



**U.S. Association of Blind Athletes  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
February 24, 2022**

**Present:**

*Mark Ackermann, Chair*  
*Gary Remensnyder, Treasurer*  
*Skye Arthur-Banning, Vice Chair*  
*Amy Wasson, Secretary*  
*Brian Eaton, Independent Director*  
*Jennifer Demby, Constituent Board Member*  
*Eve Wright Taylor, Board Member*  
*David Cohen, Board Member*  
*Calahan Young, Athlete Board Member*  
*Matt Simpson, Athlete Board Member*  
*Eliana Mason, Athlete Board Member Elect*  
*Zach Buhler, Athlete Board Member Elect*  
*Tyler Merren, USOPC AAC alternate representative*  
*Tracie Foster, Chair of Nominating and Governance Committee*  
*Erika Petach, Member of Nominating and Governance Committee*  
*John Kusku, Chair of Ethics Committee*  
*Molly Quinn, CEO*  
*Breann Scott, Staff*  
*Sarah Hartmann, Staff*  
*Catherine Raney-Norman, Staff*

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

The meeting was called to order by board chair Mark Ackermann at 4:00 PM Mountain Time.

Mark asked if any board members had a conflict of interest that they needed to disclose relating to the topics listed on the meeting agenda provided to the group beforehand. No such conflicts were disclosed.

Motion made to approve minutes of previous board meeting held on December 1, 2021. Motion seconded. Motion approved.

Mark provided his chairman's report. He congratulated the group on becoming the first HPMO to be certified as a National Governing Body by the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee, as USABA received certification for goalball and blind soccer. Both the men's and women's goalball team competed at the IBSA Americas Championships in February in Brazil, with the men earning silver and the women earning bronze. It was the first qualifying event on the road to Paris 2024, with both teams securing a spot at the 2022 World Championships. The World Championships will serve as the first direct qualifier for Paris 2024. Mark introduced Erika Petach, the President and CEO at Blind & Vision Rehabilitation Services of Pittsburgh as a new member of the Nominating and Governance Committee.



Eliana Mason and Zach Buhler were recently elected as athlete board members and are joining the meeting as non-voting members. Once standard vetting and background procedures for the two are completed shortly, they will be given full board voting rights. Also attending in a non-voting capacity is Tyler Merren, the alternate representative to Eliana's role as USOPC AAC representative. Tyler will join meetings in the future in a non-voting role as well. Mark introduced Eliana and Zach and provided their bios. Matt Simpson's role as the USOPC AAC representative has lapsed and he was elected as an at-large Athlete Board member. For the purposes of this meeting, Matt still retains his voting role as the USOPC AAC representative as Eliana awaits final approval.

Motion made to add a provision to the USABA Bylaws, Athlete Safety Policy, Membership Agreement and Code of Conduct, that the CEO may suspend or impose restrictions on any USABA member who is under investigation by the U.S. Center for Safesport or any law enforcement authority. Upon request, the CEO will provide the suspended member an opportunity to be heard by the USABA Judicial Committee, concerning the situation for interim suspension. Motion seconded. Motion approved.

Committee Chair John Kusku provided the Ethics Committee report. The committee has approved a new conflict of interest form and vetting approval process. The process is that the committee is sent the name of the individual and their completed conflict of interest form, then the committee does research to vet them to see if anything is missed or omitted. At that point, John calls the individual to review the form and informs them that they should recuse themselves if conflicts arise in the future.

Committee Chair Tracie Foster presented the Nominating and Governance Committee report. Tracie introduced Erika Petach as the newest member of the committee.

Molly Quinn presented the CEO and staff report. USABA had to cancel two ski events in Q1 but programming is slowly coming back. Held internal strategy meetings in January with staff in Colorado Springs and virtually. There are two board education sessions coming up, one on fundraising and another on strategic planning/SWOT analysis. The in-person board meeting has changed to July 14-17 and will be held in Fort Wayne, IN as part of Goalball Nationals. Staff is working with Turnstone to finalize the next partnership MOU for the goalball resident program, namely the intellectual property, facility operations and property guidelines. Molly then provided a high-level strategic plan update. From a goalball high performance standpoint, the teams had a successful performance in Tokyo and are making progression into qualifying for Paris 2024. Due to the fact that there were no events and a delayed launch of the membership platform Sport:80, membership and event revenue have been lower than anticipated. There have been staff additions and restructuring as well with Sarah Hartmann joining as the Partnership and Development Director and Breann Scott expanding her role as Admin Coordinator.

Molly, Sarah and Catherine presented an outline of the organization's revenue pipeline for 2022. Molly began by reviewing key strategic partnerships USABA is cultivating with blindness agencies, schools, sports organizations, and groups that align with our mission. This includes partnering with the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind and Clemson University for a Blind Soccer Education Summit, and with the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind to find innovative ways to connect technology, accessibility, and sports.



Other key partnerships being cultivated include Camp Abilities, Move United, and the Veterans Administration. Sarah then provided an overview of the marketing strategy, which will focus on community building and the key phrase of “You Belong Here.” USABA plans to foster a sense of belonging by increasing our support, hosting camps, clinics and events, and sharing the compelling stories of our members. Story-telling projects will include an 8-part goalball Pathways video series, a new Sport Ambassador program, and an investment in event livestreaming.

Grant Manager Catherine Raney-Norman shared a renewed approach to grant identification and cultivation, with an increased focus on garnering family foundations through robust relationship building. Another focus is to maintain and grow support from current funders such as PNC, Delta Gamma, and Foreseeable Future Foundation, while exploring partnership concepts with adaptive sports groups like Move United and Challenged Athletes Foundation. USABA is in the final approval process for the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks. That approval will open a lot of doors in Los Angeles in the short term and leading up to LA 2028.

Sarah noted that there has been positive movement with sponsorship renewals and productive engagement with new sponsors, as companies are drawn to the story telling capabilities of blind sports. Making good progress with Oakley and Cisco and looking to identify companies like Anthem where USABA can fit into several Corporate Social Responsibility categories.

Committee Chair and Treasurer Gary Remensnyder provided the Audit and Finance Committee report. 2021 final financials were provided to the board prior to the meeting. The forecast provided to board at end of Q3 2021 for 2021 actuals was accurate. Gary pointed out notable variances on the revenue side, which totaled \$18k under Q3 forecast due to direct contributions being lower than expected. Staff cut additional expenses and came in \$8K unfavorable overall as compared to Q3 2021 forecast. Balance sheet remains strong with \$1.1 million in assets. The endowment account is at \$554k, with a total of \$600k in cash or other liquid assets. There are \$500k in fixed assets related to housing facilities. Liabilities remain low overall, with total liabilities of \$250K, mostly made up of SBA EIDL loan. Gary and Breann then led a cash flow discussion, utilizing a cash flow tracking mechanism built for forward looking models that help analyze 6-12 months out. USABA is in a temporary cash flow predicament, which was outlined in the narrative document provided to the board before the meeting. Staff and committee is considering either a line of credit from a bank or using the endowment to address the temporary shortage. Staff and committee will analyze which option is more advantageous to pursue. Motion made to approve staff and committee to secure up to \$150,000 in line of credit or withdrawing Endowment balance up to \$150k. Motion seconded. Motion approved.

The Audit and Finance Committee also reviewed three bids from audit firms to conduct the 2021 independent financial audit. The firm of Waugh and Goodwin were deemed the most favorable bid by the committee and have been selected to conduct the 2021 audit.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:59 PM Mountain Time and went into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.