



**U.S. Association of Blind Athletes
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes – December 11, 2024**

Present:

Mark Ackermann, Chair
Skye Arthur-Banning, Vice Chair
Gary Remensnyder, Treasurer
Amy Wasson, Secretary
David Cohen, Board Member
Jennifer Demby, Board Member
Eve Wright-Taylor, Board Member
Eliana Mason, Athlete Board Member
Zach Buhler, Athlete Board Member
Calahan Young, Athlete Board Member
John Kusku, Chair of Ethics & Judicial Committee
Spencer Higgins, Ethics & Judicial Committee
Brian Darcy, Ethics & Judicial Committee
Tracie Foster, Chair of Nominations & Governance Committee
Erika Petach, Nominations & Governance Committee
Tyler Merren, Nominations & Governance Committee
Molly Quinn, CEO
Catherine Raney Norman, Staff
Breann Scott, Staff
Jarod Moll, Staff
Lance Sarabia, Staff
Liesl Begnaud, Staff

Absent:

Brian Eaton, Independent Director
Matt Simpson, Athlete Board Member

The meeting took place via teleconference. The meeting was recorded.

Call to Order / Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by chair, Mark Ackermann at 4:00 p.m. MST. As this is the annual meeting, each participant took a moment to introduce themselves.

Conflict of Interest

Mark asked if any board members had a conflict of interest. No such conflicts were declared. Board was instructed to declare a conflict of interest if an item arose during the meeting or executive session.

Approval of Minutes

Mark asked for approval of the November 20th board meeting minutes. The motion was made by Skye Arthur-Banning and seconded by Amy Wasson. Motion passed unanimously.



Chair Board Highlights

Mark welcomed new Team USA AC representative John Kusku and alternate Ali Lawson to the board as part of the LA28 quad. He thanked outgoing board members Calahan Young and Eliana Mason for their service. He also acknowledged outgoing committee members Tracie Foster and Tyler Merren for their commitment and service. 2025 will see new board and committee members onboarding and we will be working on our onboarding process.

CEO & Staff Report

CEO, Molly Quinn, reported that the National Governing Body (NGB) recertification is in progress. As one of 52 NGBs, this recertification process occurs every quad. The compliance standards are published every two years with the Ted Stevens Act.

Molly provided an update on the 2024 strategic highlights. The Men's Goalball Team qualifying and competing at Paris 2024 met the strategic goal set by the board in early 2023. The Men's Blind Soccer Team also achieved a strategic goal by becoming internationally ranked at their tournament in November 2024.

She provided an update on the status of establishing Goalball at the Olympic & Paralympic Training Center (OPTC) in Colorado Springs. An additional benefit of technology will be provided by the OPTC, which will assist us in providing real time video footage of the resident athletes training that can be accessed by the coaching staff.

Grant funding has been secured that will allow us to refurbish an area at Colorado School for Deaf and Blind to install a regulation blind soccer pitch. This will show continued commitment to the USOPC in order to establish a resident program at the OPTC for blind soccer in preparation for LA 2028.

Molly also announced that PlayLA Goalball has officially launched with a kickoff event that had well over a dozen participants. Clinics will start in January 2025.

Committee Updates and Reports

Bylaw Working Group: David Cohen explained the bylaw revisions that were presented to the board. As mentioned earlier, the blind soccer athletes are 10-year athletes and will now be able to run for a board seat. The bylaw revisions are due to the updates required from the USOPC, adding blind soccer throughout the bylaws, and an update to the athlete representation on the board to ensure gender and sport equity. A roll call vote was cast for the approval of the bylaws. David Cohen motioned for the bylaw revisions to be approved. Amy Wasson seconded. Mark Ackermann, Amy Wasson, Gary Remensnyder, Calahan Young, David Cohen, Eliana Mason, Eve Wright-Taylor, Skye Arthur-Banning, Zach Buhler, and Jennifer Demby (all board members in attendance representing a majority of the board) voted yes to approve the bylaws.

The policies of the organization were presented to the board. The policy changes were recommendations and compliance requirements from the USOPC. Gary Remensnyder motioned for the policies to be accepted. David Cohen seconded. The floor was opened for any comments or questions. Policies are approved.



