

February Board Meeting Minutes

American Go Association

Meeting Date and Time: February 23, 2020, 8:00 pm EST

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Overview

Summary

This was the first board meeting to be formally open to the membership to observe; approximately a dozen members listened in. The board discussed the status of Go Congress planning, including changes to the format of the US Masters Tournament. The board also formed a committee to develop a National Go Teachers Program and approved hiring an accounting service to handle AGA financials. The AGA President also updated the board on international go activities, such as the potential impact of Coronavirus on international go activities.

In Attendance

Lisa Scott (Chair, Central Region)

Devin Frazee (Central Region)

Chris Kirschner (Western Region)

Chris Saenz (Western Region)

Gurujeet Khalsa (Eastern Region)

Dan Ritter (Eastern Region)

Paul Celmer (At-Large)

Andy Okun (President)

Andrew Jackson (Executive VP)

Samantha Fede (Secretary)

Terry Benson (AGF President)

Actionable Motions Passed

1. The Board approves final documentation for the creation of the North American Go Federation.
2. The board instructs the president to submit a new format for the North American Masters Tournament to the Board by March 15, for immediate consideration and approval.
3. The AGA Board approves the Tour Operator Policy initially on the agenda for the November meeting.
4. The Board approves the reappointment of current VPs up for reappointment.
5. The Board instructs the President to create a commission to create and oversee the National Go Teacher Program, in coordination with the AGF.
6. The Board approves the Tournament Support Program, with modified language regarding one administrative aspect.
7. The Board approves spending up to \$15,000 per year on financial services for the AGA.

Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

- a. 8:03pm EST

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. November minutes will be available here: <https://www.usgo.org/board-minutes>
- b. Devin motioned to approve, Dan seconded, **minutes approved.**

3. President's Report

- a. Update on the opening of an investment account at First Republic for long term reserves.
- b. NAGF updated documents (for approval, available [below](#))— North American Go Federation, has been discussed in detail at previous meetings where the board approved NAGF, summarized by Andy Okun again. Canadian Go Federation has already approved this.
 - i. **Devin moves to approve the documentation as it stands**, Dan seconds, approved unanimously.
- c. Update on New Jersey Open
 - i. Devin has been working to set this up, Rutgers venue fell through, back up should be secured soon and registration website will be available soon. Dates: April after tax day, later than previous.
- d. Possible effects on Go activities of Coronavirus outbreak
 - i. Chinese go activities are on hold/ postponed/ online indefinitely
 - ii. Some other Asian tournaments have been canceled, but no known issues with European play.
 - iii. Could possibly have an impact on attendance at our congress from international community, but too early to say for sure. Discussed provisions in place to minimize financial risks.
- e. There's a new handicap pair go tournament, looking for volunteers to be our second pair (Lisa and Andy won an international qualifier, congratulations).

4. Go Congress Updates

- a. Report on 2019 Congress Results
 - i. 456 attendees, large for region, surplus of ~40k (leading to November 2019 creation of the congress scholarship fund to use that surplus). The board commends Dave Weimer for his excellent planning and good congresses.
 - ii. Great response to the congress survey, data analysis proceeding.
- b. Status of 2020 US Go Congress

- i. Things proceeding well, good organizers. Approx. 130 registrations as of now.
- ii. Documents for congress organizers have been distributed to the board with information about the MOA, escrow accounts, templates etc. Development of checklists for running various tournaments. (The RFP, as an example, is available [below](#).)
 - Terry Benson: What do the congress scholarships mean for this year in terms of what the AGF provides?
 - Lisa: It won't duplicate AGF, but the details are TBD. This is a brand new program. We've had large surpluses so we'd like to use that to make it easier for people to come to congress.
 - Terry Benson: This is tricky because you're talking about needs based right?
 - Lisa: No, we'll identify a class of people (e.g., under 26) to provide the discount for so we don't have to subjectively evaluate people's needs etc.
 - Chris K: Does the board need to approve the format?
 - Lisa: No, the board approved the format with the details approved by the executive.
 - **The board recognizes the achievement of the Congress Website being up in January** (webmaster: Nate Eagle; Rex Crystal did an excellent job at this for past years as well)
- c. Status of 2021 US Go Congress
 - i. We expect this to be in Cleveland, director Steve Zilber; we toured venues recently and we have 3 options we're primarily investigating.
 - Chris K: Are we expecting a decrease in attendance for Cleveland? There was less attendance last time it was in Cleveland. Maybe because of less flights, not a hub. But we are committed to doing Congress around the country.
 - Lisa: We've broken down projections by region, but I do think that Central region congresses have gotten bigger. There have also been major changes in the city and go community in the last 25 years.
- d. US Open Masters Format Proposal
 - i. Attendance has been down at the US Masters with 9 rounds for a variety of reasons. This format was created so that strong players didn't have to do two full tournaments.
 - ii. New proposal: Somewhat of a return to previous format (pre-2011). Standard morning tournament (US Open), evening masters (NA Masters Amateur Championship) by invitation or qualifier, then outside congress masters for pros (NA Masters Professional championship). This would affect the prize values, but more details need to be established. Ideally, we would find sponsorship.

