United States Association of Blind Athletes  
Board Meeting Minutes  
November 19, 2010  
10:00am - 4:00 pm MDT  
Colorado Springs, Colorado

I. Call to Order:


Absent: Walter Dean

Staff: Mark Lucas, Ryan Ortiz, John Potts, Rich Cardillo, Tiffanie Saxton (Intern)

Guest: Chris Jordan

III. President’s Welcome, Comments and Review of the Agenda:

Szott recapped the 2010 Common Sight Common Vision Breakfast held earlier in the morning stating there were nearly 200 people in attendance to hear the inspirational story of keynote speaker Army Master Sergeant Jeff Mittman. Szott thanked the board for their hard work and support especially in light of these hard economic times. He further thanked the board for their many contributions during the past year and emphasized continued promotion and awareness of the USABA mission to help increase the revenue stream needed to add quality programs in the future.

Szott especially thanked Mr. Miller for his many years of service and contributions to USABA.

IV. Approval of June 9, 2010 Minutes:

Motion was made by Ramsey to approve minutes, seconded by Reiff. Motion Passed.

V. Old Business: Hall of Fame Induction:

Potts provided an update on USABA Hall of Fame. Continuing the induction of the class of 1977-2004, the 1984 Men’s Goalball Team was inducted during the 2010 National Championships held in Delaware in June and three additional individuals were inducted during the 2010 Common Sight Common Vision breakfast including Michael May, Kevin Szott, and Oral Miller. Potts added that over the next two years, USABA plans to induct the remaining class of candidates from 1976-2004 at selected events. The nomination process for the Class of 2004-2008 will begin after the 2012 London Paralympic Games which will promoted to the membership through various means including mail, email, facebook and our website.

Miller asked if there was any consideration of housing a USABA Hall of Fame plaque in a physical location such as the US Olympic Training Center. Lucas stated he would contact the USOC to make a formal request.

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VI. Bylaw Changes:

Prior to the meeting, Lucas sent out to the BOD for consideration two (2) proposed Amendments to the Bylaws, which are as follows:

1. Elimination of Chapter Representatives on Board: Refer to Article III. Sections 3, 8, 9, 10 and Section IV Section 3 & 4.

Staff is recommending that we change the name of USABA Chapters to “USABA Sports Clubs”. The proposal includes USABA working with key partners who serve people who are blind and visually impaired including current USABA Chapters to recruit members, market and partner on programs. USABA would not charge USABA Sports Club a membership fee and each club that meets the eligibility requirements would be permitted to use USABA’s name or logo and receive a requested certificate of insurance for $25.00.

Bushland made a motion to reduce the board of director’s size from fourteen (14) to thirteen (13) members. Parrigin’s seconded the motion. Motion passed.

2. In the Discrimination policy: Article III. Section 5 a recommendation was to add the words “and gender expression”

The stated rationale behind the proposed amendment change is for USABA to meet discrimination guidelines as outlined in some foundation eligibility requirements. Bushland asked if this expression is consistent with the USOC bylaws and that of other similar organizations. By changing the bylaw to include “and gender expression”, O’Brien stated that she believes that this is a politically correct statement and she further suggested that the BOD Governance Committee consider the possibility of omitting “Vet Status” as stated in our current bylaws. The Committee will review this request and inform the BOD’s about their findings during the next Tele-Conference meeting.

The motion to add “and gender expression” to the bylaws was put forward by O’Brien and seconded by Lieberman. Motion passed.

VII. Committee Reports:

a. Nominating Committee Report (Foster):

Foster reported that there are three individual board members whose terms will expire this year. Four candidates were put forward to the board.

1. Lieberman put forward Matt LaCortiglia an Adaptive Physical Education Teacher and Athletic Program Department Head at Perkins School for the Blind in Massachusetts.
2. Foster put forward Chris Jordan who was present at the meeting providing the BOD a brief personal background.
3. Miller expressed his desire to run again for the BOD.
4. Current board member Walter Dean has indicated that he will not run again for his board seat.
5. Prior to the meeting, Foster emailed the BOD Dr. Michael Bina’s letter of Intent and Resume.

In summary, the four names up for nomination to the BOD for three positions include: Oral Miller, Matt LaCortiglia, Michael Bina, and Chris Jordan. The BOD’s conducted a paper ballot vote and the
three individuals who received the most votes and voted to the BOD include Oral Miller, Dr. Michael Bina and Chris Jordan.

This past summer, Foster mailed out two surveys to each Board member. One document was a Skills Assessment Survey asking each member to self evaluate asking each member to list what skills each she/he brings to the organization. The second document was a True Self Assessment of the BOD which allows us to determine the BOD’s strengths and weaknesses. Half the BOD responded back to Foster. The results indicate that some of the BOD’s strengths include business planning skills and financing. One of the assessed weaknesses of the BOD in the survey of the BOD is in fundraising.

