition, USA Volleyball is working with the outside group to continue to formulate USAV's policy.

Mr. Davis provided an update on training centers. He explained that the Board had determined it was no longer necessary to have a unified training center, and updated the Board on USAV's leases and options for beach, sitting, and indoor.

Mr. Davis updated the board that a month ago, the USOPC mandated vaccines for all employees, contractors, and athletes, as well as anyone wanting to enter an OPTC, including athletes, staff, and coaches. Mr. Davis has discussed this with other NGBs. Most NGBs are mandating vaccines for all athlete-facing individuals. Beach championships are coming up in Thailand in November. They are requiring vaccines. Individuals who are not vaccinated must quarantine. USAV determined that quarantining does not make sense, so for those teams, at least, USAV is requiring that athletes be vaccinated. USAV will continue to monitor the situation. The Board discussed other NGBs' approaches to vaccines.

## **V. AUDIT, FINANCE & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Thompson sent a report out last quarter. On July 12, 2021, the Audit, Finance and Budget Committee met and then sent out a dashboard outlining USAV's financials to the Board.

The Committee is meeting again on October 22, 2021 and financial reports will come out on November 1, 2021. Mr. Thompson reported that Beacon Point has been exceeding expectations. Mr. Thompson had a meeting with the Chief Investment Officer and other individuals at Beacon. It also turned into a celebration of USAV's success in Tokyo. Beacon outlined in detail how they manage USAV's portfolio.

Mr. Thompson announced that Steve Bishop has been added to the Committee.

## **VI. NOMINATING COMMITTEE – WRITTEN REPORT**

Mr. Gentile stated that a written report was distributed to the Board. Elections are coming up. One of the Committee's independent members stepped down, so they will be in search of the next person.

## **VII. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Mr. Gentile stated that this topic will be addressed in executive session.

## **VIII. ATHLETE REPORTS**

### **A. Indoor Athlete report (Kawika Shoji, Cassidy Lichtman)**

Ms. Lichtman said that the women are very excited for their first gold medal in program history. Many athletes are now back overseas starting their club seasons. The biggest thing will be getting everything restarted for the three years leading into the next Olympics.

Mr. Kawika discussed the men's indoor result at the Olympics. The men's indoor was a heartbreak for the U.S. but he is proud of the team, staff, organization, and everyone behind them. It was an incredibly stressful summer for athletes with testing every single day. To push through was a special experience.

Ms. Lichtman added that NCVP has been a good program for bringing up the next generation of players.

**B. Sitting Athlete report (Brent Rasmussen, Nickie Nieves)**

Mr. Rasmussen updated the Board that there is not much to report and the athletes are getting back to training.

Ms. Nieves updated the Board that dealing with Covid was very stressful, including with athletes and staff testing positive, some right before they were supposed to leave for Tokyo. This quad was very tough, but they were happy to win gold. Now they are gearing up for the next things.

**C. Beach Athlete report (Sara Hughes, Tri Bourne)**

Ms. Hughes updated the Board that April and Alex won gold on the women's side for beach. Some teams are in now in the off-season, some will end their season in November. There will be a lot of potential partner switches and new teams on the horizon.

Mr. Bourne updated that Board that World Tour Finals just took place. The U.S. men took third, fifth, and seventh. That was Jake Gibb's last international match. He is retired now. Phil Dalhausser is also retiring. Taylor Sanders is coming over to beach from indoor to play with Taylor Crabb.

**D. USOPC AAC report (Eric Duda)**

Mr. Duda told the Board that he would get a written report from Katie Holloway to be distributed to the Board. Most of what was covered in the last meeting was the athlete representation strategy that will be implemented.

**IX. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**A. By-law edits/changes - Approval (4) – Andy Reiting**

Mr. Reiting explained that in TEAMS, there is section for Bylaws being referenced in this discussion. Since the last Board meeting, the Governance Committee has had multiple calls regarding changing the Bylaws with respect to athlete representation. The Committee is also going to review the pros and cons of adding an executive committee, but for now, the first step is adding athlete representation. Each assembly will elect an administrative council to help handle operations. There will also be one-third athlete representation on the administrative councils. Individuals will only be allowed to serve on one assembly at a time.

