

MINUTES OF THE AGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sunday, 29 January 2006, 7 PM, EST

Attending: Board members: Allan Abramson, Yuan Zhou, Bob Barber, Willard Haynes, Mike Bull, Roy Laird, Jeff Shaevel, President Mike Lash, and Secretary Polly Pohl

The draft minutes for the 18 December Board meeting were approved without corrections, so Roy Laird will post them on the AGA web site.

Allan Abramson introduced former Treasurer Polly Pohl as the new Secretary.

The President presented his report:

a. ING Funding-

Ernest Brown, President of American Ing Goe (AIG) wrote a letter to Mike Lash, President of the AGA advising that all funding requests to the Ing Foundation need to go through American Ing Goe. This means we can no longer budget the Ing money far in advance, but must break the budget into smaller items to be approved individually. Mike said this has been done already to get funding for Terry Benson and Chris Kirschner to fly to Korea to attend a Rules Committee meeting. The approval was official within a few days of the request.

It's not clear if the change in procedure was due to a lack of satisfaction with the use of the money so far and if the money will be harder to get in the future. Ernest Brown said the top priority of the Ing foundation is to promote go to youth in America.

The FY06 Ing budget that was approved in July was sent to the California AIG for approval. It's not clear whether it will be approved as is or if they will request more information or if they will reject certain items.

Treasurer Ulo Tamm has prepared a spreadsheet showing Ing expenses and surpluses for the life of the grant. Roy Laird said that the European Go Federation has taken 15% or so of their grant over the years for other, non-Ing related purposes, and we should do likewise in our accounting. Therefore the "surplus" for each year of the \$80,000 grant should be reduced by \$10,000 when we figure out which funds belong in an earmarked Ing fund. No one disagreed. Roy Laird said we should be able to add an amount for administration equal to 10-15 percent of the money spent. Mike Lash said each line item should be raised by the appropriate amount to add what the AGA needs to administer the funds.

Yuan Zhou asked if Mike Lash had submitted the requested report on historical spending of the Ing funds and suggested the lack of such report may have contributed to the added supervision. Mike Lash said he has a draft report but it is incomplete. The data is good for the past two years, but the farther back we go, the data seems to be lacking. **He will send Ulo's spreadsheet to the Board, for its consideration.**

Mike Lash agreed to provide the Board with a draft report to the Ing Foundation on the past two years, within two weeks.

Polly Pohl said that when she was AGA Treasurer in the late 1990's, she used to send a report every year on how the money was spent. To make writing the report easier, whenever she sent money for an Ing tournament, she requested that the organizers take lots of pictures of the participants especially pictures of children playing go and send them to the AGA Treasurer. The reports included an accounting of the Ing donations spent and lots of pictures from Ing sponsored tournaments or events. The only feedback she got from her reports was that they loved the pictures, especially those including children.

Proposed Corporate Reorganization

Mike Lash sent a copy of an improved AGA organizational chart to the board members for their approval. After some discussion and minor changes, **the board agreed unanimously to approve the new organizational chart.** The board liked the fact that the functions were now grouped together more logically, while the old chart had each job assigned to a separate person. Mike Lash will announce the changes in the e-Journal.

Old Business

a. Priorities for the year: open discussion

Mike Lash submitted 7 ideas about possible priorities for the next year. The board added two more possibilities and much discussion followed. The board considered the following priorities:

Priorities for 2006

BOARD PRIORITIES

1. Corporate and foundation support – AGA needs to actively seek more corporate and foundation support for special events that benefit the go community, like Ing events and programs, Toyota/Denso Oza, Fujitsu, and other sponsored programs.
2. Recruitment of Executive staff – This task is too large for one person and the Board should get more involved in growing the higher level management population.

PRESIDENT'S PRIORITIES

1. Publish national tournament schedule
2. Establish national YOUTH tournament program - Address lack of organized national program (other than Redmond Cup) and create new method of selecting players for WYGC.
3. Webpage Upgrade – modernize features and electronic payment system.
4. WinTD upgrade - For AGA rated tournaments nation-wide use, hire expert programmer to clean up bugs.
5. Establish Pro Issues Committee - Develop policies for pro relations, parameters of pro and amateur leagues, and develop promotion/certification of ranks.
6. Establish training course for TDs – train dozens of AGA members to run tournaments in a standardized way.

