

Minutes
AGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Thursday, August 7, 2008 – 1:30 PM PDT

Meeting called to order by: Roy Schmidt at 1:30 PM PDT
Type of meeting: Annual Congress Board Meeting

Attendees:

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

Allan Abramson (President-elect)
Andrew Okun (Western Region board member-elect)
Mark Rubenstein (Membership services coordinator)

Absent:

Laura Kolb (Central Region)
Jie Li (At large board member-elect)

1. Approval of minutes

Gordon Castanza made a motion to accept the minutes from the July Board meeting. Willard Haynes seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

2. Call For New Agenda Items

(none)

3. Recognition of new/re-elected directors

Roy Schmidt introduced new board member Andrew Okun who was elected West Coast Representative replacing Gordon Castanza and Allan Abramson, who will be the new president effective September 1, 2008. Schmidt noted that Jie Li, the new At Large board member was unable to attend or call in. Schmidt recognized outgoing Directors Roy Laird and Gordon Castanza, thanking them for their contributions to the governance of the AGA. Laird has held key leadership positions in the AGA over many years, including president and chairman of the board. Castanza has been a tireless proponent of honesty, openness, and trust in AGA governance. The Board gave them a round of thanks, with the hopes that both would continue to support the AGA as volunteers and organizers.

4. President's Report

Mike Lash presented his monthly report:

a) Tournaments

World Mind Sports Games (WMSG)—Lash reported that the final stages of preparation for the games are underway. Uniforms have been ordered, and replicas of the uniforms will be sold on the new on-line store. The fund raising effort produced \$15,000 so far, and is continuing. Lash hopes the uniform sales will keep the tournament from going over budget.

b) Website

Lash reported that the website is not on-line yet, because of complications with the membership database. He had a meeting with Paul Matthews about getting the ratings database coordinated with the new website. Matthews said the ratings database will be open

source and accessible through the new website. Steve Colburn was appointed by Lash as the new webmaster. Colburn is adding new and exciting features to the website, in addition to the members-only section that will add value to our members and may attract new members.

c) Ing Funding

We have not received the \$45,000 Congress Support that we have requested yet, but Lash is working with Dr. Ernest Brown to get support for the Redmond Cup (\$5000), the North American Ing Masters Tournament (NAIMT) (\$23,000), and Youth Scholarship (\$17,000). The US Youth Go Championship funding has already been received and spent.

Adam Bridges, the AGA Treasurer, gave Lash a detailed report of the Ing funding and spending over the past few years. The data shows a surplus of unused Ing funds of \$12,891, which will be used only on Ing Programs that can be funded directly with the surplus or go over budget. Lash hopes to get a complete spreadsheet with more detailed historical spending records completed before he leaves office in September.

d) Transition to new President

Lash reported that he has had several meetings in-person and over the phone with president-elect Allan Abramson. He is confident the transition will continue to go smoothly. The focus now is on filling staff positions and getting programs underway. Allan Abramson added that Lash has been open and helpful, and he is confident the transition will go smoothly. He thanked Lash for all of the support he has received.

Lash said he will send all of his papers to the archivist.

Lash thanked the Board members for the tremendous support he has felt over the past four years. Roy Schmidt thanked Lash on behalf of the Board for the impressive work, ideas, programs, and initiatives he has been responsible for over the past four years. Roy Laird seconded Schmidt's remarks and the Board cheered for Lash.

(End of President's report)

5. Old Business

Revision of 2-event policy and procedures for selecting international representatives

Schmidt said the controversial clause in the policy is whether players ineligible to win a tournament leading to representing the U.S. at an international tournament should be allowed to participate in the tournament. Since there may be prize money for participating, a player may want to compete in the tournament even if they are not eligible to win.

Laird explained that the title of this item is something of a misnomer, since revision of the 2-event policy is not under consideration, and agreed that Chairman Schmidt had accurately described the most controversial revision. The current policy does not specify whether ineligible players who are otherwise eligible to participate in qualification tournaments, such as Ming-jiu Jiang in the Fujitsu, should be invited or not. The proposed change would specify that such players would NOT be invited. Laird explained that this addition basically ensures that no ineligible player wins the event, eliminating possible confusion over selecting a lower finishing player, and basically makes room for one more player at the bottom of the field. He also stated that top players naturally favor being able to play, and argue that players in qualification tournaments should face the strongest possible competition as they prepare, and the strongest players should also have more opportunities to play and further sharpen their skills; however, the proposed revision would not favor this viewpoint.

Laird also noted the addition of an endorsement section; all eligible players would be required to sign a statement that they have read and understand the policies and procedures.

Gordon Castanza made a motion to accept the new policy. Laird seconded the motion.

Schmidt asked if there was further discussion.

Lash said there are not many opportunities for professionals to compete in tournaments, and they do expect a playing fee for entering, so they would probably be in favor of a change allowing them to compete more often.

Abramson said that given the recent controversy about representation in international tournaments, he thinks that before any changes are made, the proposed changes should be circulated among interested people so they can comment. Professionals and AGA members want to know what we are discussing before new rules are adopted.

Castanza accepted an amendment to his motion to circulate the draft policy for comments from professionals and strong players before adopting the policy formally.

The Board voted unanimously to circulate the draft proposal for comments.

6. New Business

None

7. Establish time and date of next Board meeting

The next monthly conference call will be Sunday, September 7, 2008 at 8:00 EDT.

8. Adjourn

Gordon Castanza made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Willard Haynes seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously. The annual Congress Board meeting adjourned at 2:07 PM PDT.

Minutes submitted by Pauline Pohl, AGA Secretary