



**Minutes of the USTA NorCal Board of Directors**  
**USTA NorCal Office - Alameda, CA**  
**Wednesday, February 19, 2014**

**Directors Present:** Margie Campbell (Vice President/President elect), Chris Caputo, Michael Cooke (President), Suzy Cossette, Terry Cossette, Jack Drimmer, Frank Haswell, Alvin Hom, Paul Kepler, Andrea Norman (Secretary), Linda Peltz, Sarah Robinson, Jason Scalse, Tony Silveria (Delegate), Jack Walker (Treasurer)

**Directors Absent:** Mike Dickey and Mark Fairchilds

**Advisory Directors Present:** Pam Sloan

**Advisory Directors Absent:** Chrissy Costamagna

**Parliamentarian and Legal Counsel Present:** Michael Harrison

**USTA NorCal Staff Present:** Steve Leube (Executive Director), Alison Vidal (Manager of Tennis Service Representatives & Youth Specialist)

**Guests Present:** Rafael Carbungco, Yolanda Irigon, Imelda Lee, Robert Marcus, Ray Martin, Claire Silverson, Carol Tarantino, and Gregg Wilson

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**1. Call to Order**

President Michael Cooke called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and roll call was conducted. Following the introduction of guests, Mr. Cooke set the standard of decorum by asking all present to stand when speaking, direct questions to the President, and to formally address all Directors and guests with Mr. or Ms.

**2. Public Comments**

Three members of the Greater Vallejo Tennis Association (Yolanda Irigon, Imelda Lee and Carol Tarantino) each made a 2-minute presentation during the public comments period. All spoke with regard to a recent league grievance hearing and expressed their concern over the decorum of the hearing. A formal request was made for the USTA NorCal staff to review the league grievance procedures and make recommendations to the Board to improve the process.

Following public comments, Mr. Cooke asked Mr. Scalse to read the NorCal Mission Statement

**3. Approval of Minutes**

The Board considered approval of the minutes of the Board meeting held December 9, 2013. Following discussion, the following motion was duly made by Mr. Haswell, seconded by Ms. Peltz, and unanimously **approved** by a vote of 14 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions:

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the USTA NorCal Board of Directors held December 9, 2013 be approved as corrected.

**4. Community Partners Presentation - Alison Vidal**

Alison Vidal, USTA NorCal's Manager of Tennis Service Representatives & Youth Specialist, made a presentation on the progress she and her department is making with the H.I.T.S. program, a non-competitive and fun program to introduce children to tennis. This program has been developed over the past two years and includes the publication of a program manual for coaches and an educational booklet for parents. Alison invited two key community tennis partners that are using the H.I.T.S. program with success to describe their programs:

- California PAL. Gregg Wilson, Executive Director of California PAL, shared that the goal of their programming is to give at risk youth activities to do after school. It was a pioneer in the deployment of Junior Giants and believes H.I.T.S. will have the same ability to introduce tennis to their more than 20,000 participants and provide a pathway for those who take to the sport to develop. California PAL is a recent recipient of a \$25,000 USTA Serves grant that will be used to grow H.I.T.S. participation.
- Boys' and Girls' Clubs. Robert Marcus, Operations Director for the Boys' and Girls' Clubs of Marin and Southern Sonoma Counties, shared the growth in participation it has had in tennis through his involvement with USTA NorCal. After its first year, 100 youth were involved with tennis, and by the end of 2013 more than 1,000 were participating in a NJTL league, six clubhouses, and four school sites.

Ms. Vidal also reported that NorCal is promoting a program whereby Organization Members are sponsoring and supporting organizations that are promoting the introduction of tennis to at risk youth. Crow Canyon Country Club has conducted a fundraiser for Richmond PAL, and Lifetime Tennis and Courtside have done the same for the Silicon Valley Boys' and Girls' Club.

In addition to these programs, NorCal has also seen growth in participation of youth through NorCal's relationships with the California Youth Soccer League, that is rolling out a soccer and tennis program that primarily serves the Hispanic community, and the Girl Scouts, that has developed a patch program for tennis using H.I.T.S.

## 5. Executive Director's Report - Steve Leube

In addition to the written report included in the meeting packet, Mr. Leube noted the successful year NorCal has had across all departments as of the end of 2013:

- NorCal as the Section with most 12-month membership growth;
- NorCal as the Section with the second highest participation in USTA Leagues, ahead of Midwest for the first time in history; and
- NorCal as the Section with the most 12-month junior membership growth, almost all of which is due to the growth of 10-and-under memberships.