Mr. Reiting then provided a brief overview of the Bylaw changes for the action item of approving the changes to the USAV Bylaws. Article 8 will be revised so that all standing committees and assemblies will have 33% international athletes, with at least half being 10 Year Athletes, and the rest being 10 Year+ Athletes. David Patterson from the USOPC has been advising on the changes. Mr. Rasmussen asked if Mr. Patterson has approved of the changes and

if what is proposed meets what USAV is trying to accomplish. Mr. Gentile said the changes have not been sent to Mr. Patterson but it is not necessary step. Mr. Baker stated that this is what USAV proposed in conversation with Mr. Patterson, with weighted voting, and that Mr. Patterson says this will be a leading practice and he is on board with it.

Mr. Reitingner noted that one committee is a little different than the others, and that is the Personnel Committee. That committee can have three to five members, as opposed to a set number. If USAV cannot find enough athletes, then one athlete will get one-third of the voting rights. The biggest concern from Mr. Patterson was that athletes always have one-third voting power. For the Governance and Nominating Committees, members will be added.

Assemblies will include up to five international athletes, with at least half being 10 Year and the rest 10 Year+ Athletes. Every structure, all the way down, has one-third voting power for athletes, no matter how many athlete representatives there are. It is being determined how to populate these positions.

Mr. Gentile noted that it is important that the voting block of athletes is one-third of the total block, and this will bring USAV in line with USOPC requirements. Mr. Reitingner noted that the Bylaw changes added definitions of 10 Year and 10 Year+ Athletes. Ms. Lichtman noted that the definitions were expanded to include other international events. She explained that the challenge is going to be filling the athlete representative spots. For example, the RVA would otherwise need 20 athletes, so that is why USAV is using three to five with a weighted vote. Mr. Baker commented that quorums will be based on individuals, not voting power.

Mr. Davis asked if Beach World Tour events are included for 10 Year and 10 Year+ Athletes. Mr. Reitingner said it is possible but would require USOPC approval. Mr. Peixoto suggested that Mr. Duda take this recommendation to the AAC. Mr. Davis noted this would expand the pool of potential beach athletes.

Mr. Reitingner added that there has been discussion about expanding the list of events, if the AAC wants to propose any additional events. Mr. Davis commented that this whole topic is about expanding athlete representation. Mr. Bourne suggested that the top two tiers of the Challenger series should count. Mr. Reitingner added that USAV should check about adding older competitions. The Board discussed other events to add to the list. Ms. Lichtman added that World Cup should count as well. Mr. Reitingner said that the Committee would work with Mr. Duda to talk to athletes and the AAC and then add to the list.

Mr. Gentile stated that additions will be made, but that the Board also needs to approve the list today. Mr. Rasmussen asked if 10 Year+ is a standard term. Mr. Davis confirmed that it is.

**Motion #2: The Committee recommends that the Board approve needed bylaw changes regarding athlete representation to be in compliance. Motion carries unanimously.**

## **B. Next Steps on Athlete Representation Process**

Mr. Gentile stated that USAV really needs to make it a priority and spend time on getting athletes involved. There needs to be a process of identifying athletes to place on committees. Mr. Duda has been working on this, as well as Mr. Davis quite a bit.

Mr. Reitingger explained that at the Board level, the process should be relatively easy. The Board can do an electronic vote to add the athlete representatives. At the assembly level, this will be a big task. USAV needs to provide a list of who the eligible people are, and include the International Athletes Assembly in the process. Other assembly chairs would be happy to help. Current athletes on the Board might know who would have time to serve. It is going to be up to committee chairs to make it worth the athletes' time.

Mr. Davis said that he and Mr. Gentile had asked Cecile Reynaud if she would help in compiling a list. There is now a 10 Year Athlete roster, and Ms. Reynaud has been working with Mr. Vadala on the 10 Year+ Athlete list. Mr. Davis mentioned to the RVA that USAV needs their help and will tell them which athletes they have in their regions and ask them to please reach out.

Mr. Duda noted that he does not have access to the athlete list, but also does not think it is viable for this to be on the IAAC's plate.

Mr. Vadala added that they have identified 630-640 athletes. They are good on 10 Year Athletes. The first step on 10 Year+ Athletes is doing the research to identify individuals and find their contact information. This is a weekly ongoing project.

