

**Minutes of the USHA Annual Winter Board Meeting, Tucson, AZ
Saturday, January 23, 2016**

Attending were: President Mike Steele, Vice President LeaAnn Martin, Treasurer Steve Birrell, board members Tom Sove, Carl Porter, William Polanco, Jeff Wall, Tom Martinez, John Robles, Bill Kelly, Steve Johnson, Terry Nett, Ken Starcher, and Alethia Mendez. Also present were USHA staff Matt Krueger and Vern Roberts. Absent were: Steve Dykes and Jim Ward. It was noted that Mendez had Dykes' proxy and Steele had Ward's.

President Steele called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

The first order of business was to amend the minutes from the June, 2015, meeting. **Pearse moved to amend the June minutes to read the percentage of ball sales proceeds be increased 5 percent to 25% of total sales. Mendez seconded. Motion passed 17-0.**

Steele called for the approval of the amended June, 2015, Board Meeting Minutes from Fountain Valley, CA, and otherwise as posted on the USHA website. **Mendez moved to accept amended minutes, Nett seconded. Amended Minutes passed 17-0.**

Steele called for candidates for officers' elections. The candidates for President were: LeaAnn Martin and Rob Pearse; for Vice President: John Robles, LeaAnn Martin, and Rob Pearse; for Treasurer: Steve Birrell; and for Secretary: Tom Sove and Steve Dykes.

The Board decisions since the last meeting, including approving the Hall of Fame Committee Recommendations of Anna Christoff, Sheila Maroschick, Sy Alexander, Marty Alexander, and Harry Goldstein and the suspension of by law 16 for two regional elections.

President's Report: Making his final report, Steele addressed each member directly and thanked them specifically for their service to handball. Steele spoke about his introduction to the board and then asked for unity and support for the new officers. Steele addressed fundraising goals set in 2015 as well as improving handball gear and new products for our members. Steele suggested the board co-host at least one event each year with the WPH. Steele asked that we focus our attention on USHA membership and customer service to our current and future members. Steele suggested we work on Crowdfunding projects and the creation of a task force to determine the best handball projects. This will be a task force reporting to Funding and Revenue.

Treasurer's Report: Birrell was happy to report that the organization finished the year in the black in all departments. Total assets were also up. Donations were up in all categories and the operations fund was positive for the first time since 2011 thanks to increases in memberships and balls sales. The Endowed Legacy Fund had two contributions that resulted in a \$70,000 increase. There was also a resulting increase in the contingency fund, due to income in the operating and promotions accounts. Birrell proposed that income in promotions be split out from operations to build a contingency fund for Worlds' events every three years. After all that good news, Birrell presented a draft budget that needed an additional \$17,000 in income to balance.

Game Committee: Sove presented seven rule changes in the rule book that were simple edits and did not result in a material change of any rule. The committee also looked at the proposed Collegiate Mission Statement prepared by the Collegiate Committee and decided it would like to refine it and align it with typical mission statement formats; to simplify it and make it more succinct. A conference call will

be arranged with the Collegiate Committee to achieve these revisions. The Game Committee representatives on this call will be Martin, Nett, and Steele. The results of this collaboration will then come back to Game for presentation to the whole USHA Board for ratification. This will allow for approval in time for use at this year's collegiate tournament in Minneapolis.

The annual review of the Red or White 21 ball for use in the Women's Open events at our 1-, 3- and 4-wall nationals was discussed with Sove noting nothing has changed in the past few years since we temporarily allowed the Red 21 to be the ball of choice for Women's open events. Thus, he'd like a motion to make the current protocol permanent until players request a review or change. Martin stated that she supported players using the ball they want; however, she was concerned that it seems to assume that the White Label ball is for lower skilled or new players. Mendez stated that she uses the Red 21 simply because it's the ball that the people she plays with use.

Martinez moved to make the Red 21 the official ball for Women's Open events at the USHA Nationals. Nett seconded. Motion passed 11-1-4.

Sove described infractions reported to the committee that took place in 2015. Two infractions were filed involving improper and abusive behavior during the big ball 1-wall nationals. Both players were given stern warnings. A third infraction was filed after the small ball 1-wall nationals, involving improper and abusive behavior by a repeat offender. This player was given certain suspensions.

First Ace

Martin reported the 2016 grant recommendations from the First Ace Committee. She noted how we're moving forward in the future by getting better accountability and more detailed reports. The committee will develop a template for the year-end report. Martin discussed making First Ace more visible in the magazine as well as making the First Ace Campaign more visible throughout the handball community. Several board members noted it might be time to consider rebranding and/or a name change.

Sove moved to accept the recommendations of the Committee for the 2016 First Ace Grants. Birrell seconded. The motion passed 17-0.

Crowd-funding Discussion

Birrell and others described Crowdfunding successes and he will move forward researching options and different websites. Brainstorming sessions for Crowdfunding initiatives will be presented in a report Birrell will deliver no later than March 1. There will be a follow-up conference call on March 7. The board members who volunteered to pursue this initiative include Birrell, Wall, Mendez, Johnson, and Martin.

