

**Directors Present:** Nancy DeSchane, Martha Ehrenfeld, Jack Hesotian, Andrea Norman (Secretary), Larry Olmstead, Mary Ryniewicz, Caroline Sheu, Pam Sloan (President), Jack Walker (Treasurer), Keith Wheeler (Parliamentarian), Scott Winn

**Directors Absent:** Andrea Barnes, Christine Costamagna (Vice President), Michelle Nicholson, Craig Pasqua, Jason Scalse (Delegate)

**Advisory Director Present:** Suzy Cossette

**Legal Counsel Present by Video Conference:** Jonathan Madison

**USTA NorCal Staff Present:** Summer Verhoeven (Executive Director), Darren Wenger (Director of Operations)

**1. Call to Order**

President Pam Sloan called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm and roll call was conducted. President Sloan then asked Suzy Cossette to read the NorCal Mission Statement and Vision.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

There being no persons present to make public comments and no public comments submitted in advance of the meeting, the Board considered approval of the agenda, a copy of which was distributed with the meeting packet. There being no recommended changes, the agenda was announced approved as distributed to the Board.

*Jack Hesotian briefly left the meeting before the Approval of the Minutes.*

**3. Approval of Minutes**

The Board considered approval of the minutes of the meeting held June 21, 2023. Following discussion, the following motion was duly made by Ms. Norman, seconded by Mr. Wheeler, and **approved** by a vote of 10 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the USTA NorCal Board of Directors held June 21, 2023 be approved as corrected.

*Jack Hesotian joined the meeting following the Approval of the Minutes.*

**4. Closed Session**

President Sloan announced that the Board would be going into closed session. Following the conclusion of the closed session, President Sloan announced all discussion held during the session was to remain confidential; however, it was agreed that the following would be reported in the public minutes:

*Legal Counsel Jonathan Madison arrived at the meeting during the Closed Session prior to the approval of the Sanctions.*

*Advisory Director Ms Cossette remained in Closed Session only for the items that were related to sanctioning as she is the chair of the Sanction & Schedule Committee.*

- Approval of Adult Tournament Sanction. The following sanction was **approved** following a motion duly made by Mr. Winn, and seconded by Ms. Sheu. The vote was 11 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions.

Date	Level	Division	Events	Organizer	Director	Location	Courts	Draw Limit
August 25-27	TBD	Open	MS, WS, MD, WD	Saint Mary's College	Nick Combs	Moraga	12	64

- Sanction & Schedule Report. The Board heard a report of the Sanction & Schedule Committee related to infractions of regulations by tournament organizers.
- Legal Updates. The Board heard updates on outstanding legal issues.

*Legal Counsel Jonathan Madison left the meeting following Closed Session.  
Ms. Cossette returned to the meeting following the Closed Session.*

## 5. Consent Calendar

President Sloan directed the Board's attention to the Consent Calendar that was distributed with the meeting packet and noted that there are:

- 1 recommendation being made by the Adult League Committee; and
- 1 recommendation being made by the Adult Tournament Committee.

President Sloan explained that any Director may unilaterally request that an item be removed from the Consent Calendar for individual consideration apart from the Consent Calendar. She also noted that simple questions, clarifications, or short amounts of dialogue relative to an item on the Consent Calendar may be discussed after the motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

President Sloan asked if any Director intended to pull a recommendation. There being no interest in doing so, a motion to adopt the Consent Calendar was duly made by Mr. Wheeler and seconded by Ms. Ehrenfeld. Following discussion, the following motion was **approved** by a vote of 11 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions.

**RESOLVED:** That items listed on the Consent Calendar attached as Exhibit A are hereby approved.

## 6. Delegated Authority Decision Report

Ms. Norman directed the Board's attention to the report of decisions made by Committees that were within the clearly defined scope of authority that the Board has delegated to the Committees in the applicable Committee Charters, a copy of which was distributed with the meeting packet and noted that there is:

- 1 decision made by the Junior Council to submit feedback to the USTA Junior Competition Committee with respect to quota for USTA National Championships.

President Sloan explained that if the Board disagrees with any action, it may consider taking further action as it deems appropriate. Following presentation of the Report, the Directors had neither questions, comments, nor objections to the actions taken by the Committees.

## 7. Pickleball Discussion

Ms. Sloan announced that the Sections have received from the USTA Board a market assessment recently conducted on the impact of pickleball on tennis ecosystem. Key takeaways included:

- Tennis industry stakeholders (including facilities, manufacturers, and retailers) have already made decision to look at pickleball as a means of revenue production.
- While pickleball had had significant growth and investors and celebrities have taken interest, it still is undetermined whether the participation and excitement has staying power.

The USTA Board has concluded that at this time there is no proven business model to make case for USTA to create a partnership or investment in pickleball infrastructure and/or programming at this time. Additionally, the USTA Board chose not to take any action at this point and be neutral its position. The USTA will still support the guidelines created to address the growth in demand of tennis courts for pickleball usage,.

Ms. Verhoeven noted that the Sections may decide what actions, if any, they want to individually take.

