

# USA Badminton Board Meeting Minutes

**Date:** December 5, 2024

**Time:** 11:07 AM Pacific

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## Roll Call

**Board Members Present:** Pavan Vedere, Patty Pflaging, Eva Lee (left at 12:31 PM PST), Iris Wang (left at 1:00 PM PST), Philip Varghese, Paula Lynn O. Cao Hok (left at 1:05 PM PST), Ken Wong (joined at 11:11 AM PST)

**Board Members Absent:** Nibu Paul, Richard Alcaraz

Board Members Excused: None

**Staff and Counsel:** John Ruger, USAB Interim CEO; and Laura Peeters, outside counsel

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## Conflict of Interest Disclosures

- **Pavan:** Since COVID, the number of junior tournaments organized by badminton clubs in NorCal has dropped significantly. To address this, nonprofits and other non-USAB member organizations are hosting more practice tournaments, giving juniors opportunities to compete and grow. Pavan disclosed that he actively volunteers with various organizations and clubs in NorCal. Also, Pavan is continuing to serve as NorCal rep for Junior Advisory Group (JAG), and no one has stepped into that position since he joined the USAB board as an At-Large Director (a board seat that is elected by USAB members to represent the USAB member community.)
  - **Laura:** Reminded the board of the importance of maintaining confidentiality and prioritizing the organization's interests. Suggested completing conflict-of-interest forms for 2025, even though they were updated in Q4 2024 and the USOPC Compliance Team has approved USAB's request that the forms do not have to be resubmitted for 2025, since that would be less than 90 days later.
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## Agenda Items

1. **Delays in Monthly Junior Ranking Publication (Dec 1 Date was Missed)**

- Pavan provided a review of the junior ranking history (to the level that he is aware of) from 2015 onwards, detailing contract periods and ranking publication timelines using a diagrammatic representation.
  - Currently, membership registrations and renewals are managed in ClubLocker (<https://usabadminton.clublocker.com/login>). Tournament registrations, matches and scores are managed using Tournament Software, which is used for badminton tournaments worldwide (<https://www.tournamentsoftware.com/>). Results for USAB-sanctioned junior tournaments are uploaded and processed by ClubLocker to produce the monthly junior ranking results.
  - **Query:** Pavan inquired about the delay.
  - **Response:** John explained that Club Locker was working on the rankings, and result files were sent to them earlier that day.
2. **International Federation Director (IFD) Appointment**
- **Action:** Ken appointed Pavan as the IFD, replacing Fred Teng who resigned.
3. **Delay in Adult Nationals Prospectus Announcement**
- **Query:** Paula questioned the delay in the announcement.
  - **Response:** John will follow up with staff.
4. **USOPC Assembly Update**
- **Summary:** John provided updates from the assembly:
    - John discussed decertification with Holly when he met her at the assembly.
    - He met with the LA28 head to explore hosting a test badminton tournament at USC's Galen Center.
    - He noted challenges with Galen Center costs but expressed intent to pursue the idea and indicated that BWF was interested in this idea being executed.
5. **USAB Annual Assembly Update**
- **Details:** John provided an update on plans for the December 14, 2024 assembly. <https://usabadminton.org/usa-badminton-annual-assembly-2024-on-december-14/>
  - **Feedback:** Patty suggested collecting questions in advance for more thorough responses.
6. **2025 Junior Nationals Date and Venue**
- **Query:** Pavan asked about the date and venue.
  - **Response:** John indicated it is not yet decided.
7. **Backup for February 2025 ORC Tournament**
- **Query:** Pavan inquired about contingency plans if the Lewisville facility isn't ready.
  - **Response:** No backup plan currently exists. John to follow up with staff.
8. **Coaching Director Position**
- **Concern:** Philip highlighted an error in the job posting indicating the position opens on January 1, 2025, instead of 2026.
  - **Resolution:** John will correct the posting.

## 9. Independent Director Position and Junior Community At-Large Director Proposal

- Ken gave an update that the Nominating and Governance committee (NGC) is in the process of evaluating candidates for the open Independent Director position
  - Pavan proposed converting the vacant independent director seat (after Fred Teng's resignation) into a Junior Community At-Large Director position or adding a new Director position. (There are currently four independent director seats, per the USAB bylaws.)
  - **Motion:** Patty moved to conceptually agree to the proposal with detailed criteria, implementation and timing to be discussed and voted on later.
    - **Seconded by:** Pavan
    - **Vote:**
      - **Yes:** 4
      - **Abstain:** 1
      - **Oppose:** 2
    - **Outcome:** Motion passed.
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## Executive Session

- **Time In:** 12:50 PM
  - **Time Out:** 1:27 PM
  - **Topics Discussed:**
    - Legal challenges facing the organization.
    - Audit-related issues.
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## 10. Financial Update

- **2025 Budget:** John presented a high-level budget, highlighting:
    - Increased allocations for athlete support and staff salaries.
    - Additional staff and contractors required for effective operations.
    - Membership dues to be increased, which will partially fund increased operational expenses. (Membership dues increase had been approved for the 2024 budget but had not been enacted that year.)
  - **Next Steps:** A more detailed 2025 budget will be presented for board approval by year-end.
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## 11. Updates by CEO

- **ARC By-laws:** John emphasized the need for the ARC to have by-laws and committed to drafting them if the ARC continued to have delays in producing them on their own.
- **Athlete Elections:** Updates provided.

- **Para Director Transition:**
    - Steve Kearney stepped down from Para Director position and will now focus on finances.
    - The board recognized his contributions to the Para program.
    - Yuko Kawasaki appointed as new Para Director.
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## 12. Recognition of Paris Olympic Athletes

- **Suggestion:** Ken proposed sending congratulatory letters to all athletes representing the USA at the Paris Olympics.
  - Staff to work on preparing the letters
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## 13. Adjournment

- **Motion:** Pavan moved to adjourn the meeting.
- **Second:** Ken seconded the motion.
- **Time Adjourned:** 1:45 PM