Ethics & Judicial Committee: John Kusku provided an update on the conflict-of-interest forms submitted by the board. John has been elected as the Team USA AC representative and USABA board member, he will begin that roll in January 2025. The board chair will be appointing a new chair of the Ethics & Judicial Committee.

Nominations and Governance Committee: Tracie Foster, chair of the committee, explained the board elections again as four (4) board members terms were expiring. The positions were two (2) At-Large Directors currently held by Mark Ackermann and David Cohen, one (1) Independent Director held by Eve Wright-Taylor, and one (1) Constituent Director held by Jennifer Demby. The board was reminded that the Nominations & Governance Committee appoints the Constituent Director and the board votes on the other Director positions. The election will be held via text message. All board members will receive a text with the number to send votes into. The committee will call each position and eligible candidate(s), board members will text the name of the candidate they are voting for, and the committee will tally the vote before moving on to the next position.

The committee vetted one external candidate. Cody Colchado is a lifetime member of USABA and has been an athlete since 1985. He competed in power lifting and has been inducted in 8 sports halls of fame. The appointment and election process began.

Constituent Director: The committee named Cody Colchado as the Constituent Director. The committee thanked Jennifer Demby for her service, and she now moves into the candidate pool.

Independent Director: Eve Wright-Taylor is the only candidate. Voting was called for procedural purposes. It was established that all board members received the text with the number to vote. Eve Wright-Taylor was elected as the Independent Director of the USABA Board to serve another 4 years.

At-Large Director: The candidates are Mark Ackermann, David Cohen, and Jennifer Demby. There are two open positions. The committee called a vote and asked all board members to text two names. The candidate winning the two most votes would be elected. Mark Ackermann and David Cohen were elected as the At-Large Directors of the USABA Board to serve another 4 years.

Committee appointments are now required.

Nominating & Governance Committee: Tyler Merren and Tracie Foster are rotating off the committee. Tracie recommended Erika Petach be appointed as chair. It was also recommended that Ken West and Jennifer Demby join the committee. Mark Ackermann announced his appointment of Erika Petach as the chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee. He agreed with the recommendations of Ken West and Jennifer Demby. As Jennifer Demby was present at the meeting, she confirmed her acceptance on the committee.

Ethics & Judicial Committee: Mark Ackermann thanked John Kusku for serving as the chair. Mark appointed Brian Darcy as the new chair of the Ethics & Judicial Committee. Jen Armbruster and Spencer Higgins are appointed to the committee.



Compensation Committee: Mark Ackermann reappointed the same committee members, Mark Ackermann, Gary Remensnyder, and Matt Simpson.

Audit & Finance Committee: Mark Ackermann thanked Calahan Young for his service and work on the Audit & Finance Committee. Mark reappointed the remaining committee members Gary Remensnyder and Eve Wright-Taylor. He confirmed that Gary Remensnyder will continue as chair of the Audit & Finance Committee. The third committee seat will be filled after the athlete elections take place at the beginning of 2025.

Election of Board Officers: Skye Arthur-Banning called for the nominations and votes for the Board Chair position. Gary Remensnyder nominated Mark Ackermann to continue the role. A call for additional nominees went unanswered. David Cohen seconded the nomination of Mark Ackermann as board chair. Nominations were closed and a vote was held. Mark Ackermann was elected to serve as Board Chair for USABA Board.

Mark Ackermann called for nominations and votes for the Vice-Chair position. Mark Ackermann nominated Skye Arthur-Banning to serve as vice-chair. Amy Wasson seconded the nomination. Mark called for additional nominations, hearing none the vote was called. Skye Arthur-Banning was elected to serve as Vice-Chair for USABA Board.

Mark Ackermann called for nominations and votes for the Treasurer position. Calahan Young nominated Gary Remensnyder and David Cohen, seconded. No other nominations were put forth. Gary Remensnyder was elected to serve as Treasurer for USABA Board.

Mark Ackermann called for nominations and votes for the Secretary position. Mark Ackermann nominated Amy Wasson and Skye Arthur-Banning seconded. Mark called for additional nominations, hearing none the vote was called. Amy Wasson was elected to serve as Secretary for USABA Board.

The next board election will occur in two years.

The meeting went into executive session at 5:40 p.m. MST. The board discussed personnel matters, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m. MST.