

American Go Association Chapter Assembly

August 9, 2020
Via Teleconference

1. Call to order

Call to order at 6:05pm EDT (08/09/2020)

Roll Call:

Chris Kirschner (Not rep, board member)
Gurujeet Khalsa (National Go Center, XYZ, Greater Washington Go Club)
Les Lamphear (Not rep, board member-elect)
Mark Rubenstein (Evanston go club)
Willard Haynes (Davis/Sacramento go club)
Ashish Varma (Not rep)
Brad Rose (Peoria Normal go club)
Andy Okun (Santa monica go club, president)
Steve Colburn (Empty Sky go club)
Gary Smith (NOVA Go)
Justin Teng (Not rep)
Nick Wilmes (Seattle AGA chapter)
Bob Gilman (Albuquerque go club, chapter services coordinator)
Trevor Morris (Western Mass go club)
Bart Jacob (Austin go club)
Paul Celmer (Triangle go club)
Brian Allen (Ghosts of seattle)
Steve Zilber (Cleveland go club, prospective congress director)
Ted Terpstra (San diego area go club, board member-elect)
Terry Benson (Brooklyn go club)
Devin Frazee (Columbus Ohio go club)
Albert Yen (Not rep)
David Kahn (Mass Go Association)
73 chapter votes present, quorum is met.
YouTube viewership: 42
Lisa Scott (chair of board)
Samantha Fede (secretary)

Approval of minutes:

Minutes were sent out previously. Terry Benson moves to approve, Gurujeet Khalsa seconds, minutes unanimously approved.

2. President's Report [Andy Okun]

Discussion of impact of COVID-19 pandemic on AGA go events.

Though membership briefly dropped, it has returned to stable levels with eGo Congress. We have 1978 members and 87 chapters. A lot of our activities are suspended in response, though we have had a return of operations for eGo Congress.

Financial update:

Have had a search for a Treasurer, struggled to find a volunteer, have gone to JITASA that does accountant services for nonprofits, we are onboarding there, but things are still in transition. Our financial numbers are about the same, but the report isn't quite done, will circulate to the chapters upon receipt. We are investing some money with professional management with our surpluses from previous years. Steve Colburn thanks Danny Ko for his many years of service as treasurer and there is general consensus.

3. Membership Dues and Levels Discussion

We were asked to restructure dues last year at this meeting, but given the situation, Andy Okun and the AGA board feel that this is not an appropriate time to raise dues (given we have been providing less services)

- Ted Terpstra: What if we made dues for members and chapters free for a year, like Canada? Would our membership rates increase drastically? I motion for this.
- Steve Colburn: What would happen in year 2?
- Lisa Scott: This is a much bigger conversation. Plus it is not fiscally responsible to pull into our savings for operations and services we provide other than tournaments (i.e., eGo Congress).
- Ted Terpstra: What service is provided to chapters? [Lisa Scott: eGo Congress]
- Gary Smith: How does the Canadian go association support operations? [Lisa Scott: It's a smaller operation]
- Mark Rubenstein: I think it's worth considering. Ratings is the biggest service they provide, so maybe we think about those items and weigh against implementing a no cost membership.
- Terry Benson: We don't have zero costs even during the pandemic.

- Gurujeet Khalsa: Instead of a promotional membership, we could consider instead a 1st year free membership. It would help lower barriers to entry.
- Bart Jacob: How would we deal with duplicate members? [Bob Gilman echos the concern, discussion of this issue]
- Brian Allen: Membership should be as simple as possible, we've had some issues with it in the past. I'd like to get rid of the promotional memberships.
- Bob Gilman: The option for promotional memberships being done online makes it easier [Willard Haynes and Steve Colburn echo this].
- Ted Terpstra: Can foreign nationals sign up and play in our tournaments through another membership mechanism?
- Terry Benson: We've always tried to recognize membership in foreign organizations. We use a temporary number. [This is no longer allowed in the system]
- Andy Okun: Could the system handle foreign players the same way as promotional memberships? [Steve Colburn says it is being programmed]
- Andy Okun: Could we have a working group within the GA to discuss and solve these issues?
- Gurujeet Khalsa: Can the GA committee be empowered to enact this on its own, so we don't have to wait another year? [Andy Okun: The GA can't delegate this authorization, but maybe could convene at other times]
- Lisa Scott: The GA is allowed to meet on additional occasions [lack of consensus in group]
- Andy Okun: Perhaps I could convene an additional meeting.
- **Ted Terpstra: [restating previous motion] I motion that we set the membership dues and chapter fees to zero until in person go resumes. Devin Frazee seconds.**
- **Mark Rubenstein: You mean new members only. [Ted Terpstra: No.] I would only be in favor of giving new members this rate. I would amend that to grant new members a one year free membership. [Ted Terpstra says okay, but Devin Frazee doesn't second amended motion. Willard Haynes seconds amendment.]**
- Steve Colburn: Free for new players is more technically complicated, free renewals. [Discussion of bylaws allowing for a second meeting]
- **Terry Benson motions to table the main motion and the amendment, until a later point in this meeting.**

Committee who will work on this issue: Gurujeet Khalsa, Mark Rubenstein, Ted Terpstra, Willard Haynes.

