

USA Badminton Board Meeting Minutes

Date: February 1, 2025

Time: 2:06 PM Pacific

Roll Call:

Board Members Present: Pavan Vedere, Iris Wang, Ken Wong, Patty Pflaging, Nibu Paul (left at 5:07 PM), Eva Lee, Philip Varghese (2:33 PM)

Board Members Absent: None

Board Members Excused: Paula Lynn O. Cao Hok

Staff and Counsel Present: John Ruger, Trenton Szeto, Esther Lin, Laura Peeters (Outside Counsel), Steve Kearney, Thai Pham, Justin Rogers

Observers Present: 1916 Vaquero Yvonne, Geetha Rasamsetti, Harry Ma, Jacqueline Myers, Mary Ann Bowles, Matt Fogarty, Pedro Garcia, Uday, Ben

Conflict of Interest Disclosures: None declared.

Waiver of 30-Day Notice: Waived.

Moment of Silence:

A moment of silence was observed in respect for the victims of the DC plane crash, which included members of the figure skating community.

1. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

1. December 5, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes:

- **Vote:** Yes – Pavan, Patty, Ken, Philip; Abstain – Eva, Iris, Nibu; Opposed – None
- **Result:** Approved

2. December 9, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes:

- **Vote:** Yes – Pavan, Patty, Ken, Philip; Abstain – Eva, Iris, Nibu; Opposed – None
- **Result:** Approved

2. Board Chair Election:

- **Nominee:** Ken Wong (Nominated by Patty)
- **Vote:** Yes – 6; Opposed – None; Abstain – None. (Philip Varghese was not present during the vote)
- **Result:** Ken Wong elected as Board Chair

3. Election of IFD:

- **Nominee:** Pavan Vedere (Nominated by Ken)
- **Motion:** Patty
- **Second:** Ken
- **Vote:** Yes – 5; Abstain – 1
- **Result:** Pavan Vedere elected as IFD

- **Discussion:** Following the election, Eva sought clarification on the criteria for nominating candidates for the IFD position. Board members referred her to Section 7.25.4, which states that a sitting board member may nominate any USAB member who is at least 18 years old, in good standing, and does not need to be a board member. Eva suggested allowing non-board members time to express their interest, so the board could consider nominations beyond the current board members. Pavan suggested that we could do that and run IFD elections in the next board meeting. This suggestion was unanimously agreed upon. Staff was tasked with posting an invitation for interest on the website. Elections for the IFD position must be completed by March 31st, with Pavan continuing in the role until then.

4. Staff Updates:

- **Steve Kearney:** Provided a budget update related to Para badminton.
- **Trenton Szeto:** Provided updates on upcoming events:
 - The JN site will be finalized within a few weeks. JN is expected to conclude around July 4th.
- **Thai Pham:** Working with Omaha Sports for the US Open (June 24-29). Awaiting BWF approvals on flooring and lighting. BWF contribution increased from \$180K to \$200K with no revenue split. Monthly meetings between USAB and BWF are ongoing.
- **Esther Lin:** Provided updates on international athlete performance.
- **John Ruger:**
 - Chair of the Ethics and Grievance Committee resigned; another member resigning by the end of February. Volunteers needed for the Ethics and Grievance Committee.
 - In December 2023, the Board approved an increase in membership dues to \$50 for 2024, followed by a further increase to \$60 in 2025. However, the increase was not implemented in 2024 and will instead take effect in 2025, with membership dues set at \$60.

5. Athlete Report:

- Eva suggested board member emails should be published for athletes' accessibility. Laura advised a single contact email for the Chair instead.
- Eva inquired if pool play format can be used in Selection trials instead of elimination format. John suggested appointing a Junior Review Task Force to look into this matter and other junior related suggestions. Laura reminded that 1/3rd of the task force should be athletes. Ken suggested including TOAG representation.
- **John:** ARC to review the draft bylaws. Eva supports working with the draft and expanding athlete representation. John and Eva to discuss further and provide recommendations.
- **Athlete Director Vacancy:** Trenton to repost the position.

6. Yonex Shuttlecock Concerns:

- Parents prefer AS30 over ACL30. John indicated that the Yonex contract is valid until 2028.

7. Shuttle Time Initiative:

- **Eva:** Suggested considering Shuttle Time for grassroots development.

- **Trenton:** BPAC and USAB staff exploring its restart.
- **Patty:** Past Shuttle Time challenges included finding school coaches.

8. Budget Review:

- The board reviewed various aspects of the budget and concurred that budget need more work and that it will be approved in the next meeting or via email

9. Bylaw Revisions:

- Patty presented the proposed revisions for Section 7.6.c and the combining of Sections 7.6.a and 7.8.5.
- **Section 7.6.c:** This revision clarifies the criteria for the Coach Director board position. Specifically, the “Level 1 certified coach” requirement refers to BWF’s Level 1 coach certification, which includes the completion of an in-person assessment, and not to any prior definition (previously, USAB’s Level 1 certification did not align with BWF’s).
- **Section 7.6.a:** This section outlines the process for appointing an Independent Director for the first term.
- **Section 7.8.5:** This section covers the vote for retaining an Independent Director for subsequent terms.
- Patty made a motion to approve the bylaw revisions for Section 7.6.c and to combine Sections 7.6.a and 7.8.5.
- Pavan seconded the motion.
 - **Vote:** Yes – 6; Abstain – 1
 - **Result:** Approved

10. Proposed ARC Bylaws:

- Discussed potential policy if ARC fails to meet responsibilities. The board decided to let ARC determine its approach..

11. Independent Director Selection:

- Three candidates applied. Elections to be held in February after Ethics & Grievance Committee vetting.

12. Decertification Process:

- Hearing scheduled for April. Mediation to take place in February.

13. Future Board Meetings & Town Halls:

- To be scheduled after John and Ken work out a schedule offline

14. Executive Session: 5:32PM to 6:02PM

- **Topics Discussed:**
 - Legal challenges.

15. Meeting Adjournment: 6:02 PM