Call to order at 10:40 a.m. MDT

Roll Call (Dec 4, 2009)
- Present: David Bushland, Jeanne Derber, Tracie Foster, Oral Miller, Jim Mastro, Tom Parrigin, Gary Remensnyder, Kevin Szott
- Absent: Walter Dean, Elizabeth O’Brien, Bill Ramsay, Trisha Zorn
- Staff: Rich Cardillo, Mark Lucas, Ryan Ortiz, John Potts
- Guests: Cheryl McCullough, Dave Reiff

President’s Welcome, Introduction of Guests, Comments:
Szott opened by stating he believed the organization has made considerable progress in the past two to four years. He further stated he believed a lot of the progress was attributed to using the USABA Strategic Plan. He encouraged everyone to continue to use the plan to move USABA forward. Szott went on to say using the strategic plan will help us use our time wisely. He told the board to congratulate themselves for the recent USOC driven by-law revision and encouraged more engagement from the board on projects like the by-law revision and more involvement in USABA events. Szott stated he believes things are beginning to gel and USABA is in a position to move forward in a more calculated way. He mentioned USABA’s military program provides us another avenue to pursue to impact lives. He mentioned that past years have been challenging times for disabled sports organizations and we are a survivor among DSOs. Szott then introduced two visitors: Cheryl McCullough, who works for the Colorado Springs Visitor’s and Convention Bureau, and Dave Reiff who is a senior vice president for Wal-Mart. Both visitors were present to observe the board and possibly run for upcoming board of director’s positions that would be up for election. Szott addressed the board about when
candidates would be presented for election and stated candidates will speak at lunch, nominations from the floor would also occur at lunch and the election would occur at 4:00p.m., December 5, 2009.

Approval of Minutes from the June 6, 2009 Meeting: Miller asked who was taking minutes in the absence of the secretary and was told by Szott that Potts would take the minutes. Parrigin asked about the USABA abuse policy; he specifically wanted to know if USABA’s insurance carrier approved the policy. Lucas stated the policy had been reviewed and approved by the insurer, but since one of the provisions was background checks, there would be financial implications attributed to the cost of those checks. Foster made a motion to approve the minutes; Bushland seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Executive Director 2009 Report and Staff Reports: Lucas started by saying USABA had an outstanding year. He discussed strong USOC support for the Military and Goalball programs. Lucas went on to address future USABA challenges. USABA had traditionally received considerable financial support from the USOC; however the level of that funding was decreasing. He then stated the major future challenge for USABA was how to increase funding. Lucas mentioned recent initiatives such as reaching out to the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion, which had provided positive results, but we still had a long way to go. Lucas also mentioned board committees are stepping up and he thanked those committees for their support. Lucas recognized the USABA staff for their work during the past year, work that he said often exceeded 60 hours per work week. Derber also recognized the staff and added the staff often put in 100 hours a week during competitions like the IBSA Pan-American Games and the IBSA World Youth and Student Championships. Szott agreed. Bushland added his observation from his visit to the IBSA events last summer, agreeing with Derber and Szott.

Potts talked about growth in athlete numbers and briefly touched on some upcoming events; he asked the board if they had any questions about his full
report that was sent in advance of the board meeting. Cardillo talked about starting up the military program, current identified athlete numbers and added his goal for the next year. He mentioned future goals including finding one female emerging athlete and identifying three emerging athletes who will qualify for the 2012 Paralympic Games. He also informed the board the USABA military program received USOC/US Paralympic funding for calendar year 2010.

Foster added two thoughts. The first was exploring the possibility of integrating Mission Vision into and military athletes into the Common Sight/Common Vision breakfast and she also asked how Disabled Sports USA (DSUSA) finds athletes. Lucas agreed with both of Foster’s inputs and said we’re open to inputs, suggestions, or contacts.

