



**United States Association of Blind Athletes  
Board of Directors  
Meeting Minutes  
September 15, 2021**

**Present:**

*Mark Ackermann, Chair*  
*Gary Remensnyder, Treasurer*  
*Skye Arthur-Banning, Vice Chair*  
*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*  
*Tracie Foster, Chair of Nominating and Governance*  
*Molly Quinn, CEO*  
*Kevin Brousard, Staff*  
*Breann Scott, Staff*

The meeting, which was held virtually via the Zoom video conference platform, was called to order by the chair, Mark Ackermann at 4:15 p.m. MDT.

Mark asked for board members to disclose any potential conflicts of interest specific to the meeting agenda sent before the meeting. No potential conflicts of interest were declared.

Bylaw Report: Prior to the meeting, members of the board were provided a comprehensive list of bylaw amendments for discussion and voting purposes.

Pursuant to Article XVIII, Section 2, of the bylaws, at least 3/4 (three-fourths) of the entire USABA board need to vote in favor of bylaw approval in order to be confirmed. Three-fourths of the USABA ten member board equates to at least eight (8) board members present. Pursuant to Article XVIII, Section 2, of the bylaws, voting quorum requirements were met with the presence of nine (9) board members at the meeting.

Bylaw working group representative and board member David Cohen presented the amendments made to the bylaws since the last meeting. One important amendment noted was the expansion of athlete board directors from two athlete board directors in 2021 to four athlete board directors in 2022. The proposed bylaw amendments would render the establishment of two Athlete Advisory Councils (AAC), the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) AAC and internal USABA AAC. Matt Simpson is USABA's current USOPC AAC representative which gives him a seat on the USABA board of directors. New provisions to the congressionally mandated Ted Stevens Act require that each national governing body establish its own internal AAC to bolster athlete representation within its board of directors. The USABA AAC will be responsible for recruiting and assigning athlete representation on committees. The USOPC Athlete Representative Review Panel determines the eligibility requirements for the USABA AAC.

David Cohen and members of the bylaw working group opened the floor for discussion and comments on the provided bylaw amendments. There was a brief discussion regarding the connection between the two AACs, athlete board representative and committee term lengths. A final discussion on the bylaw amendments occurred, with clarifying remarks from the bylaw working group satisfying all questions.

The board chair called for any further questions or comments on the bylaws. None were raised and a vote was called. A motion was made to approve the bylaw amendments. Motion was seconded. Motion was passed.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the board of directors meeting held on August 26, 2021. Motion was seconded. Motion was passed.

The board recognized the athletes on the board for their performance at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. The USA Women's Goalball Team won the silver medal and the USA Men's Goalball Team finished fourth. Staff welcomed the team on their return from Tokyo at Chicago's O'Hare Airport.

CEO & Staff Report: With the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization has not been able to host or attend any events for almost two years. The staff created a Paralympic Games experience in Colorado Springs for board members and stakeholders. A blind soccer camp was also held during the Paralympic Games experience to give a first-hand introduction of the Paralympic sport to board members and the USOPC. Jaime Garzon, newly-hired USABA blind soccer manager, had a chance to interact with board members. Athletes at the soccer camp expressed interest in continuing skill development and training.

The board chair and staff attended Turnstone's board of directors' gala celebrating USA Goalball athletes who competed at the Tokyo Paralympic Games. Both Turnstone and USABA honored special benefactor Ron Plassman by announcing the creation of the Ron Plassman Gold Standard Award, which will be awarded annually. Award winners will exemplify the values of excellence on the field of play, sportsmanship, leadership and will champion the sport of goalball.

During our monthly staff meeting held on September 15, one of the topics discussed was how vital it is the goalball pipeline be further developed in the months and years to come. The organization has closed on two sponsors totaling \$60k with three solid prospects in the pipeline. The annual Breakfast with Champions will be held on Friday, October 29, at the US Olympic & Paralympic Museum in Colorado Springs, as well as broadcast via live stream on USABA's Facebook and YouTube channels. USABA applied for 2022 soccer development funding with the USOPC.

Committee Reports: The Nominating and Governance Committee (NGC) presented the recommended candidate, John Kusku, for the athlete representative vacancy on the Ethics Committee. Motion was seconded. Motion to approve John Kusku to be a member of the Ethics Committee was approved. The NGC is reviewing several candidates for the third and final seat on the NGC, with candidate interviews scheduled in the near future.

USOPC AAC: Nominations for the USOPC AAC election are due by October 30, with the election taking place shortly thereafter. Athletes on the 10 Year List (anyone who has participated in Paralympic Games, Para Pan Americas Championship and World Championships) are eligible to be nominated for the election. Currently, there are approximately 22 eligible athletes.

The board chair called for any new or old business items. No such items were declared. No executive session occurred at the meeting. Motion made to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:34 p.m. MDT.