Votes: All yays except Devin Frazee, Bob Gilman abstains, **motion to table passes.**

4. Discussion of Go During Pandemic – Bring Your Ideas and Experiences

- Gary Smith: I think the pandemic is covering up our issues with tournament ratings. Our tournament, submitted in February, still hasn't been rated. What are we doing about this?
- Andy Okun: There are a few reasons for this. 1- We were behind to begin with. 2- We are an all-volunteer organization, so when events come up in volunteers' lives, I can only push so hard. But, in some ways it's my fault for getting occupied with other AGA matters i.e., financial services, eGo Congress.
- Terry Benson: We've had issues with ratings on and off for years. We should professionalize this aspect of our organization.
- Steve Colburn: As TDs, how often do you get a rejection from the ratings officer because a membership isn't up to date? [General consensus: Often] This is the reason for the delay. I tell people this all the time. [Gurujeet Khalsa: not all tournaments have the problem]. I was speaking more globally to ratings issues, not this year specifically.
- Ted Terpstra: I use goclubs.org. I require people to register a day before so all those issues are figured out in advance. It's \$35. Maybe the AGA can provide it?
- Terry Benson: We're hurting ourselves by trying to be perfect. [Trevor Morris agrees]
- Lisa Scott: We [the board] allowed the ratings officer to go ahead with about 90-95% good AGA IDs.
- Devin Frazee: I proposed this and the board rejected it.
[The history of this action was debated between Lisa Scott and Devin Frazee throughout the meeting. Upon looking up the relevant language in the 9/8/2019 meeting, Devin Frazee and Lisa Scott agreed that the board did not approve Devin Frazee's September 2019 proposal about revising the rating process upon the Ratings officer affirming that 100% membership is not required.]
- Bob Gilman: There's an immediate problem of backlog, and it needs to be caught up. [Andy Okun acknowledges these two separate issues].
- Andy Okun: I would anticipate the backlog will be resolved by the first week of September.

Role of AGA

- David Kahn: In MA, we use meetups to organize go club meetings, so losing our physical space was good. This is pre COVID. We've been doing online go servers with zoom. Other clubs should do this, and geographical limitations aren't relevant. We can do more online events like Beginners Nights, and we need to increase the smoothness of coming into the go community and retention.
- Andy Okun: Do you have time to work on this project?
- David Kahn: A little, please contact me and let me know. [provided email to attendees] We have a strong volunteer base in MA. [Discussion of details]
- Terry Benson: What can we do to help you with this project? Money, volunteers, publicity etc?
- Terry Benson: We need to have another big online event.

- Lisa Scott: We can't do this again in 6 months, we don't have volunteer effort in the meantime. We can do something smaller.
- Ted Terpstra: It would be good if the AGA had a place to list online tournaments.
- Bart Jacob: I support all this online play, video chat makes bad behavior less likely
- Devin Frazee: I'm working on a personal project to provide an estimate of AGA rank (unofficial) online.

5. Go Congress Planning

Status of 2022 – Colorado

The 2020 congress planned for Estes Park has been moved to 2022. We're trying to get an identical experience.

Presentation/Approval of 2021 – Ohio

- Steve Zilber: We had a chance to look for sites and found that Case was by far the best option. I welcome any feedback as I'd like it to be the same quality as Madison. Hopefully it happens.

Steve Zilber presented a slide show of the details, including location. Dorms and hotel approximately 5 minutes away. Main area and second playing areas. Dining, pub, and restaurants on campus, other dining off campus nearby. Museums nearby. Presentation will be available on youtube soon. July 24th - Aug 1st. **Ted Terpstra moved to hold the 2021 congress in Cleveland, Paul Celmer seconded, unanimous.**

6. Meeting Break

Ted Terpstra motions, Steve Colburn seconds that the first half of the minutes will be approved upon reconvening, unanimously approved.

Steve Colburn reminds GA that there are still many meetings that typically occur at Congress and invites audience to attend.

The meeting is temporarily but not formally adjourned for a break until it is reconvened on October 4th, at 8pm EDT.

7. Resumption of Meeting

Meeting resumed at 8:05pm EDT.

8. Summary of Interim Activity

There was no notable interim discussion of membership changes to provide COVID related relief.

Bart Jacob: Could a committee meet to discuss what changes to membership could be made?

Lisa Scott: Yes but note that the discussion was specific to relief during the pandemic.

[Samantha Fede summarizes motion]

Mark Rubenstein: Then at this point, I don't think there's much of a point of doing anything at this point, since we can't implement it until next year.

Devin Frazee: To clarify, I thought this meeting was to discuss this?

Lisa Scott: Yes, but no proposal was put forward.

Andy Okun: Outside of the meeting, if something was proposed and put forward, we could discuss it and try to figure something out.

Lisa Scott: I don't believe the bylaws allow.

9. New Business

Lisa Scott motions to approve the first half of the minutes (from 8/9/2020), Willard Haynes seconds.

Unanimously approved (Haynes, Jacob, Gilman, Khalsa, Rubenstein, Smith, Morris, Frazee, Scott, Rose)

Devin Frazee motions to approve the remainder of the minutes (from 10/4/2020) provisionally, pending no objections by email, Lisa Scott seconds.

Unanimously approved. (Benson abstains, Haynes, Jacob, Gilman, Khalsa, Rubenstein, Smith, Morris, Frazee, Scott, Rose approves).

Devin Frazee: Are we not voting on membership?

Steve Colburn: No, there has been no external meeting of the committee about that, so we don't have anything to vote on.

Terry Benson motions to adjourn, Mark Rubenstein seconds, unanimous.

Adjourned at 8:24pm.