Cardillo then discussed the VA, military service “wounded warrior” programs. He talked about the Department of Defense (DoD) Vision Center of Excellence and that they’re compiling registry of military members from all service branches who incur eye injuries. Bushland asked what our strategy would be if money wasn’t an object, so that the board and staff can figure out the best way to raise and use financial resources. Cardillo discussed a leadership round-table discussion he attended in Washington DC that consisted of governmental and non-profit agency representatives who are attempting to resolve the best collective approach to serving veterans. Two future meetings are planned for 2010. Cardillo added some statistics: 48,000 veterans have been identified as having vision problems; of that number, 90% are 60 and over. Foster asked how injured military members in military hospitals meet up with athletes and introduced to sport. Cardillo responded by saying the bulk of treatment and rehabilitation doesn’t occur in military hospitals, but in the VA system.

Potts provides sports report.
Ortiz gave a report and pointed out that despite a challenging economy, USABA was able to add Cardillo to the staff and how USABA increased their ability to grow grass-roots programs.

Miller then asked Ortiz about whether direct mailing results are worth the investment of time and money. Ortiz mentioned USABA’s 3 percent return rate for direct mailings is in line with national averages. Miller then asked whether the investment of dollars and administrative time provided a suitable return. Bushland responded and said he’d discuss the topic the next day during the strategic planning session.

Miller then asked about USABA’s relationship with the National Industries for the Blind (NIB). Lucas explained the past relationship was through CEO Jim Gibbons, who was a goalball player. When Gibbons left and Kevin Lynch replaced him, USABA asked for a 3 year contractual commitment. We don’t have a 3 year contract yet as NIB wanted a tie to the VA and wanted to help blind and visually impaired veterans who may want to work for NIB. Lucas pointed out Cardillo brokered some of that relationship; he then opened the floor to Cardillo. Cardillo mentioned we invited NIB present at several of sports programs attended by military members. Also, as a matter of internal policy, when we contact military we ask if they have interest in jobs, and if so, we refer them to NIB. Cardillo added that so far, six veterans expressed interest and referred to NIB.

Committee Reports Q & A (based on read-ahead documentation): Szott asked for questions from the read ahead materials and received no inputs. Szott stated the read ahead reports and information saved the board and staff a lot of discussion time.
**09 Finance Report:** Bushland states revenues were up and events provided significant funding. Expenses were higher than anticipated, but increased costs were attributed to larger programs. Bottom line was the fact our financial situation was improved over 2008.

- **Investment Program:** Economic gains over past 12 months resulted in an overall increase. Miller added that over time we may be forced to draw from our funds. No further questions or comments were received. Szott added that our system of using a summary briefing enabled us to focus on the salient points of finances versus a line by line review of each financial item.

**Lunch:** Individual presentations were provided by perspective board members Cheryl McCullough and Dave Reiff. Mastro also discussed board candidates Dr. Lauren Lieberman and Miller discussed Donna Brown.

**2010 Strategic Initiatives Briefing Slide Presentation:**

- **Membership:** Lucas presented a 2010 goal of 55 additional members, a seven percent net gain in membership size. Lucas said a membership challenge is providing value in a USABA membership. Derber mentioned increasing membership dues would provide more revenue. Remensnyder mentioned eliminating memberships because the revenue wasn’t worth the time to administer membership and that the time used could be better invested in larger fundraising initiatives. Derber said people don’t join because of money. Lucas stated membership was important as we pay insurance by the number of active members. Bushland mentioned that providing free membership resulting in growth and larger membership numbers can increase our ability to capture larger grants. Bushland added the prospect of seeking a grant to offset membership costs that we could use to help us grow our membership base. He then posed the question to the board
about what is USABA’s real goal knowing that will drive a course of action. Miller said the goal should be to offer more sports and events and added that if we’re going to grow grass roots programs we need to attract and retain more people. Szott mentioned that elite levels qualifications create less incentive for many athletes. Lucas stated a frustration for the staff is no definition of the way ahead. He then referred to the Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG) set by the board during the development of the current USABA Strategic Plan.

- Lucas discussed remaining slides. Miller asked about sports festival/mission vision. Potts explained to the group.