It was suggested to BOD that a possible “Junior Advisory Committee” be formed of young athlete members who then have one person from that advisory committee attend the USABA BOD’s meetings for the purpose of improving athlete communications.

b. Finance Committee Report**:  
Bushland’s provided 2010 Finance Update and 2011 Proposed Budget 2011 (refer to attached reports).

c. Sports Technical (Ramsey):  
No Report

d. Fundraising Committee (Ortiz/O’Brien):

O’Brien explained to the BOD’s that fundraising is typically a relationship-based effort and one of the weakest links within USABA and the board. O’Brien challenged the BOD to become more actively engaged in fundraising and suggested that each board member establish one of one relationship with perspective donors to acquire new gifts.

Also disused were fundraising results from the 2010 Common Sight Common Vision Breakfast which raised approximately $20,000 to $25,000 dollars.

Finally, Reiff informed the BOD that Wal-Mart sponsored a golf tournament in Little Rock, Arkansas, in August. Reiff also reported that earlier in the year, the staff submitted a grant proposal through the Wal-Mart Foundation that was denied. Reiff added that he would attempt to position the staff’s proposal for 2011.

e. Governance/Disciplinary Committee (Zorn-Hudson):

Zorn-Hudson and Potts informed the BOD about a situation with athlete, Nick Gassway. Mr. Gassaway owes more than $700 to the Utah Foundation for the Blind and Visually Impaired and USABA. Furthermore, in the past, he has written insufficient fund checks and provided credit card numbers that do not work.

Zorn-Hudson sent a letter to Mr. Gassway via email explaining the disciplinary action that USABA would implement until he paid his incurred debt. The BOD put forth a motion by Foster to exclude Mr. Gassway from all USABA sponsored activities until he paid off all his debt. Seconded by Bushland. Motion passed.
f. **IBSA Report (Miller):**

Miller informed the BOD’s that he attended an IBSA strategic planning session this past summer in Manila (refer to re-ahead document). Miller will continue to update the board on any progress.

VIII. **2010 Dashboard Update (Lucas):**

The USABA staff spent considerable time providing the BOD key initiatives, accomplishments and markers from the 2010 Dashboard (refer to attached document).

The staff also informed the BOD of several major initiatives that are included in the 2011 Dashboard (Refer to attached document).

IX. **New Business-Update Board Manual:**

Miller suggested that the USABA Dashboard be redesigned so that those who are blind and visually impaired could read it in a more accessible format. He added a recommendation that the staff use the Dashboard as an internal management document whereas the BOD would only receive a quarterly update in Microsoft Word format.

X. **2011 Board Schedule-Next Board Meeting:**

The BOD agreed on the following tele-conference schedule:
- Tuesday, March 22, 2011 at 8:00pm EDT, 6:00 MDT, and 5:00pm PDT.
- Sunday, June 12, 2011 at 8:00pm EDT.
- Wednesday, September 21, 2011 at 8:00pm EDT.
- The face-to-face meeting TBA in November or early December/

XI. **Adjourn:**

Szott made a motion to close the meeting. Bushland seconded the motion. Motion passed to adjourn the meeting at 4:15p.m. MDT.
I Call to Order:
In the morning, the BOD and staff participated in a team building session by participating in the Sport of Goalball.

The planning session came to order at 2:05pm MDT. Resident athlete; Karissa Whitesell, Paralympic Cyclist and Tim Willis, US Paralympics were present. Whitesell spoke to the board about her cycling training and how USABA has been an important part of her success. Board members asked Whitesell several pertinent questions.

Strategic Plan 2007-2017
Lucas read to the BOD and the staff the current USABA mission and vision statements. After a healthy discussion, the board and staff agreed that the mission and vision statements still remain accurate and vibrant.

2010-2012 USABA Goals

The BOD and staff discussed the current goals as outlined in the 2007-2012 Strategic plan:

Goal # 1: Research, evaluate and implement board evaluation by December 2010 and by January 2011 have in place an operational plan that compliments USABA's strategic plan. Reached goal by implementing new manual and creating the Dashboard to help with the strategic planning of USABA.

Goal # 2: Build our infrastructure by having in place a data base management system, website and social network system which are 100% functionally and complete by December 2011 which allows us to reach projected membership and revenue goals by December 2012. USABA has a facebook page and is updating the website to be more user friendly and appealing to the public.

Goal #3: Secure, develop, and invest in a staff which allows organization reach projected membership and revenue goals by December 2012. USABA will try to acquire funding through the USOC or US Paralympics to hire another staff member to concentrate on the military programs.

Goal #4: By December 2012, increase the number of members 10% annually. Through the Ability Sports Education Camps membership increased by 0 to 5% in 2010. Strategy is to reach out to the 56,000 students who are visually impaired and who attend public schools.