Investment / Endowment

Wall outlined the various funds and their performance in 2015 as well as the change in investments. Two estates made contributions to the Endowed Legacy Fund over the past year.

Funding / Revenue

There were various recommendations made for increasing funding and revenue, along with increasing the cost of memberships and/or balls but discussion was tabled until the budget finalization.

The board broke for lunch 12:00 p.m.

Vice-President Martin called meeting to order at 1:08 p.m.

Collegiate Report

Sove presented the US Handball Collegiate Program Manual, pointing out various highpoints. He also discussed the Collegiate Committee's progress report, again pointing out various highpoints.

One-Wall Report

Mendez and Polanco reported on the One-Wall Committee's efforts to run the Big Ball Nationals, as well as host a dinner to honor the game's best players and contributors while raising money. There was a general discussion on the game's growing popularity on the international scene, too.

Promotion Committee

Pearse reviewed the potential sites for USHA National events through the next two years.

Martinez and Mendez suggested a Big Ball One-Wall Exhibition at the Three-Wall Nationals in Toledo. There was further discussion about an East Coast vs. West Coast competition with Big Ball 3-Wall and Big Ball 1-Wall. A task force lead by Martinez will move forward with the idea.

Sove presented the Awards Task Force report. The Task Force will run a cycle from January to January and it requests help from regional board members yearly in nominating good candidates for the three awards. Sove then gave the Task Force's recommendations for Coach, Volunteer and Organization of the Year.

Sove moved that the board approve the recommendations from the sub-committee for the following 2015 awards: Ozzie Burke as Coach of the Year, and John Stoffel as Volunteer of the Year. Wall seconded. Motion passed 17-0.

Johnson noted how he became involved in hosting this year's Four-Wall Nationals at Life Time Fitness. Johnson outlined this year's plan for fundraising since one of the problems in hosting is raising the funds for hospitality.

Hall of Fame

Hall of Fame chair Mike Dau had asked for board guidance on how to recognize big ball stars prior to the start of formal competition. The board asked Polanco and Mendez to build cases for those players with any available records and would ask the committee to consider such information.

Dau also questioned the board's intentions on allowing players already in the hall as a player to be elected to the hall a second time as a contributor. Would this be redundant since they are already in the hall?

Porter motioned that the board approve that a person can enter the Hall of Fame both as a Player and a Contributor. Pearse seconded. Motion passed 17-0.

Personnel

Nett presented the results of three performance surveys. He presented the staff and board review of the executive director and the board's review of the board. The staff and board continued to rate the executive director positively. Roberts offered salary recommendations for staff and was asked to leave when the board held its discussions.

Sunday, January 24, 2016

President Steele called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

The board met early to interview the two candidates for president. Steele laid out the ground rules where each candidate would field questions for 10 minutes. The board applauded both candidates at the conclusion.

Following the officers' elections, the seven member executive committee would be elected.

Committee Assignments / Changes

Steele asked the board members to inform him of any committee change requests as well as created the new task force for Crowdfunding. (See the new committee listing on line).

Regional/Officer Elections

Steele reviewed the election schedule and assigned nominating chairs. The At-Large positions up for election this June are John Robles and Steve Birrell. The President and fellow at-large members comprise the nominating committee for the at-large directors. The Regional elections taking place in the fall are in the Southwest, Southern California, and Northeast regions. Johnson is the chair for the Southwest Nominating Committee, Sove will solicit candidates for Southern California and Pearse will look for candidates for the Northeast.

The election for president was conducted first so that a non-winner could run for vice president. Candidates were LeaAnn Martin and Rob Pearse. **Martin won and will serve a two-year term.**

The other officers serve for one year. Running unopposed were Pearse for vice president and Birrell for treasurer. **Sove moved to elect the officers running unopposed by acclamation. Starcher seconded. Motion passed 17-0.**

Running for the Secretary's position were Steve Dykes and Tom Sove. **Sove won and will serve the one-year term.**

The next step was to fill the seven-member Executive Committee. **Johnson, Porter and Robles were elected to the Executive Committee.**

Budget Finalization

As a result of deliberations and some increases in salaries and wages, nationals prize money, etc., the budget committee worked the night before to balance the budget. There were several increases in income proposed, including a \$0.10/can increase in distributor ball pricing, increased sales of the new Edge Glove, and Steele and staff fundraising efforts.

**Porter moved to accept the proposed 2016 Budget for operating expenses. Mendez seconded.
Motion passed 17-0.**

**Rob Pearse moved to accept the proposed 2016 Budget for promotions and First Ace. Sove seconded.
Motion passed 17-0.**

In Steele's closing remarks, he reflected on the past 10 years and wished the newly elected officers luck.

In closing and scheduling the next meeting a conflict arose with the planned dates to coincide with the National Three-Wall. It was agreed to reschedule the summer meeting to coincide with the beginning of the National Four-Wall Tournament in Minneapolis and then schedule the following year's summer meeting at the beginning of the national three-wall.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.