Lucas asked Bushland and Remensnyder if they had examples of a one page priorities document, similar to a “dashboard report” that could replace the current quarterly reports. Both mentioned they had copies we could implement.

**BUDGET:** Ortiz discussed major line items…expenses and revenues. Budget was driven by strategic initiatives. Bushland compared those numbers against 2009 numbers. Remensnyder issued a challenge to all to think about how we can raise the bar on generating revenue. International representative came up as an issue...how we fund since there’s no policy. Szott believed this has the potential to be a very expensive area. Miller explained about the types of activities that may occur internationally and what happens at those meetings. In the end, the amount in the proposed budget may not be correct. A policy needs to put into place about how a person takes on one of these positions that there will be expectations about funding support and how it will be approved. Miller moved to approve the budget; Foster seconded…unanimously approved.

**ELECTION:** An election was held for board positions three, four-year positions vacated by Derber, Mastro and Dean, and two one-year positions
previously vacated by Jerry Donley and Dan Kelly. Derber did not seek re-election; Mastro and Dean expressed interest in reelection and were nominated for re-election. In addition to Mastro and Dean, the ballot consisted of Cheryl McCullough, David Reiff, Lauren Lieberman and Donna Brown.

Lauren Lieberman, Jim Mastro and David Reiff were elected to four-year terms. Cheryl McCullough and Walter Dean were elected to fill the one-year terms.

Meeting adjourned for the day at 1630

Call to order at 8:30 a.m. MDT

Roll Call (Dec 5, 2009)

- Present: David Bushland, Tracie Foster, Oral Miller, Jim Mastro, Cheryl McCullough, Tom Parrigin, Gary Remensnyder, Dave Reiff, Kevin Szott
- Absent: Walter Dean, Elizabeth O’Brien, Bill Ramsay, Trisha Zorn
- Staff: Mark Lucas, Ryan Ortiz, John Potts

Visitor Tim Willis (USABA member and member of the US Paralympic Staff) introduced himself and informed board what he does at US Paralympics thanked the board for allowing him to and sit in the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Open discussion from the floor. Miller asked if we need to review abuse prevention policy. Remensnyder asked about revision of policy and procedures…Parrigin stated he would get with Zorn early next year to discuss.
NEW BUSINESS:
Mastro discussed a series of mini documentaries being produced by Gatorade group called Mission G.com. The documentary series called “Blind Passion” will feature films of blind athletes as they compete in uniquely blind sports: goalball, showdown and beep baseball. Mastro said he was interviewed. Parrigin added the film crew visited the recent USABA Youth Goalball National Championships where they took video footage. Parrigin mentioned he was interviewed about his experience with blind sports and athletes. Mastro says he will have the opportunity to review the footage and interviews.

Mastro then talked about Showdown and his recent trip to Sweden to compete in the IBSA World Goalball Championships. Mastro stated his belief that Showdown is a sport that should receive greater USABA attention. He shared his belief that the US is about 20 years behind the international curve in adopting and competing in this sport. Szott asked Mastro about the cost for a game table. Mastro said a table costs about $3000, and there’s a company in his area that makes them. He said there are also companies in Sweden and the Czech Republic that manufacture them and that the dimensions for building tables are listed on the IBSA website. Szott said we should explore strategies for the procurement of tables and increasing sport visibility. Miller also talked about table cost and asked Mastro if an NIB company could possibly produce them. Szott said we should have the sports management committee review the sport to explore how to promote it further. Mastro says he’s on an academic Sabbatical and is going around to schools promoting the sport. Szott appointed the committee Mastro, Remensnyder, Ramsay and Potts to explore the sport further.