- Chris K: When will the board have more details about this?
 - Lisa: I am putting it on my urgent to do list.
 - [Following cross-talk, Andy indicates that this discussion is outside the scope of this board meeting but would appreciate input.]
 - Gurujeet: This may be relevant for how the open is handled, since we've implemented cell phone control generally for the Masters in the past (to protect against potential cheating).
1. Chris proposes that Andy Okun send a **proposal outlining the new Masters format to be approved** unless 2 members object within 48 hrs of receipt, Devin seconds with addendum of Mar 15 deadline, Gurujeet expresses concern about dissention to which the board identifies that an ad hoc meeting or other offline discussion would ensue and the deadline would be identified to be addressed; unanimous approval.
- e. Overseas Tour Operator Policy
 - i. (See the text for the policy [below](#).)
 - ii. Lisa Scott, Chris Kirschner, and Andy Okun have been working on this since 2016. The draft has been circulating for the last few months.
 - iii. Devin **moves to approve policy as circulated, effective date after this meeting**, Chris Kirschner seconds, unanimously approved.
 - f. Policy for bringing non-resident popular teachers to Congress
 - i. This has been done historically on an ad hoc basis, but there is not a board policy. Do we want to develop a policy?
 - Chris K: This has been done on an ad hoc basis because it's an inherently case-by-case process.
 - Lisa: We're not discussing a specific policy of some people but not others, more of checking in on this policy.
 - Andy Okun: Before the early 2000s, we weren't inviting domestic teachers, plus we were paying foreign teachers a fee (\$2000) to come on top of the organization pros; this was repealed because former president wanted the money to go to domestic pros. We're limited in our budget, but we are pretty generous on exceptions at this point. They're popular, and congress attendees like them.
 - Devin: Do we need a policy other than it's at the discretion of the Congress director/coordinator unless we see it being abused?
 - Lisa: Directors have a hard time making those decisions fairly and look for guidance sometimes.
 - Devin: I'm not opposed to a guidance document, but I don't know that it needs to be done at a board level.
 - [No other objection from the board, moves forward]

5. AGA Reappointments

- a. Discussion of whether appointment of all these positions is at a board level.

- b. Gurujeet **moves to approve VPs up for re-appointments**, Dan seconds, Chris K recuses himself [as a VP], remaining votes of aye, approved.
- c. Andy Okun discusses the development of a committee for fairplay [doping, using AIs to cheat, etc]. This needs to be investigated further and Andy requests a group to understand and develop this, particularly for online play. The US Chess community may be helpful and I am in communication with them. Would also like Steve Colburn and Jeff Sheval to be part of this.

6. Creation of a National Go Teacher Program

- a. Terry Benson leads discussion of a proposal for Creation of a National Go Teacher Program (appended [below](#)).
- b. Small monetary motivation (~\$40) for teaching might motivate teachers to go to schools, but we need a formal program for this.
- c. Expression of enthusiasm from board, discussion of what would count as a certification, details described in attached document
- d. Devin moves to **instruct the president to develop a committee to create this program**, Dan seconds, approved unanimously.
- e. Dan, Devin, Chris K., and Terry Benson express desire to serve or consult with the committee.

7. Other Ongoing Business

- a. Update on Tournament Support Proposal (board approved in November pending final documents, some of which are [below](#))
 - i. Discussion of **proposal** (put forward by Chris K and Devin, seconded by Dan) **described by the circulated document**, Lisa expresses some concern about an implied election procedure, intent to be self-determining discussed, **agreement from committee to modify the language, board approves proposal unanimously.**
- b. Update on Treasurer Search
 - i. Proposals have been solicited for full-service financial and bookkeeping services. Documents were distributed to the board summarizing the options prior to the meeting. Andy and Lisa have been spearheading this, feel that it is a waste of go player expertise and that there's a lack of interest in volunteering for treasurer, struggling to find a little-things bookkeeper and an accountant service company.
 - Terry: Can't we get someone who needs a little extra money from within the organization to do this bookkeeping?
 - Andy: We're concerned about continuity of service as such a person's position changes.
 - 1. Devin motions to **approve up to \$15,000/year on accounting services**, Dan seconds, approved unanimously.
- c. Update on Executive Search

- i. No updates right now. No comments for the board on this topic.

8. New Business

- a. Accessibility of Board Meetings to Members (minutes, comments, etc.)
 - i. With the lag between meetings, there's a large delay in approving minutes and thus posting them. Do we want to agree to approve via email after some period of time? Or is the brief story in the EJ sufficient?
 - ii. [General support for approval via email]. Approval will be affirmative rather than implicit without dissent.
 - iii. Website analytics of Board Minutes views since August are available here (more analytics available if requested before the meeting): [AGA Board Minutes views Aug 2019 to Jan 2020.png](#)
 - iv. View-only or muted board meeting visitors (this is the first meeting with that format)
 - v. Comments on board meetings
 - 1. Will be available to board members so that they can address.
- b. AGA funding of World Go Map (DF)
 - i. Devin is mapping go clubs across the world, wanted to get board support in making this an AGA supported venture, doesn't yet have a presentation but will send out a future date.

