

**MINUTES**  
**AGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**Sunday, February 25, 2007 – 8:00 PM EST**

Meeting called to order by: Roy Laird  
Type of meeting: Regular monthly conference call  
Secretary: Pauline Pohl

**Attendees:**

Roy Laird (At Large) Chairman  
Paul Celmer (Eastern Region)  
Chuck Robbins (Eastern Region)  
Robert Barber (Central Region)  
Roy Schmidt (Central Region)  
Willard Haynes (Western Region)  
Gordon Castanza (Western Region)  
Mike Lash (President)  
Pauline Pohl (Secretary)

**1. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

Pauline reported that Phil Waldron had contacted her regarding the minutes of the annual meeting in August. He asked for a correction so that it doesn't say that he was there as a representative of the Canadian Go Association. Roy Laird said he would correct those minutes and post them to the AGA web site.

Action items: Motion to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2007 meeting  
Motion- Gordon Castanza  
Second- Willard Haynes  
Approved unanimously

**2. President's Report-Mike Lash**

**a) Ing Funds**

Mike Lash reported that the AGA submitted a request for \$45,000 to the Ing Foundation through Ernest Brown of American Ing Goe. The request was for three events at the Go Congress: \$17,000 for youth scholarships, \$23,000 for the Ing Cup,

and \$5,000 for the Redmond Cup. He said he hasn't heard from the Foundation yet, and we need to make a decision on whether to proceed with the events at the Congress as was done last year using reserve funds and hoping for reimbursement.

Chuck Robbins noted that the \$17,000 for youth scholarships was already approved at the last Board meeting.

Willard Haynes made a motion to authorize funding the Ing Cup (\$23K) and the Redmond Cup (\$5K) using AGA reserves.

Mike Lash suggested a friendly amendment noting that reserve funds will be replenished dollar-for-dollar if we do get a grant from the Ing Foundation.

Roy Schmidt seconded the motion with the amendment.

Discussion: Chuck Robbins voiced concern that \$23K for the Ing tournament benefits very few members, and if the AGA were doing the funding, it may be too costly. Bob Barber argued that we went through this debate last year and decided to fund it and the Ing Foundation did come through with the funding, so the event is important to them and it is likely that they will fund it again. There was some discussion about adjusting the level of funding and/or the number of participants, but those decisions were postponed and a vote was called on the question.

The motion was approved unanimously, with the dollar amount being the upper limit of the budget rather than a mandated amount.

## **b) US Youth Go Championship Qualifiers**

Roy Laird commended President Lash, Nicole Casanta and the USYGC team for the fact that eight qualification tournaments are scheduled. Mike Lash said that the only issue before the Board regarding the Youth Championships at this time is which rules to use for the tournaments. At the last board meeting, a motion was passed to require the use of Ing rules, because we are hoping to eventually get Ing Foundation funding for the events. Mike Lash said there are several problems with this mandate. The rules had already been published stating that AGA rules would be used. Many of the tournament directors and the children entered in the tournaments will not be familiar with the rules and it could cause problems. Also the counting requires that all sets of stones are complete, and Ing equipment is not available at all of the venues. In addition to the problems with equipment and counting, Mike Lash said the original idea of the Youth Championship was to create an AGA tournament to choose a representative to the World Youth Go Championship. (Which admittedly uses Ing

rules) Even if the Ing Foundation chooses not to sponsor the U.S. Youth Go Championship, we would like to continue the tournament.

Bob Barber made a motion to rescind last month's motion to use the Ing Rules for the U.S. Youth Go Championship. Willard Haynes seconded the motion.

Chuck Robbins raised two points: 1) If we are using this tournament to select someone to go overseas to a tournament that uses Ing rules, wouldn't it make sense to use them here? And 2) If we are trying to get Ing Foundation funding for the tournament it would show respect and good faith if we use the Ing rules.

Mike Lash asked which is more important to the Ing Foundation, the rules or the name being attached to the tournament? If funding comes through, we can change the rules for next year with more time for preparation.

Roy Laird called the question. The vote was six in favor of rescinding the motion with one abstention. (Chuck Robbins)

### **c) Fundraising and marketing**

Mike Lash said he would like to identify sponsors in the \$100K-200K range to provide enough of a budget to hire full-time staff and an office for the AGA. Bob Barber and Roy Laird expressed doubts that this is a realistic goal; while a sponsor might like to support a tournament event, few would be interested in sponsoring a secretary for a year. Roy Laird said he thinks we should focus on development strategies such as opening an on-line store and developing an advertising campaign to recruit members and customers in suitable publications -- game magazines, manga/anime, Asian publications -- would be more realistic plans to grow the AGA. He questioned whether it would be a judicious use of money to pay a fundraising consultant. Roy Laird suggested that since there was no motion on the table and the discussion wasn't going anywhere that we table the topic for this month.

### **d) Rank certificates and PAGA**

Mike Lash reported that Feng Yun is opposed to the AGA issuing Rank Certificates. She thinks that the ability to issue certificates for money would be one of the key financial incentives for professionals to join the proposed Professional American Go Association (PAGA).

Gordon Castanza asked if there was a way the AGA could establish a process and turn it over to the PAGA once it is established? Bob Barber expressed concern that the rank inflation that has occurred in Japan would happen here, too. Roy Laird said the proposed system ensures an authentic rank by requiring success in tournament play, but authentication by a professional could add value. He said that he went through a similar process when qualifying for his PhD. He passed a comprehensive examination and then had to write something and be examined by a group of experts. Chuck Robbins said the two-step process could ensure validity.

Willard Haynes made a motion to ask the rank certification committee to develop a method that includes professionals in the rank certification process.

Paul Celmer seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously. Roy, being on the Committee, will take the matter to them for discussion and reporting back to the Board.

#### **e) Chapter membership drive**

For information only. No issues to decide or discuss.

#### **f) 2007 Go Congress**

Chuck Robbins has been looking at ideas to encourage attendance of American Professionals at this year's Go Congress. He is proposing a \$2000 stipend for up to 18 invited professionals. The total professional cost would be \$50,000. It will be a one-year experiment, but if it doesn't continue, there is concern that the US professionals may not return without some kind of similar compensation package. Roy Laird remarked that there was only one U.S. pro last year anyway, so there's no down side. At the Board level, we just need to decide whether to support the stipend proposal, the details of the number of pros and the amount of the stipend would be left up to the Congress organizers.

Willard Haynes made a motion to support the stipend offer to all professionals, both foreign and domestic.

Paul Celmer seconded the motion.

The motion passed by a vote of five in favor and two abstentions.

#### **g) Chinese Go Sets**

Mike Lash reported that he believes the deal is in place to accept shipment of 400 sets of equipment on the west coast. The AGA will store 100 sets in Tacoma, 100 sets in Denver, and 200 sets will be stored elsewhere. The AGA will pay shipping from the west coast to the storage places.

### **3. New Business**

None.

### **4. Schedule next monthly Meeting and Adjournment**

The next monthly Board meeting will be held Sunday, March 25, 2007 at 8:00 PM EDT.

Willard Haynes moved to adjourn the meeting. Chuck Robbins seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:48 PM EST.

Submitted by: Pauline Pohl, AGA Secretary