Mr. Gentile suggested that he and Mr. Davis sit down and discuss a framework to identify athletes to be in compliance by the end of the year. It is something they can work on with Mr. Duda, Mr. Vadala, and other. Mr. Rasmussen added that it might be helpful to add someone from the Foundation to help with the list as well.

## **X. ASSEMBLY & CONSTITUENT REPORTS (15 minutes)**

### **A. Junior Assembly Report**

Mr. Gentile stated that there is nothing to report.

### **B. RVA Assembly Report**

Mr. Reitingger updated the Board on the RVA Assembly. He sent the Board a report yesterday, they just finished meeting on Sunday. The report is in TEAMS. There are some insurance challenges with increased cost of insurance.

### **C. Beach Assembly Report**

Mr. Gentile told the Board that a representative is not here to report but there is a written report in TEAMS.

### **D. International Athletes Assembly Report**

Mr. Gentile noted that Katie Holloway was not on the line to provide an update, but that there has been a significant emphasis on athlete representation and how to make that happen.

#### **E. DE & I Committee –Cassidy Lichtman**

Ms. Lichtman updated the Board that USAV's DEI strategic plan is due to the USOPC in November. The USAV staff is taking the lead, and the Committee will convene to review it. There are some DEI training opportunities coming up. By the next Board meeting, the Board will be able to look over the DEI strategic plan.

#### **F. Officials Assembly Report**

Mr. Gentile told the Board that there is a written report in TEAMS.

### **XI. REGION PERFORMANCE STANDARDS – Bob Baker**

Mr. Gentile introduced the topic and explained that the objective of region performance standards was to try to identify a way for regions to improve service overall or have a mechanism for a higher level of compliance.

Mr. Baker updated the Board that the idea is that USAV would have standards for regions, similar to how the USOPC now audits NGBs. The goal is to make USAV a high-performing organization, with consistency across the country. The RVA standards were developed from USAV's requirements for RVA bylaws in addition to standards from the USOPC, working with the RVAA Compliance Committee. RVAs can meet or exceed the standards. The program is not punitive; it is meant to advance organizational standards. RVAs that have difficulty meeting the standards due to resources or staff will be provided with assistance. The first round of regional audits will take four to five months, starting in November with 10 RVAs. Every region will be audited once per quad.

Ms. Lichtman asked if RVAs can ask for help before they are audited. Mr. Baker answered yes. Ms. Lichtman asked how many RVAs Mr. Baker believes are currently in compliance. Mr. Baker answered that he believes at least 30 regions have everything that's required. Mr. Gentile asked if it is going to be encouraged that everyone start working to meet the expectations. Mr. Baker explained that a few regions have asked, and that this will be done through the RVAA. Mr. Reitingger added that 10 regions have already started the audit process. The conversation during RVAA meeting was about what the standards are and that RVAs should start working on this now. The purpose of the RVAA is to identify issues and help each other out.

Mr. Gentile suggested that an indirect oversight role of this program, for the Board, is appropriate. Mr. Baker agreed and said the Board will be involved if needed. The RVAA will report to the Board every year. Mr. Reitingger commented that these standards make us better and everyone agrees. He further noted that there is a remedy in the Bylaws if a region were to refuse to comply. Mr. Baker added that there is also an intermediate level to enforce the standards, short of de-certifying an RVA.

### **XII. UPDATE ON VOLLEYBALL HALL OF FAME – Steve Bishop**

Mr. Gentile reminded the Board that the Hall of Fame is this Friday.

Mr. Peixoto stated that everything looks good for the event. It is the first one in a while. Seven of the people who were nominated are attending.

### **XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Gentile stated that he will send the Board the dates of the next meeting, and that December 7, 2021 at 11 a.m. CT is the next Board meeting. In that meeting, the Board will be reviewing and approving budget that Mr. Thompson and the Audit, Finance and Budget Committee are putting together. The following Board meeting is January 26, 2022 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. CT.

### **XIV. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Gentile asked if anyone had any announcements. There were no announcements.

**Motion #3: Mr. Eldridge moved to go into executive session, Ms. Lichtman seconded. Approved.**

The Board convened to executive session at 2:35 pm MT.

### **IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

### **X. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn, seconded, approved.