9. Update on Goals and Priorities

- a. Board members will continue to work/comment on the document of goals/priorities. **Lisa will send to the board both this document and the comments on board minutes.**

10. Next Meeting

- a. The next meeting of the board will be May 17 at 8:00pm EDT.

11. Adjourn

- a. Devin moves to adjourn, Chris K seconds, adjourned unanimously at 10:04pm.

Addendum – Proposals and Documents

North American Go Federation

Constitution of By-Laws

ARTICLE I: Name

1. The Association shall be called “The North American Go Federation” (NAGF).

ARTICLE II: Purpose

1. The mandates of the NAGF are as follows:
 - i. To represent the Go community of North America in international contexts.
However, this does not limit General Members’ ability to interact with international organizations or to represent themselves.
 - ii. To establish and maintain professional promotion and ranking systems.
 - iii. To organize pro qualification events.
 - iv. To organize North American Championships.
 - v. To support Go promotional activities in North America.

ARTICLE III: Official Headquarters and Language

1. The official headquarters of the NAGF are located in The National Go Center: 4652 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Washington DC, USA.
2. The official language of the NAGF is English.

ARTICLE IV: Members

1. Types of Membership. There shall be one primary class of membership:
 - i. General Member: A body that represents Go in a country or territory located in North America. There is only one General Member per country.
2. Members' Rights and Responsibilities.
 - i. At an Annual Assembly of the General Members, known as the General Assembly, the General Members may establish such other criteria for membership or categories of membership, including a schedule or an amount of

membership dues, as they deem appropriate, including the rights of the Members in general.

3. New Members.

- i. The initial members of the NAGF are the American Go Association and the Canadian Go Association.
- ii. When the NAGF receives a new membership application, the Board makes a recommendation, and the General Assembly decides with a simple majority vote.

4. Meetings.

- i. The General Assembly shall be held yearly. The General Assembly shall meet at the place, time, and date fixed by the Board.
- ii. The General Assembly may be convened outside the yearly schedule when needed.
- iii. The General Assembly may be held by audio or video conference call or any other agreed upon electronic means.

ARTICLE V: Board

1. Powers and Number.

- i. The number of Board of Directors (Directors) constituting the entire Board shall be not more than nine.
- ii. Designation of term of office
 1. Each Director shall be 21 years of age or older.
 2. Directors shall be elected individually for a term of two years. Re-election is permitted.
 3. Should a Director resign, the position will be filled through the next scheduled election.
 4. Each General Member has one Director on the Board.
 5. A body representing all NAGF professional players has one Director on the Board.
 6. Up to six Directors are sought by the existing Board of Directors for the benefit of the NAGF from the North American Go community
 7. The Directors elect one of their number as Chairperson of the Board
 8. The Directors elect one of their number as Executive Director

2. Meetings.

- i. The Board of Directors shall meet on at least one occasion each calendar year, at times and places fixed by the Board (online meetings may count for this purpose).
 - ii. Special meetings. At any time, unscheduled directors meetings may be convened by the Chairperson of the Board, or upon the written request of not less than two other sitting Directors, or as may otherwise be permitted by law, and notification of such meetings will be sent by the General Secretary to the remaining Directors. Meetings may be held by audio or video conference call or any other agreed upon electronic means, as directed by the Board and stated in the notice of meeting.
 - iii. At the General Assembly, the Executive Director, and the Chairperson of the Board, jointly or individually, shall report to the General Assembly the state of affairs of the NAGF.
 - iv. The Chairperson of the Board shall lead and set agendas for all business meetings, as well as be responsible for the overall operations of the Board. A Chairperson of the Board may be reelected without limit so long as he/she continues to be reelected as a Director.
3. Notice of Meetings.
 - i. Notice of the place, date, and hour of the annual meeting shall be given by the General Secretary to each Director and Officer by email, mail, or by personal delivery, not less than sixty days before the date of the meeting.
 - ii. Notice of the place, date, and hour of other meetings shall be given by the General Secretary to each Director and Officer by email, mail, or by personal delivery, not less than fourteen days before the date of the meeting. Notice of special meetings shall indicate the purpose for which they are called and the person or persons calling the meeting.
4. Quorum.
 - i. At all meetings of the Board where official decisions are made, a simple majority of the Directors then in office shall be the minimum number required to make official decisions.
 - ii. The Directors may be present in person, by letter, or by proxy.
 - iii. Voting by proxy shall be permitted.

5. Action by the Board.
 - i. If and when the Directors shall collectively consent in writing, through any medium, to any action taken by the NAGF either before or after the action is taken, such action shall be a valid action as if it had been taken at a meeting of the Directors. Written consent shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Directors.
 - ii. A Director may participate in a meeting of Directors by a video conference or telephone call or similar communication by which all persons participating in the meeting may hear and/or see each other. All participants must be advised of the communications options in advance of the meeting and the names of the participants in the conference must be divulged to all participants.
6. Compensation.
 - i. Directors shall not receive any wage, commission, or salary, except that the Directors may receive reimbursement of expenditures reasonably incurred on behalf of activities for the benefit of the NAGF.
7. Removal of Directors.
 - i. Any Director may be removed for malfeasance, dereliction of duty, or irreconcilable conflict of interest only by a vote of the electing constituency, which must be 67% of those voting. Such recall may be initiated by: a) The petition of at least 2 General Member, b) An affirmative vote of two thirds of the Directors at the Board meeting in which the matter was included as an agenda item in the announcement of the meeting at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE VI: Officers