Mr. Leube also reported on:

- The upcoming ACEs Awards on Sunday, February 23, where outstanding volunteers, tournaments and Organization Members will be recognized, and to which all Board Members are encouraged to attend;
- The successful Junior Awards Event held at the Baladium in Alameda;
- His attendance at the USPTA Conference at which he spoke on behalf of NorCal where most of the feedback and questions had to do with the pathway (specifically whether new policies have rendered the Green Ball level ineffective and concerns over the elimination of the Novice level of tournaments);
- The status of Play Day registrations;
- The successful first training in support of the H.I.T.S. program;
- NorCal's focus on promoting play at the 2.5 level, which includes adult Play Days, one-day tournaments, and entry-level daytime leagues, and is the result of survey feedback that this level of player is interested in less formal and more casual programming.;
- His upcoming attendance with Anna Elefant (staff) and Dale Russell (Leagues Committee Chair) and the national Leagues meeting in Dallas;
- The upcoming Player Development meeting that will be held in NorCal on March 11, which will be lead by Patrick McEnroe and will include participation from NorCal leadership and high performance coaches, and will focus on the efforts to create a more unified effort to develop players in collaboration with the Sections and coaches; and
- The significant amount of website traffic to the NorCal website, which is significantly higher than other Sections.

Mr. Leube also noted the contribution of Henry Talbert, who most recently served as the USTA Southern California Executive Director. Henry passed away in January and Mr. Leube joined a significant number of other USTA staff and volunteers at his memorial service in Los Angeles.

## 6. Delegate's Report - Tony Silveria

- USTA Annual Meeting Call. Tony Silveria directed the Board's attention to the proposals to amend the USTA Regulations and Bylaws that will be considered at the USTA Annual Meeting in March. The first item sets a standard for net tension, but permits the use of the existing strap pull down method when a device to measure tension is not available. The remaining items are all in support of the Membership Innovation Study Group's recommendation that Bylaws and Regulations related to membership need to be hard coded in order to permit the USTA to test new membership models. Discussion followed that included concerns over disincentivizing growth in membership, and a description of how NorCal receives funding based on membership. Mr. Silveria reminded the Board that he votes as Delegate on behalf of NorCal based on the recommendation made by the Board, and that there is the possibility that changes may take place to the proposals between now and the time of voting. He asked for a straw vote of the members to indicate whether there was support of the items as written, but noted that if substantive changes take place to the proposals, all members of the Board in attendance at the Annual meeting will meet to give guidance on how to vote. The following straw vote was **approved** by a vote of 12 for, 2 against, and no abstentions:

**STRAW VOTE:** That the NorCal Board supports its Delegate voting in favor of all call items as distributed with the notice of the 2014 USTA Annual Meeting.

- New USTA Headquarters in Lake Nona. Mr. Silveria announced that the USTA is currently in negotiations with Lake Nona, a community near Orlando, FL, to develop a tennis and office complex that is proposed to become the "home of American tennis." He expects a formal announcement about the plans to be made at the USTA Annual Meeting in March.

- 2024 Summer Olympics. Mr. Silveria announced that San Francisco has announced its intention to bid for the 2024 Summer Olympics. Should these plans proceed the USTA and NorCal will become involved with the bid process as it relates to tennis.

## 7. President's Report - Michael Cooke

Mr. Cooke's report included the following:

- Jeff Tarango will serve as MC of the ACEs Awards event on February 23, 2014.
- The USTA is continuing its work on the project to find areas where the USTA Sections can align in an effort to grow participation in junior tennis, and he expects there to be presentations and announcements on the progress to take place at the USTA Annual Meeting.

## 8. Executive Session

Mr. Cooke announced that the Board would be going into Executive Session, thanked the guests for their attendance at the meeting, but asked that they now exit as the Board would be conducting a confidential discussion in closed session. The Executive Session began at 7:38 pm.

Following the conclusion of the closed session at 8:06 pm, Mr. Cooke announced in open session that no Board decisions were made and that the discussion held during the session was to remain confidential.