7. Create manual for TDs, Congresses – Stop reinventing the wheel at every tournament and congress; standardize rules and applications for AGA rated events
8. Agree upon the international rep selection criteria --Current ratings? Past year's performance? Elimination tournament? Combinations of these?
9. Increase Membership

Allan Abramson opened the floor for the board to name priorities.

Fund-raising/Sponsorship

Everyone agreed that it would be desirable to secure more corporate and foundation support of go events and programs, but there's not much consensus about the best way to go about it. Willard asked if we may need a specialist? Could we afford to hire someone? Would it be worth it? Allen said it should be a board responsibility rather than a President's responsibility. It's up to the board to either do it or hire someone.

Roy Laird said that from his experience working in the non-profit sector, he knows of development consultants who will advise organizations like the AGF and the AGA. They know the world of corporate and foundation support, and they help organizations to find compatible sponsors—businesses and foundations that want to support their mission. They will draft sample proposals and set up a schedule so that the organization may focus on likely sources of funding. The AGA should focus on corporate/foundation support of tournaments, events, and special programs. Individuals are more likely to donate to the AGF, which is tax-deductible, while the AGA is not.

Allan Abramson is concerned that sponsorships of specific events are by their nature unstable and difficult to plan around. Longer term grants or a mix of both would be best. We should diversify so we can continue important programs even if we lose a sponsor.

Should we become 501c3 to allow tax-deductible donations? Roy said we can't because we're a membership organization.

All agreed: Sponsorship is a big priority.

Growing membership

Roy Laird: Another way to get more money is more members.

Jeff Shaevel agrees. Corporations will want to see that they are reaching a lot of members when they help an organization.

Allan Abramson: Growing membership is highest priority of all.

Recruitment of Executive staff

Mike Lash: Recruitment of executive staff is an important priority. This priority relates to new corporate structure.

The board should focus on finding future potential board members. Mike Lash is always recruiting. He contacts new life members, etc. to look for potential volunteers. The board needs to do the same.

Allan Abramson: Is this priority a board responsibility?

Mike Lash and Roy Laird answered, "It's a shared responsibility".

Tournament Software

Jeff: IT projects are too long term to help with this congress. Getting WINTD working should be top priority short-term. Should pick one software program and get it working well. Need to identify US Open TD and make sure he knows the tournament software and it's working well.

Mike Lash: We need to get a better program without bugs. May cost \$\$ to get better results. Need a budget and a schedule: project director.

Web page upgrade--high or low priority?

Congress Organization Manual

Bob Barber: Used Ken Koester's manual to run 2002 Congress. This manual is being upgraded currently. This manual has been sent to N.C. They seem happy with it.

It seemed there were too many priorities to figure out which were most important to focus the group's limited resources on. A suggestion was made that the board look at the list of 9 potential priorities and vote on what priorities are most important to each board member.

Each board member gets 5 votes and uses one vote per item. The votes will be collected by Polly Pohl by Friday night. She will tabulate the votes and report to the board via e-mail to show what issues are most important to the board.

b. Web Store:

Roy Laird is exploring the possibility of an AGA Web store. We can offer unique values—not compete with vendors by selling equipment & books. Things like demo boards, organization materials for teachers, AGA caps, mugs, bumper stickers and tote bags, etc. Priority is streamlining credit card system. Program a shopping cart.

Jeff suggested using Café Press. They have an existing infrastructure for creating small stores. They're terrific for publishing and promoting arms. This way people searching Café press may find the AGA. We could reach new audience.

Roy: We will look into it and see if it fits the need.

Bob Barber: Would there be a problem with vendors? We don't want to hurt them.

Roy: This is a potential source of revenue that doesn't rely on corporate support.

Allan: I think it's important to be AGA specific not general go items

Mike Bull: PBS gives out things for certain levels of donation. We could do that.

Bob Barber. I would support the store if it doesn't hurt go vendors.

Allan: **Consensus is to approve concept of web store as long as it doesn't compete with established vendors.**

c. Adjournment

Allan Abramson proposed that we adjourn and hold over the other agenda items. Allan will send out a calendar of monthly meetings for the rest of the year.

Roy moved to adjourn

Willard seconded. All agreed. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 EST.

Six of the Seven board members sent their votes on priorities by the deadline. The results of the vote are:

Pro issues committee	6
Win TD upgrade	5
Increase membership	4
International representatives selection criteria	4
National Tournament Schedule	4
Web page upgrade	3
Youth tournament program	3
Training course for TDs	1