1. Definitions For the purpose of this section:
 - i. The term 'appointing authority' means the Board or the Executive Director as appropriate.
 - ii. The term 'Officers' is defined as the Executive Director, General Secretary, Treasurer.
 - iii. The term 'staff' includes all other appointees.
2. Appointments and duties:

- i. The Board shall have the sole authority to appoint the following Officers: Executive Director, General Secretary, and Treasurer. No person may hold more than one of these positions at the same time.
 - ii. The Board shall determine the qualifications for each office.
 - iii. Appointments for these offices shall be approved by a simple majority vote and Acting Secretary or Acting Treasurer until the required vote is achieved.
 - iv. The Board may appoint non-Officer staff as appropriate, with or without compensation, to perform certain duties for the NAGF.
 - v. The Executive Director may appoint subordinate, Coordinators, Committee Chairs, Liaisons, Project Managers or other staff, with or without compensation, to provide operational support to the Executive Director and shall so inform the Board. All such appointees report to the Executive Director.
 - vi. Appointees have only the authority, and may perform only the duties, assigned to them from time to time by the Board or the Executive Director. Duties may be added after the original appointment.
3. Suspension, Removal or Resignation of Appointments.
- i. The Board has the sole authority to suspend or remove from office any person appointed by the Board. Suspension or removal shall be for good cause and the vote must be a simple majority of the Board in favor of such action.
 - ii. In the event the Board wishes to suspend or remove an officer, it shall follow these procedures:
 1. At a properly called Board meeting, the Board may decide to place on the agenda of a subsequent Board meeting a vote on the suspension or removal of an Officer.
 2. As soon as possible after such decision, the Board shall give the Officer written notice of the Board's intention to hold such a vote. The notice to the Officer shall explain clearly why it intends to hold such a vote and provide at least fourteen calendar days' notice before the meeting agenda is published.
 3. After the fourteen days have expired, the Board may publish the agenda for the Board meeting at which the vote will take place, and if it does, the

Board must send the notice to all Board of Directors, General Members, and Corporate Officers. The Board shall provide at least thirty days between the publication of the meeting agenda and the meeting at which the vote is scheduled.

4. In exceptional and urgent circumstances, the Board may act to suspend any officer instantly for up to sixty (60) days for good cause without prior notice or publication. The Board shall advise the officer immediately to cease all corporate activity, provide reasons to the officer and shall investigate all appropriate matters.
5. Any officer or appointee may resign on his or her own initiative at any time by written notice to the appropriate appointing authority. A resignation notice containing any language indicating an intention of instant effect shall be effective upon its receipt by the appointing authority, General Secretary or the Chairman of the Board either electronically or physically.
6. Unless instructed otherwise by the Board, the Executive Director may remove from duty any of the Executive Director's appointees with or without cause upon written notice to the Board and the appointee.

4. Compensation:

- i. With the express prior written consent of the Board, Officers or other staff and appointees may receive wages, commissions, or salaries for their services.
- ii. All Officers, staff and appointees may be reimbursed for actual expenditures reasonably incurred on behalf of activities for the benefit of the NAGF.

5. Executive Director.

- i. The Board shall appoint an Executive Director every two years. The Board may reappoint a current Executive Director.
- ii. The Executive Director shall exercise full operational control and management over the business affairs and property of the NAGF. The Executive Director also shall have all powers expressly delegated by the Board and the By-laws.
- iii. The Executive Director shall see that the resolutions and directives received from the Board are implemented to the best of his/her abilities.

- iv. When instructed or authorized by the Board, the Executive Director shall execute for the NAGF any contracts, deeds, or other instruments in accordance with the delegation or instructions.
- v. Where such authority has not been clearly delegated by the Board, the Executive Director must seek prior approval before taking actions that:
 - 1. establish formal internal or external policies, except for operational and administrative policies;
 - 2. establish new formal relations between the NAGF and any other organization or entity;
 - 3. legally obligate the NAGF to take or refrain from taking any action that it might otherwise wish to take.

6. General Secretary.

- i. The Board shall appoint a General Secretary every two years. The Board may reappoint a current General Secretary.
- ii. The General Secretary shall have the powers and duties delegated by the Board and these By-laws. The General Secretary shall see that the resolutions and directives of the Board are properly recorded and delivered except where responsibility is assigned to some other person by the Board.
- iii. The General Secretary shall attend all meetings of the Board and the General Assembly and record all votes and the minutes of all proceedings. The Secretary shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings of the Directors and the General Assembly for which notice may be required.
- iv. The General Secretary shall execute with the Executive Director all conveyances, contracts, or other obligations as authorized by the Board in the name of the NAGF.
- v. The General Secretary shall maintain the NAGF records in a safe and secure place at all times. The records shall be kept in an organized manner such that research may be conducted efficiently by topic, Board meetings, or fiscal year. Non-sensitive records may be inspected upon written request of any Board of Director, Officer, or General Member.

