

USTA NorCal Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
October 16, 2013
USTA NorCal Office, Alameda, California

USTA NorCal Board of Directors Present: Margie Campbell, Chris Caputo, Gordon Collins (Treasurer), Michael Cooke (President), Suzy Cossette, Christine Costamagna (Secretary), Jim Coyne, Mike Dickey (Vice President), Mark Fairchilds, Paul Kepler, Andrea Norman, Sarah Robinson, Jason Scalese, Tony Silveria (Delegate)

Absent: Rosie Bareis

USTA NorCal Advisory Directors: Frank Haswell, Pam Sloan

NorCal Staff Present: Steve Leube, Executive Director; Jennifer Pitzen, Director of Competitive Play; Richard Rogers, Manager of Operations

Guests: Nigel Pugh, Chair, ROG Development Committee; Alvin Hom

Legal Counsel: Michael Harrison

Call to Order: Noting the presence of a quorum, Michael Cooke, President, called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. The President introduced the staff and guests. He reiterated the ground rules for the meeting. Mr. Collins read the USTA NorCal mission statement. The President then asked for public comments which there were none.

The President recognized the following directors who are not returning to the Board as their term is up: Ms. Bareis, Mr. Collins, Ms. Costamagna and Mr. Coyne.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the August 21, 2013 Board meeting were presented for approval. On motion duly made, seconded, and carried, the minutes of the August 21, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved.

Executive Director Report: Mr. Leube provided an overview of his report, a copy of which was provided in the meeting material. He noted that NorCal was #1 in overall membership growth. He commented on the outcome of the Gar Glenny Cup and US Open Series. He commented on the status of the NorCal adult leagues and noted that NorCal is #2 in league participation. He commented on the Breaking the Barrier exhibit and the upcoming Beyond the Baseline event. He commented on the success of play days. He also responded to questions related to the decrease in membership from a national perspective.

Delegate Report: Deferring from the previously distributed agenda, the Chairman called upon Mr. Silveria to provide the Delegate's report. Mr. Silveria began by noting that the proposals presented at the USTA Semi-Annual Meeting in New York were approved. He provided an update from the Membership Innovation Study Group (the "Group"). He noted the areas the Group has been focusing on, including voting strength and percentage of fundings, and further noted that NorCal has proposed a 3 year pause to freeze membership dollars. He responded to questions related to the decrease in participation numbers from a national perspective.

President Report: The President provided his report to the Board. In addition to Mr. Leube's comments, he commented on his meeting with the USTA President, David Haggerty. He commented on the recent Sectional President's call and the upcoming annual meeting. The Board briefly discussed the junior membership figures noted in Mr. Leube's report which were the farthest off target. Mr. Leube commented on the progress the on-line registration system noting that the first touch to the player is the most important. The Board further discussed the marketing and advertising efforts around various products and Mr. Leube commented on the status of hiring a Manager of Marketing and Communications.

Mr. Pugh joined the meeting during the course of this report.

2014 USTA NorCal Budget: The Chairman called upon Mr. Dickey to present the 2014 proposed budget. Mr. Dickey first introduced the members of the Budget Committee and recognized them for their hard work. Then, referring the budget information included in the meeting material, he briefly commented on the 2014 goals that were cascaded down which helped achieve a balanced budget. He then reviewed the components of the budget. He noted that the Committee did look at a possible league fee increase. He commented on the potential programming included in the budget and noted that the Board can make changes to the budget throughout the year. The Board briefly commented on the value of new memberships. The Chairman then commended the Budget Committee for all of their hard work. After the presentation, on a motion duly made by Ms. Norman and seconded by Mr. Kepler, the Board unanimously approved the 2014 NorCal budget as presented.

Bill Talbert Sportsmanship Award: The Chairman called upon Ms. Norman to comment on the Bill Talbert Sportsmanship Award. Ms. Norman began by explaining the history of the award and the process for selection. She noted that of the 17 candidates, David Ball was selected. She commented on the quality of the candidates and suggested that age division awards may be presented. It was suggested that a recognition be sent to all of the candidates.

2014 Junior Tournament Schedule: The Chairman called upon Ms. Cosette, who is the Chair of the Sanction and Scheduling Committee, to review the proposed 2014 junior tournament schedule included in the meeting material. Ms. Cosette began by thanking the Committee for their work around developing the schedule to be presented. She noted that the schedule could not be compared to 2013 because of the junior tournament changes. She noted that 16 organizations did not reapply for tournaments in 2014 and that there are still openings in the calendar. After discussion, on motion duly made by Ms. Costamagna and seconded by Mr. Silveria, the Board approved the proposed 2014 junior tournament schedule as presented - 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions (directors who have tournaments on the schedule did not participate in the vote).

Update on Court Resurfacing: The Chairman called upon Mr. Fairchilds to provide an update on the court resurfacing project. Referring to a handout in the meeting material, Mr. Fairchilds reviewed the proposal noting the changes made since the last meeting. Mr. Leube commented on the discussions with potential contractors.

Action Item: The Chairman called upon Ms. Campbell to present action items concerning revisions to the Junior Development Pathway ("Pathway"). Ms. Campbell, on behalf of the presenters, expressed concern over issues that still need to be addressed in/incorporated into the Pathway. After a brief discussion, the presenters agreed to withdraw Action Item A related to Pathway revisions due to the short time frame between the time of this Board meeting and the player declaration date of January 1 and focus

on Action Item B related to a revised Pathway. The Chairman suggested that Action Item B be bifurcated to address each of the levels (red, orange and green) within the Pathway.

