

AGA Board Minutes

Attending:

- Andy Okun (President)
- (absent) Ted Terpstra (Executive Vice President)
- Paul Celmer (Director, eastern region)
- Gurujeet Khalsa (Director, eastern region)
- Lisa Scott (Director, central region)
- Edward Zhang (Director at large)
- Steven Burrall (Director, western region)
- (joining partway through) Chris Kircshner (Director, western region)
- Bob Gilman (guest observer)
- Daniel Smith (guest taker of minutes)

Meeting called to order at 8:12 EDT, 4/28/2013.

1. Approval of minutes
 - a. Scott moves to approve, Celmer seconds. Unanimous.
2. Appointment of Secretary
 - a. Scott nominates Daniel Smith for position of Secretary, Celmer seconds. Unanimous.
3. President's Report
 - a. 2014 Congress
 - i. Plan A was for it to be in Vancouver. The team there has fallen apart. Kathy Lee is trying hard, but the main other organizer has moved away. That plus the large expense means we're looking for another location.
 - ii. The New York area is where we're looking. Expense and venue is a problem. Peter Armenia is willing to spearhead a venue search and is going to start looking on Monday. The team is not set in stone, but it seems like there's ample volunteers in the area.
 - iii. Perhaps we'll try a joint USA/Canada congress again in Toronto, but there's a low chance it will be in 2014.
 - iv. Zhang: we should publicize this, so people don't feel like they have to choose between Seattle in 2013 and Vancouver in 2014 if they don't want to go to the west coast twice in a row.
 - b. The AGA received the invitation for the world pair-go championship. Half air-fair.
 - c. A new tournament, China Qi-wan, Meng Baihe/emlily cup, also sent an invitation. All our pros and one amateur invited; however, this is for the preliminary round and there are no prizes or subsidies until later rounds. We must nominate the player by May 3rd; we were given very little notice.
 - d. Joel Sanet sent an email complaining about the rating system; he's winning tournaments and isn't rising in the ratings. Okun thinks perhaps the self promotion rules could stand clarification.

- e. Rank Certification.
 - i. Kirschner would like to do something at this congress.
 - ii. Okun has lined up Solomon Choe as a volunteer to help with this.
 - iii. Would like to award rank certificates for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd placing players in a section of the US Open.
 - f. Okun met up with the clock maker, DGT. Current clocks are not ideal. Okun would like to give AGA approval to clocks, and allow the clock makers to put the AGA logo on their clocks, perhaps in exchange for a small royalty.
 - g. Okun thinks the AGA lacks PR. The EJ does a good job of reporting on go things, but doesn't really function like a PR department.
4. Discussion of subsidy ideas
- a. Khalsa: let's continue discussion of Zhang's proposals from email.
 - b. Zhang: Initially, the idea was to partially subsidise travel, since people coming from distant places have many connections and longer flights. Then there was a discussion about how much to reserve, so later I revised this into something similar to the milage or points system of airlines or credit cards. So if people come to congress three or four times, they could accumulate enough points to get registered for free at a subsequent one. There'd be a lot of flexibility for using this points system to reward volunteers in the future.
 - c. Okun: There are some dangers there and we need to be careful about them, but these are used by a lot of companies because they do seem to work. But we need to do some careful math and plan carefully how to administer things, but I'd like to have some sort of points system to reward people.
 - d. Scott: I like the idea of a points system, but I don't think it should be based on miles. But giving people credit for money spent on congress or at tournaments might be good and feasible for some technologically gifted volunteer to set up.
 - e. Celmer: I'm concerned about the complexity. As a congress director, dealing with discounts is an additional variable that could make your calculations more prone to error.
 - f. Khalsa: I'm also concerned about the administrative complexity.
 - g. Okun: There's ways of not having it be a congress thing, it could be an AGA thing. This would involve a lot of computerized record keeping. We don't necessarily have the resources to do this, but some of the things necessary to do this would be similar to the things necessary to do the rank certification. When we've managed that and are good at it, that might be a good time to implement an additional thing.
 - h. Zhang: we could set aside a central reserve to back these points, and the AGA can issue funds to congresses to cover them. This way it shouldn't add too much burden to congresses.
 - i. Khalsa: Should we set up a committee to issue recommendations?
 - j. Okun: Maybe not quite yet. This could use more discussion, and I'd like to go through the life cycle of a software change first.
 - k. (Kirschner joins)

- l. Khalsa: the other thing we had discussed was to try and do a first-time congress goer's discount.
 - m. Scott: Seems like a good idea, but the time frame is short.
 - n. Kirschner: hard to tell if people are first-time attendees.
 - o. Khalsa: we could publish the names of those that get the discount.
 - p. Kirschner: it's very difficult to tell if this would sway people's decision.
 - q. Khalsa, if we were going to do something, would it be too late to announce by our next meeting?
 - r. Scott & Okun: Yes.
 - s. Kirschner: the first late-pay penalty is May 31st, we'd need to announce in the next week or two to make it reasonable.
 - t. Khalsa: we can continue this by email.
5. New Business
- a. Okun: Terry Benson thinks a congress in New York will cost over \$1500. What is the price that we want to target for congresses?
 - i. Scott: Children need to be able to go for under \$1000.
 - ii. Kirschner: Our older clientele is probably going to be OK with \$1100 or 1200, but at \$1500, we're going to lose some attendees. But it's hard for families with children.
 - iii. Okun: the charges are pretty high even when people share rooms. If it costs \$1000 for one person, it shouldn't cost \$4000 for a family of four.
 - iv. Kirschner: Unfortunately, we're charged by the bed, not the room. That's where hotels can compete with us.
6. Date and time of next meeting
- a. 5 P.M. EDT on June 2nd.
7. Adjournment
- a. Scott moves to adjourn, Celmer seconds. Unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 9:40 EDT.