7. The Treasurer.

- i. The Board shall appoint a Treasurer every two years. The Board may reappoint a current Treasurer.

- ii. The Treasurer shall have the powers and duties delegated by the Board, and these By-laws. The Treasurer shall have custody of the funds and securities of the NAGF and shall keep full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in records which shall belong to the NAGF.
- iii. The Treasurer shall deliver to the Board annual account of all financial transactions and bank accounts. The Treasurer shall at all reasonable times make available for inspection the books and accounts to the Executive Director or the Board.
- iv. The Treasurer shall maintain records in a safe and secure place at all times. The records shall be kept in an organized manner such that research may be conducted efficiently by account, project, or fiscal year. The records may be inspected upon written request of any Board of Director, Officer, or General Member.

ARTICLE VII: Books and Records

1. The NAGF shall keep complete books and records of account and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of its Board of Directors, General Assembly, and committees.

ARTICLE VIII: Fiscal Year

1. The fiscal year of the NAGF shall end on the last day of the month of December unless changed by the Board.

ARTICLE IX: Amendments

1. These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the General Members. Voting may be carried at the General Assembly or electronically.

MOU Establishing the North American Go Federation (NAGF)

Introduction

The North American Go Federation(NAGF) will be a joint venture between the American Go Association (AGA) and Canadian Go Association (CGA). CGA and AGA therefore define and control the scope of NAGF operations.

There are two key motivations for establishing the NAGF. First, many of our international partners expect to cooperate with a regional organization. The NAGF will serve as the North American face of our shared Go community. Second, our professional activities are fully North American, it is more natural to have them managed by body whose scope explicitly matches that.

Funding

The NAGF organization is responsible for determining its own funding needs. It may then apply to the AGA & CGA for support, or apply for external funding. The AGA & CGA can consider NAGF applications for funding as per any other spending on their budget. As NAGF develops, it may become convenient for CGA and AGA to approve standard contributions to simplify NAGF planning.

Additional North American Partners

On establishment the CGA and AGA will be the only North American national Go organizations participating in the NAGF. But we don't exclude the possibility of other North American countries participating in the future; in fact we would welcome it. When/if that possibility becomes a reality the NAGF bylaws will be updated to reflect their participation, and the CGA & AGA would be asked to approve shared control of the NAGF.

Overlap between CGA and AGA Activities and the NAGF

The CGA and AGA retain their international functions where tradition and host-country's wishes dictate or when the activities are not continent-specific. Reference how the European Go Federation and the Ibero-American Go Federation separate their international operation with the member Associations and National Federations. Existing examples include:

1. Events that are focused on "per country" representation, like the World Amateur, or the Prime Ministers cup. In that case the NAGF won't perform any useful function, and it

makes more sense for the CGA and AGA to retain their own direct connections with the events. 2. Pair Go, which has long standing arrangements with the CGA & AGA. 3. Applications for funding from international sponsors (for example KBA offers equipment grants to Go promoting organizations abroad)

In general the AGA & CGA can use their judgement which international activities naturally belong to the NAGF. And of course they can reach out to the NAGF and their sister CGA/AGA partner to discuss what makes sense in a particular new case.

Administrative Management

We want to keep administrative overhead for this organization to a minimum. So we are not planning a separate corporation for the NAGF. The head office of the NAGF will be the National Go Center in Washington D.C, and NAGF officials will communicate using a National Go Center email account. Funds will be managed through the AGA accounts.

Request for Proposal for the 2021 US Go Congress

Organized by the American Go Association

Overview

What is Go?

Go is an ancient board game that in Asia is roughly the cultural equivalent of Chess in the West. It is becoming increasingly popular in America.

More detail can be found on the American Go Association website : <https://www.usgo.org/what-go>



What is the US Go Congress?

The US Go Congress has been held annually since 1985 and is the premier Go event in North America. The residential event lasts 8 days, and typically includes 450-525 people aged 5-80 from throughout the United States and a dozen countries, speaking 6 or more languages. Large groups come from China, Japan, and Korea.

Our attendees not only participate in the Congress's events, but many also come to the event in order to explore a new city and experience what it has to offer. For this reason, we try to make it as easy as possible for attendees to make their way to key tourist attractions – museums, parks, and downtown areas in particular. Many attendees will stay after Congress as tourists.

Proposal Timeline

Final decisions regarding event location and dates will be made spring 2020, and submitted to the American Go Association Board of Directors and General Assembly for approval thereafter.

Venue Requirements

Dates and Availability

- Our conference runs from Saturday through the following Sunday, with necessary setup time the Friday before the start of the conference.
 - We prefer to be able to unload the Thursday before the conference and finish packing up the Monday after the conference.
- Our preferred dates are the last week of July or first week of August, but we are interested in any availability between July 10 and August 10.