The Chairman then called upon Mr. Pugh to review the rationale for the red ball level noting that USTA has guidelines where juniors should play. Some of the directors expressed their views on red ball noting that it is more of a teaching tool and could hold players back if included as a requirement under the Pathway. In response to questions from the directors, Mr. Pugh provided the extensive background and experience of the ROG Development Committee members. Mr. Pugh then noted that in response to prior concerns over the point levels for red ball, the ROG Development Committee reduced the point requirement from 20 points to 10 points. Some of the directors expressed additional concerns over the access to and availability of play days, as well as any barriers, to meet the points requirement. Mr. Pugh indicated his concern with making any of the levels a guideline rather than a requirement as players may move up before they are ready. It was clarified that the Pathway was already in place based on a vote of the Board last year.

Some of the directors noted that the current Pathway sets up barriers for certain geographic areas, programming needs to be provided to organizations, and the Pathway is restrictive. Mr. Pugh noted that players are forced up the Pathway based on age and asked the Board what other barriers the Pathway creates. Mr. Leube commented on the IT expense already incurred as a result of the Pathway being approved last year. After discussion, on motion duly made by Ms. Campbell to eliminate the red ball requirements in the Pathway, which was seconded by Mr. Scalse, the Board approved the elimination of the red ball requirement – 9 in favor, 3 opposed, 1 abstention. As a point of clarification, Ms. Norman duly made a motion that the red ball level outlined in the Pathway remain as a guideline rather than it being eliminated, which was seconded by Ms. Costamagna. After discussion, the Board unanimously approved that the red ball level be a guideline under the Pathway and not a requirement.

The Board then next addressed the current orange ball requirements under the Pathway. Mr. Pugh noted that the orange and green levels will need to be reworked because of the interdependency of all of the levels. The presenters noted that if the levels were a guideline rather than a requirement then there should be no issue. Mr. Pugh noted that the ROG Development Committee developed the best Pathway based on all of the information available. Ms. Norman then duly made a motion which was seconded by Ms. Costamagna that whether or not changes to the orange and green ball levels under the Pathway are approved or defeated, that no action item concerning the Pathway may be brought before the Board in the next 12 months without a 2/3rds approval of the Board. A discussion ensued concerning corporate governance and being able to bind future Boards with such a motion. The presenters suggested that all of the levels be a guideline rather than a requirement and they reiterated concerns about accessibility. Concern was expressed over the need to give guidance to committees and staff. Ms. Norman's motion was restated and the Board denied the motion – 4 in favor, 7 opposed, 0 abstentions. Ms Campbell then duly made a motion to modify the orange ball requirements to reduce the point requirements to 4 points of the players choosing and to eliminate the age requirements/limitations which was seconded by Mr. Coyne. As a point of order, Mr. Kepler made an amended motion to table the discussion/decision on the orange and green ball levels in the Pathway and revert back to the ROG Development Committee for further recommendations at the December Board meeting which was seconded by Mr. Caputo. The amended motion made by Mr. Kepler was denied by the Board – 4 favor, 6 opposed, 1 abstention. Ms Campbell then duly made a motion to make the current orange ball level a guideline rather than a requirement which was seconded by Mr. Coyne. The motion was denied by the Board – 7 in favor, 7 opposed, 0 abstentions.

Additional discussion occurred concerning player retention, accessibility to programs to earn points, and the speed at which players would advance. It was noted that it is easier over time become less restrictive than more restrictive. The presenters noted that there appears not to be strong participation in declaring player level in the Pathway and the players need to advance to yellow ball. They also expressed concern that if players see this as a requirement, they may not stay in the Pathway or with tennis. Ms. Campbell amended and restated her motion that the orange ball level has a 4 point requirement of the players choosing and that the green ball level have a 10 point requirement of the players choosing, which was seconded by Mr. Kepler. A discussion ensued wherein it was suggested that the Pathway be limited to 10 & under and that at age 11, a payer can choose to play yellow or green ball. Mr. Scalse duly made a motion that once a players turns 11, there would be no green ball requirement, which was seconded by Mr. Collins. Mr. Pugh noted that the proposed motions by Ms. Campbell and Mr. Scalse would significantly reduce orange and green ball tournaments. It was noted that the Pathway sets up a system for future players. Thereafter, Mr. Scales' motion concerning no green ball requirements for player age 11 and older was restated and approved by the Board – 9 in favor, 0 opposed, 4 abstentions. Ms. Campbell's motion concerning reduced point requirements for orange and green ball levels was restated and approved by the Board – 9 in favor, 3 opposed, 1 abstention.

Treasurer Report: The Chairman called upon Mr. Collins to provide a report covering NorCal's financial status. Mr. Collins noted that NorCal was financially sound and discussed the timing of revenue and expenditures hitting various line items.

Monthly Financials: The President noted that the monthly financials were included in the meeting material.

Committee Decisions: The President noted that the Committee decisions were provided in the meeting material. Ms. Norman inquired about the Sportsmanship Committee's decision in a suspension appeal hearing and expressed concerning about the precedent being set. The President will ask the Sportsmanship Committee for clarification.

Unfinished Business: The President reminded the Board that the annual meeting is scheduled for November 9 at the NorCal offices.

New Business: The President noted that there was no new business to report.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Costamagna
Secretary