Goal #5: Develop a platform to create and sustain programmatic strategic alliances adding at least 5 new partners annually and while sustaining 75% of the previous year’s partners. In 2010, USABA secured new Military dollars to help support the military sports camps and other recreational activities for veterans.

Goal #6: Create a Robust Fundraising Plan to Increase the Resource Engine with a 6% organic growth rate per year through corporate sponsors, donors, foundations and special events (excluding athlete events).
2011 1st Quarter Goals
- Have the redesign website up and running by March of 2011.
- USABA will sponsor a Paralympic Sports Camp at the U.S. Olympic Training Center. Bring in kids from the Cleveland Society for the Blind to compete against teens from Junior Blind of America located in Los Angeles.
- Potentially hire a new administrative staff member to help in the office.
- Continue to look to hire one staff member with the Department of Defense VA Grant money.
- Implement the VA Grants and Department of Defense (DoD) grants.
- Host the 2011 IBSA World Youth Championships which USABA has conducted every two years and on off years of the Paralympic years.
- Begin the infrastructure of the Regional Goalball Championships leading up to the London 2012 Paralympic Games.
- Continue to work with partners on ten Sports Education Camps.
- Identify names and strategies of those individuals within USABA who will call potential donor individuals.
- Determine board needs and Recruit board members who fulfill needs.

2011 2nd Quarter Goals
- Determine which marketing arena USABA would like to Partner with “Ideal Partnerships.”
- Create and implement Corporate Donor Plan as well as packaging ideas. Further, attract new sponsors and thank those who have been prior sponsors.
- Rewrite and standardize the structure of Sports Manuals such as Cycling, Swimming etc. and update the manuals on a quarterly basis.
- Recruit and Manage volunteer coordinators for each sport.
- Try to better coordinate and communicate with the volunteer you presently have and will acquire during 2011.

2011 3rd Quarter Goals
- Continue to create the Recurring Gift Strategy.
- Through re-designed website, developing giving levels and each levels benefits.
- Design print packaging to mail out to current and future members.
- Continue to design Volunteer Strategies to acquire more volunteers to help work events, camps etc.
- Continue to have a 6% revenue growth per year. In 2010, estimated a $560,000 budget. As of this date, USABA is behind in this strategy. In 2011, USABA estimated a budget of $593,000.

2011 4th Quarter Goals
- Continue to develop strategies to identify and retain board members/recruitment replacements that meet objectives of succession plan as current members leave board.
- Reach two hundred (200) youth athletes of which one hundred (100) become members.
- Continue to create annual strategy to exhibit and/or attend conferences in order to get the world out about USABA.
- Continue to publish articles in professional trade journals.
- Increase Foundation Grants by 7% annually.
- Continue to create the Public School Strategic Instructional Sports DVD series such as the Cycling DVD.

Four Main Topics were raised for discussion that includes the following:
1. Fundraising: O’Brien explained to the BOD’s the Fundraising Pyramid. She explained that the fewest number of people are on the top of the Pyramid providing the organization the larger gifts and the larger
number of people who are at the on the bottom of the Pyramid provide the small gifts. She recommended that she will be working with her committee to determine how we increase the number of people making small gifts and secure recurring gifts. USABA needs to identify Patron; those individuals who would most likely make a donation to the organization. The current membership today is made up of mostly athletes who typically do not have a great deal of discretionary income to make any donations. Therefore, USABA needs to create a mailing list to expand the base of the Pyramid and have its members contribute to a recurring gift annually.

2. **Youth Development & Membership**
   Szott appointed a Youth Development Committee which is composed of Dr. Lauren Lieberman, Jim Mastro, and Matt LaCortiglia. Lieberman presented a power point presentation to the BOD’s on her Sport Ability Camps that she and her staff at Brockport College conduct each summer (refer to attached document). USABA potentially gains memberships through Lieberman’s camps by having the students exposed to sports and recreation activities for the blind and visually impaired as well as being informed about USABA.

   Lieberman inquired if USABA has the funds in the 2011 budget to send her to conferences which advance the mission of the organization. Lieberman suggested that USABA hire a Graduate Assistant to help in the office whereby USABA will pay that individual a small stipend or pay for their tuition for the number of required credits the Graduate Assistant would receive for their services.

3. **Staff Plan**
   The BOD and staff discussed the idea of adding an additional staff to the USABA office. Lucas expressed some concerns including budget and physical space constraints. The BOD requested Lucas develop a and present to the BOD a staff plan during the January 2011 board meeting which is when the 2011 budget is expected to be approved. It was suggested that staff send the amount required to hire another staff person one week before the

**Adjourn:** Szott made a motion to close the meeting. Remensnyder seconded the motion. Motion passed to adjourn the meeting at 6:00pm MDT