A/V Requirements

We need to have A/V equipment, primarily projectors although in limited cases sound, in multiple rooms throughout the week. We need to know the prices and A/V availability of the following:

- Wireless internet for all attendees in all event and housing spaces
- Wired (ethernet) internet connections in Rooms B, E, and F
- Projectors and projector screens, with versatile computer hookups, in Rooms B, J-R
- Projector, projector screen, microphone, and speakers in Room A

Meeting Space Requirements

Our conference has very particular space requirements, and we need to know how each of the following requirements will be fulfilled and what the cost of each room will be:

- **Room A: Main Playing Area**
 - *Size: 4500 sq ft - 6750 sq ft*
 - *Needs: Wi-Fi, projector and large screens, PA system (or ability to set ours up)*
 - *51-76 10 ft tables (or equivalent) and 300-450 chairs*
 - *Min. Days: 1st Sat AM through 2nd Sat PM (ideally Fri before through 2nd Sun)*
- **Room B: Strong Players Room**
 - *Size: 1500 sq ft - 2750 sq ft*
 - *Needs: Wi-Fi, Wired Ethernet Ports, Multiple Power Outlets, projector and screen*
 - *16-29 tables and 64-116 chairs*
 - *Min. Days: 1st Sat AM through 2nd Sat PM (ideally Fri before through 2nd Sun)*
 - *Location Concerns: Quiet space away from Room C*

- **Room C: Youth Room**
 - *Size: 1000-1500 sq ft*
 - *Needs: Wi-Fi*
 - *10-16 tables and 51-75 chairs*
 - *Days Needed: 1st Saturday AM through 2nd Saturday PM*
 - *Location Concerns: FAR from Room B and Room F*

- **Room D: Public Congress Office**
 - *Size: 150 sq ft - 300 sq ft*
 - *Needs: Wi-Fi, 2-3 tables, multiple outlets, printer(s)*
 - *Min. Days: 1st Saturday PM through 2nd Saturday PM (ideally 2nd Sunday AM)*
 - *Location Concerns: Centrally located room or alcove near Room A*

- **Room E: EJournal Office**
 - *Size: 250 sq ft - 600 sq ft*
 - *Needs: Lockable, Wi-Fi, Wired Ethernet Ports, Multiple Outlets*
 - *Days Needed: Friday before through 2nd Saturday PM (ideally 2nd Sunday)*
 - *Location Concerns: Near Room B and/or Room F; Away from Room C*

- **Room F: Broadcast Room**
 - *Size: 250-400 sq ft*
 - *Needs: Lockable, Wi-Fi, Wired Ethernet Ports, Multiple Outlets*
 - *Must be in quiet space away from Youth Room and pick up games*
 - *Days Needed: Friday before through 2nd Saturday PM (ideally 2nd Sunday)*
 - *Location Concerns: Near Room B and/or Room E; Away from Room C*
 -

- **Room G: Vendor Room**
 - *Size: 300-500 sq ft*
 - *Needs: Lockable, 5-8 tables, 4-10 chairs*
 - *Days Needed: Thursday AM (possibly Wednesday) through 2nd Sunday AM*
 - *Location Concerns: Easily Accessible from Room A and Room H*

- **Room H: Banquet Space**
 - *Size: 3600 sq ft (300 people at rounds) to 4800 sq ft (400 people at rounds)*
 - *Days Needed: Saturday Evening*
 - *Location Concerns: Sufficient lighting for stage and prize areas, Near Room G*

- **Room I: Meeting Room**
 - *Size: 300 sq ft to 900 sq ft (to accommodate General Assembly)*
 - *Needs: Wi-Fi, Multiple Outlets, projector and screen capabilities*
 - *Days Needed: Afternoons Monday through 2nd Saturday*
 - *Location Concerns: Accessible to Public (not hidden away)*

- **Room J: Workshop Room**
 - *Size: 200-400 sq ft*
 - *Needs: Wi-Fi, projector and screen capability*
 - *Days Needed: 1st Sunday PM through Friday PM*

- **Room K: Large Lecture Room**
 - *Size: 300-500 sq ft*
 - *Needs: Wi-Fi, projector and screen capability*
 - *Days Needed: 1st Sunday PM through 2nd Saturday PM*

- **Rooms L-N: Small Lecture Rooms (x3)**
 - *Size: 150-300 sq ft*
 - *Needs: Wi-Fi, projector and screen capability*
 - *Days Needed: 1st Sunday PM through 2nd Sunday PM*
 -

- **Rooms O-Q: Game Review Spaces (x3)**
 - *Size: 150-300 sq ft*
 - *Needs: Wi-Fi, projector and screen capability*
 - *Days Needed: 1st Sunday PM through 2nd Sunday PM*

- **Room R: Skittles Space**
 - *Size: Unimportant*
 - *Days Needed: 1st Sunday PM through Saturday PM*
 - *Location Concerns: Open-air – could be a balcony, an area near registration, etc.*

Housing and Catering Requirements

Housing

Rooms: We need on-site housing for between 250 and 450 attendees, as well as off-site accommodations (hotels, hostels, etc.) available for those seeking a different type of accommodation than that provided by the event. We look for a mixture of dorm rooms and hotel rooms, with different price points.

Parking: Parking for staff and attendees must be available, ranging from 40 - 200 spots. We need to know the costs and logistics of distribution of parking passes, if they are required.