Miller inquired about the new USABA Abuse Prevention Program. Potts read the program guidelines and application, plus he provided explanation on how the policy and application were developed. Potts added that both documents were submitted to USABA’s insurance carrier who determined them satisfactory for their purposes. The cost of background checks was raised by
Miller. Bushland stated that background checks were the norm for volunteers and that the cost was borne by the volunteer. Potts stated that was consistent with his research. He added that only volunteers with direct athlete contact would require background checks and most USABA volunteers who fall into that category already have background checks from other areas (school teachers and the USOC). Miller also asked about the option for volunteers to “opt out” of getting background checks, a provision contained on the current application. After discussion, Lucas agreed to talk with the insurance carrier and mentioned that any changes would have to go back to the board for a vote. Anticipated implement date is January 10, 2010.

**New Business – Policy on International Meetings:** Miller provided a report on USABA representation at international meetings. Miller is a member at large of the International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA) Executive Board. He started by stating IBSA is a volunteer organization and that in his current IBSA capacity, he attends the general assembly meeting that occurs once every four years. He attended the most recent executive board meeting held in Malaysia in November, 2009 and the last general assembly, April, 2009, conducted in Turkey. Miller was accompanied by Lucas at the general assembly meeting. Miller stated the business style and meeting culture is similar to other European organizations, democratic and decision making requires considerable communication and approval. He went on to say many outsiders would view IBSA as ineffective because they appear to move slowly. During the April general assembly meeting, several new members were elected to the executive board. The executive board meeting was scheduled in November to permit the new executive board members time to assume their new positions. Malaysia was chosen for the November meeting as it was the site of the 2009 IPC general assembly meeting. Several people are members of both the IBSA and IPC groups, so anyone who needed to attend both meetings by position could on a single trip. Szott asked Miller about hot topics that occurred. Miller said the meeting included discussions of how positions would operate. The new
IBSA Secretary General, who is from Turkey, explained how he would operate and stated he will have considerable support from Turkish disabled sport organizations. Szott observed out that a lot of upcoming events are being held in Turkey. Miller talked about IBSA’s past sports technical director who resigned prior to the end of his term and that the past secretary general assumed both roles until the last election. Miller went on to add the new sports technical director is not very well known. He then discussed the fact the past IBSA treasurer died that occurred at a time when a replacement could not be elected in April. So the acting treasurer was approved at the Malaysia meeting to serve as the permanent treasurer. The new treasurer, who works with Irish Bind Sport and has a background in financial consultation, has been pulling together IBSA’s financial picture. He also reviewed the contract for IBSA’s 2011 World Championships and Games. The new treasurer developed a standardized sport contract that was signed by IBSA and Turkey for the 2011 games to be held in Anatalya, in April of that year. Miller also stated that discussions of initiatives needed to modernize IBSA need to occur in the form of a general assembly. There was a decision of an “Extraordinary General Assembly” at the same time of the 2011 IBSA event in Turkey. Miller also reported IBSA has a cash reserve of approximately $550K USD not earmarked and other marked monies exist for sports soccer. The board authorized the commitment of a contact for a paid financial manager for the next six months as a development director/fundraiser. The incumbent will also explore establishment of a central office and how that would affect establishing operating systems and migrating duties from a volunteer to a paid staff.

Miller went on to discuss the IPC meeting. He said the plan was for the IBSA people who are also part of the IPC general assembly to attend the IPC meetings as and others from IBSA (Miller included) would attempt to attend the IPC meetings as observers. He said the first day consisted of a welcome and workshops that included topics like classification. Miller stated that at the end of the first day, observers were informed there was a $850 USD fee to attend remaining meetings. For financial reasons, Miller did not attend. Miller
did say he talked with the IBSA medical officer, Dr. Roman Tolmachev about the classification meetings. Tolmachev related there was very little said about classification for the blind and visually impaired. He was told the topic was too difficult to discuss in a meeting at that time.

**2010 Board Schedule:** Szott wanted to shift to quarterly meetings versus meeting every other month. Meetings were established for March 9, June 9, September 13 and either 3-4 or 10-11 December, 2009. All meetings would occur 6:00p.m. MDT.

**Adjourn:** Bushland made a motion to close the meeting. Szott seconded the motion. Motion passed to adjourn the meeting at 10:55a.m. MDT.