## 9. Northern California Tennis Foundation (NCTF)

Paul Kepler and others reviewed the history of the formation of the Northern California Tennis Foundation and the request made at the December Board meeting by NCFT President Bill Schoen for funds to permit the foundation to hire a full-time Executive Director. An email communication on the status of the current services being provided to the NCTF as well as the solicitation of possible candidates for a new full-time position were also reviewed. A written proposal was presented to consider allocating funds to hire a person for this position, with the goal of NCTF becoming self sustaining after approximately three years. The proposal included the primary job responsibilities of managing the grant application process, re-constituting the Board with individuals who are leaders in the community and have the ability to build sponsorship relationships, and managing fundraising and advocacy.

Discussion followed that yielded general support for the December resolution that approved the concept of hiring an Executive Director to meet the expanding needs of the NCTF, but also a concern as to whether the foundation should consider affiliating with a community foundation that would handle administration and enable the NCTF to hire an Executive Director that could focus on other areas. There may be other advantages to associating with a community foundation, including participation in matching grants and foundation-wide fundraising efforts.

The following motion was made by Mr. Kepler and seconded by Mr. Haswell:

**RESOLVED:** That the USTA NorCal Board hereby approves the expenditure of approximately \$300,000 to \$350,000 over a three-year period to fund the hiring of a full time Executive Director for the Northern California Tennis Foundation and to permit the President of the Foundation to determine what outside sources to use to solicit a person to fill the position.

Additional discussion took place that regarding the grant approval process and best practices of the foundation, as well as what role the NorCal Board should have in focusing on these responsibilities of the NCTF. Others questioned whether the resolution was too narrow and suggested it would be better to allocate funds to permit the NCTF to hire one or more employees to run it. In response, the resolution on the floor was amended by the proposer Mr. Kepler, and accepted by Mr. Haswell to read as follows:

**RESOLVED:** That the USTA NorCal Board hereby approves the expenditure of approximately \$300,000 to \$350,000 over a three-year period to fund the hiring of employees to run the Northern California Tennis Foundation and to permit the President of the Foundation to determine what outside sources to use to solicit a person to fill the position.

Following additional discussion, the amended resolution was **approved** by a vote of 9 in favor, 3 opposed, 1 abstention, and 1 director not voting.

During the discussions, the need for funding of a particular school court project was discussed by Mr. Silveria, and concerns were expressed over the delays currently being experienced in the grant process. Mr. Silveria was advised to have the school proceed with its application.

Following the vote, Mr. Cooke announced he would form a task force to recommend ways that NorCal can better assist the NCTF achieve the goals it was formed to accomplish.

## 10. Treasurer's Report - Jack Walker

Mr. Walker directed the Director's attention to the report distributed with the Board packet and the variance report at the end of the statements. He highlighted the following with respect to the year-end numbers

- membership revenue was down despite growth due to the free junior membership program and because members generally are renewing for a shorter-term memberships;
- tournament revenue was under budget, but the junior tournament revenue was still up over 2012; and
- adult leagues revenue was \$121,000 over budget.

Mr. Walker reminded the Board that in 2014, the Section is budgeted to break even.

When questioned about the revenue from Tennis Warehouse, it was clarified that NorCal receives a percentage of each sale made to a person who provides an address within the geographical boundaries of NorCal.

## 11. Committee Decisions

Michael Cooke directed the Board's attention to the Committee Decisions document distributed with the meeting packet. Steve Leube reminded the Directors that the deadline for submitting a challenge to a Committee Decision is 5:00 pm, 7 days from the date of the Board Meeting, and that a challenge requires the support of three Directors.

Andrea Norman asked that the Board review the decision from the Sportsmanship Committee that requires a grievance to be notarized. She explained, and Mr. Leube confirmed, that in an email exchange with the committee chair, it appeared that the resolution in the Committee Decision document was not the exact intent of the Sportsmanship Committee. Additionally, she expressed concern over the need for notarization since it did not guarantee the truthfulness of a grievance, only that the person filing it is who they say they are. Michael Harrison concurred that there may not be a need for this new policy and agreed to consult with the committee chair. The following motion was duly made by Ms. Norman, seconded by Mr. Haswell, and unanimously **approved** by a vote of 13 in favor, none opposed, and 1 abstention:

**RESOLVED:** That the Sportsmanship Committee Decision approved February 6, 2014 to require notarization for all grievances be referred back to the Sportsmanship Committee for reconsideration and that it shall not become effective as written in 7 days pursuant to the Committee Decision process.

## 11. Unfinished Business

Michael Cooke noted that there was no unfinished business.

## 12. New Business

Michael Cooke noted that there was no unfinished business.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 9:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrea Norman  
Secretary