Food and Catering

We provide our attendees with the option of a meal plan for all three meals each day. We usually have approximately 65% of total attendees purchase the meal plan each year, although this number can be higher when there are expected to be few nearby food options or if the meal plan is required for those staying on-site, and in locations such as midtown Manhattan, we have not provided any sort of meal plan. Our attendees expect an average meal cost of \$10-15 for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

We host a banquet and prize ceremony on the final night of the event (the second Saturday). We generally have 300-350 attendees at this banquet, and provide either a buffet or plated dinner, depending on venue options. Our attendees expect to be able to purchase wine and beer at the event, and also expect it to be very kid-friendly.

In the middle of the week, we host a dinner to honor our professional players and volunteers. This dinner is a formal affair, serving alcohol, for 50-60 people, and often takes place at a restaurant or landmark near the Congress venue.

We invite the lifetime members of our organization to attend a semi-casual lunch towards the beginning of the week. This is not a formal affair, and usually has 20-30 attendees.

Our attendees often expect to be able to consume alcohol within their rooms, and to be able to purchase alcohol on or near the Congress venue.

Additional Needs

Activities

The Wednesday in the middle of the event is our “day off.” Attendees take a break from our normal tournaments and events, and instead are invited to participate in special events. We hold one “Die Hard” Tournament (in which 80-120 people play) for those who would like to play go even on their day off, but most attendees use their day off to explore the location where the event is being held.

We regularly host 3-4 large excursions, and provide information and sometimes transportation for smaller, self-guided local excursions. These excursions include activities such as visiting theme parks, brewery/winery tours, museums, hikes, and more. We also help attendees find their own local entertainment.

Load/Unload & Storage Requirements

We store our equipment during the year, and to unload it we need a sheltered dock and access to freight elevators. If we use a shipping container, the container will need to stay in place during the Congress. Elevators are only needed during setup and breakdown/repack. We expect that suitable moving equipment such as dollies and carts will be available.

Overseas Tour Operators Policy DRAFT

To be adopted by the AGA Board

1. This policy adopted by the AGA Board of Directors governs the relationship between the AGA and any person or entity that seeks to register or represent Congress attendees from outside the United States, whether for profit or not.
2. Any person who plans to lead a group including three or more non-relatives is subject to this policy. Individuals booking for themselves or small groups of family or friends, and not as a public event or for monetary gain, are not governed by this policy.
3. The AGA expects anyone who seeks to act as a tour operator to inform the AGA in advance, by January 1 of the year of the Congress, and to abide by this policy. To that end, before the AGA will accept third party group registrations, it will ask anyone seeming to act as a tour operator to agree to this policy and to provide the AGA with the necessary information to enforce this policy. Should the third party and the AGA both agree, the third party will be approved as a tour operator for the Congress in question.
4. No unregistered tours will be permitted to operate with the U.S. Go Congress.
5. The AGA understands that a tour operator may seek to make a profit on the venture of organizing a group to attend the Congress. In doing so, the tour group operator must not misrepresent information about the Congress or its prices, as discussed in detail below.
6. For an agreed tour operator, the AGA will
 - a. Assist to the degree it can with local information about the Congress and the Congress site, and will help the tour operator make arrangements, as it would for any other attendee.
 - b. Assist with registration and housing questions.
 - c. Help with visa letters, in the event some of the attendees require visas to enter the US. The AGA can only help with visas if timely and complete information is provided. The AGA will only provide visa letters for attendees who have already paid, unless visas are required before registration has been opened. In the absence of special circumstances, the AGA will only provide visa letters for tour group leaders, go players, and their immediate families. Any abuse of the visa letters may end the AGA's working relationship with the tour operator, and may be reported to authorities.
 - d. Provide information, graphics, and other materials about the Congress beforehand to help the tour operator with marketing. The tour operator does not have the right to use any other AGA materials without the permission of the AGA.

- e. Provide operator with a blocking schedule for all accommodations based on the host facility's policy on group blocking.
7. An agreed tour operator must
 - a. Not use the AGA's name, logo, or other intellectual property, including pictures from prior Congresses, in any marketing materials without clearing each item with the AGA first.
 - b. Not misrepresent its relationship with the AGA.
 - c. Not misrepresent the Congress, including but not limited to what is included with registration, the experience the players are likely to have, or the prize pool.
 - d. Not negotiate separately with the host facility.
 - e. Faithfully represent the elements of Congress registration in accordance with its representation on the AGA and Congress websites. This includes only requiring extra fees for those events for which the Congress requires extra fees.
 - f. Include in its marketing materials and website a link to the Go Congress website so that players can learn more about the Congress on their own.
 - g. Comply with and ensure that all members of their group comply with all safety and information requirements of the Congress, in particular any requirements regarding minors in attendance. This includes all forms required of Congress attendees and tour groups, including but not limited to minor agreement forms, attendee registration forms, and tour group registration forms.
 - h. Must completely convey the Congress's safety and information requirements to group members and ensure their compliance, including bearing the burden of accurate and complete translation of legal materials. Any failure to properly provide information or safe guardianship for minors may result in attendees being denied participation in the Congress.
 8. In order to ensure compliance with this policy, the AGA will require a \$5,000 deposit to be wired to the AGA before a person or entity can become a tour operator. The deposit may be credited against the registration fees, room and board, and other expenses of Congress, but if additional expenses are borne by AGA due to acts of the tour operator, the tour operator agrees to make all additional payments during the registration process. Any unused balance will be returned to the tour operator.
 9. New operators, or those whose relationship has been informal prior to January 1, 2020, must immediately comply with this policy in full. Operators with a prior relationship in good standing with the AGA will be permitted to transition to adopting this policy between the period January 1, 2020, and September 1, 2023, according to individually agreed upon schedules.

National Go Teacher Program

Overview

Goal

For the AGA and AGF to work together to create a National Go Teacher Program.

Background

Since 2012, the AGA has run a teacher certification program as a workshop during the US Go Congress. During the past eight congresses, we have trained a number of teachers, but in the process we have not created a uniform or documented curriculum or methodology, recorded the names of those who have received certification, or in any other way created a structured teacher certification program.

Go players who wish to teach in schools often face scrutiny as well as background checks. This is as it should be for those working with children, but at the moment they have virtually nothing to indicate that they are indeed qualified teachers. A National Go Teacher Program would ameliorate that issue by giving schools and other institutions some confidence that the potential go teacher is qualified, and is supported by a national organization.

Proposal

This proposal asks the following:

1. The AGA Board approve in principle the creation of a National Go Teacher Program.
2. The AGA Board instruct the president to create a committee to oversee the National Go Teacher Program.
3. The AGA Board instruct the president to document past and future teaching program and certification activities to the extent possible.

Addendum – Launch Steps and Plan

Preparatory Tasks

- Compile a list of all teachers who have taken part in past Teacher Certification Workshops.
- Create list of potential committee members.
 - There are tons of passionate teachers who are not overly committed to AGA and AGF activities already, and it would be great to include them in the committee.
 - The committee should probably be chaired by a more experienced AGA/AGF organizer.

Follow-Up Tasks from Prior Years

- Contact those who have completed (past) Teacher Certification Workshops and send them full-sized and wallet-sized certificates as needed.
- Compile curricula used in prior years

Priorities for Launching Program

- Determine standards for teacher certification
- Design curriculum for Teacher Certification Workshops.
 - This workshop should be held annually at Congress, but a good curriculum could ideally be utilized for Teacher Certification Workshops elsewhere as well.

Launch Timeline

- February 2020: AGA Board Approval
- March 2020: Committee Chair confirmed and committee members invited
- April-May 2020: Curriculum audit of past workshops
- June 2020: Confirmation of curriculum for 2020 US Go Congress
- July 2020: Past Teacher Certification Workshop participants, professional teachers, and Teachers of the Year contacted regarding their certificates
- August 2020: New Teacher Certification Workshop piloted at 2020 US Go Congress
- September 2020: Report on first activities of the National Go Teacher Program submitted to AGA board for fall meeting

AGA Financial Support for Tournaments System

Summary

The purpose of this system is to promote and support major regionally oriented tournaments that will attract greater numbers of players. We expect these events to be annual, and the premier event within the region during that year. For this purpose, we have designed an algorithm that allocates financial support appropriately for regions, which we are calling catchment areas, of different size both geographically and in terms of Go playing population.

The system for organizing and applying for these funds is similar to what we use for supporting State Championships [\[link to State Championship webpage\]](#). Chapters within the region must come together to select a primary organizer, who will work with the AGA to ensure that established standards are met. We hope that such selections will be unanimously approved; but there are voting rules for cases in which the selection is contested. (see State Championship election standards)

Our way of providing funds to all areas of the county is to specify catchment areas. Each catchment area will be eligible to obtain financial support for one event each year. Where States are large and population sparse, the State and catchment area will be the same. i.e. Ohio, Florida, Oregon. California and Texas may choose to be divided into two catchment areas, due to their size and population. If deemed appropriate by all concerned, adjoining States may join to have a single event. In some cases where States are small and closely grouped, this is mandated.

The multi-state catchment areas are:

Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont
Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island
New York, New Jersey, Delaware
Maryland, West Virginia, Washington DC

All other catchment areas are States

Note: the catchment area definition is used only to determine who the organizers will be, and the location of the event. It places no restriction on who may compete.

States running Championships may use that tournament as its annual catchment area event.

Qualification Requirements

Tournament must be organized by current Chapter(s) of the AGA.

Chapter(s) must be chosen by agreement with all chapters in the catchment area.

An application [link to application] for recognition must be received a minimum of 45 days prior to play.

An approved budget will be required a minimum of 30 days prior to play.

AGA reimbursement will be provided only after receiving an accounting which shall permit a maximum of the lesser of \$200 or 25% of the AGA financial support to be retained by the host Chapter(S). (Large upfront expenses such as venue deposits may be provided ahead as needed.)

Tournament must be ratable under AGA requirements for rating tournaments.

We prefer a minimum of 4 rounds and 2 days of play; but the AGA coordinator will work with organizers to create a premier event in the time available in the local area.

AGA code of conduct will be in force during the tournament.

Tournament must be announced in the AGA E-Journal a minimum of 22 days prior to play.

A minimum entry fee of \$5.00 is required.

The event should be geographically distant (~ 75 miles or more) from any other supported event within six months.

Tournament entry must be available to amateur players at all levels. (But multiple sections restricting by strength, or by other qualifications, such as those required for State Championship competition is permitted.)