Ms. Ehrenfeld, as chair of NorCal's Pickleball Task Force, has reached out to USA Pickleball to see if there is any interest in our two organizations developing best practices on blended lines and sharing the coast of this project. Interest has been expressed, and she will continue with a follow up. This could be a positive story of collaboration between the two sports, and provide a resource for NorCal to respond to persons inquiry about how to create blended lines.

Mr. Olmstead, who is leading a NorCal group to advocate for tennis, emphasized the importance of advocacy for overall growth.

Ms. Verhoeven and Ms. Sloan noted work will continue to explore what partnerships could look like and for a proposal to be developed for consideration by the Board.

## 8. New & Returning Organization Members

Mr. Wenger presented the report of 2 returning Organization Members and 4 new Organization Members since the last time the Board met on June 21, 2023, so that the Board may fulfill its obligation to review such report pursuant to USTA NorCal Bylaw III.D. One of the new Organization Members appears to be a duplicate and staff is working to resolve this issue. If this issue isn't resolved, it can be handled by the Executive Committee. No concerns were raised by Directors.

## 9. Treasurer's Report

Mr. Walker directed the Board's attention to the May 31 financial statements distributed with the meeting packet. He reported on the following:

- Mr. Walker directed attention to the new Adaptive Planning income statement report that now includes projections for the remainder of the year. Net income year-to-date was \$403,459, \$228,945 better than budget. Net income for 2023 is projected at \$224,585 against the original budget of \$690.
- The Balance Sheet shows a cash balance of \$4,154,254 and Total Equity of \$6,167,768.
- The Statement of Cash Flows shows a net decrease of cash for the month of \$312,446 and an ending cash balance of \$4,154,254. Cash decreased due to a \$104,198 loss for May and approximately \$200,000 adjustments for receivables and payables.

Mr. Walker also presented the timeline for completion of the 2024 budget. Work begins this week, and the timeline includes collaboration with Committee Chairs on Operating Plans, development of budgets by Senior Managers and their staff, review of proposed budgets by the Executive Director and Director of Operations, presentation of the budget to the Budget Committee and work by that Committee to review in detail each department budget, and presentation of a final budget to the Board for approval on September 20.

## 10. President's Report

- Community Tennis. USTA CEO Lew Sherr has set a 5-year Strategic Plan to grow tennis by 35 million players by 2035. Two areas of focus to achieve this growth will be facilities to accommodate new players and coaching available so that programs can be offered. This participation growth will require approximately 100,000 new tennis courts.
- \$30 Million to Grow Tennis. As part of the 5-year plan, \$30 million will be allocated to growing tennis, and a plan for how those funds will be allocated will be announced at the US Open.
- US Open. The 2023 US Open is well on its way for record-setting revenue. Currently the event is \$6 million overbudget in sponsorship revenue, offsetting a \$3.5 million shortfall in broadcasting revenue. Advanced ticket sales and hospitality are robust. The USTA is also developing a strategy for growth in which new revenue growth can come from future US Opens.
- Strategic Investment. The USTA Board has a new strategic investment committee that will be exploring ways to invest in tennis business ventures.
- NCAA Championships. While the NCAA has a bid process for awarding Championships to sites, the USTA is looking to make the USTA National Campus the permanent site for all 3 divisions of the NCAA's Tennis Championships.
- Election Update: Deadline has passed for nominations for the Board of Directors. Twelve candidates have been nominated to fill six spots. Staff will send these onto the Nominating Committee. The election guidelines will likely not be changed, but will need to be approved. This approval will be handled by the Executive Committee.
- NorCal Annual Meeting: President Sloan reported that work has begun on hosting a more robust NorCal Annual Meeting starting this November. The goal is to have a 2-day event that will include workshops on the first day, a volunteer recognition dinner that evening, and on the second the business meeting. Should any additional Director be interested in working on this project should be in contact with Ms. Verhoeven.

President Sloan encouraged the Directors to review her full report in greater detail, particularly the Digital Update NorCal received from the USTA outlining the headway being made on several digital products.

## 11. Executive Director's Report

In addition to the NorCal program statistics and written report included in the meeting packet, Ms. Verhoeven's in-meeting presentation included the following:

- Participation Statistics: The program statistics for the year continue to look good and steady and are on track for all programs. This report now includes notes at the bottom that support the data in the charts.
- US Open Update: US Open tickets and dinner plans have been communicated to volunteers. The USTA is giving Sections the opportunity to have staff be part of US Open events. Three NorCal staff were selected to participate: Troy Rondeau, Trey Astbury and Martin Borjas.
- Golden Gate Open: This new ATP/WTA tournament will be held at Stanford August 12-19. The Mubadala has moved from NorCal to Washington DC, and NorCal will now be focusing efforts on programming at this new tournament. Plans include a Members Appreciation Day, High School Days, a Kid's Day done in collaboration with EPATT, GLTF night, Fan Zone, wheelchair exhibition, staff retreat, and a Tournament Director Recognition Day.

Ms. Verhoeven asked the Directors to review her written report for other key information, including a significant number of events being held in August.

**12. Delegate's Report**

In Mr. Scalese's absence, President Sloan encouraged the Directors to review his full written report in detail.

**13. Adjournment**

Following an announcement that the next meeting will be on August 16, 2023, and with no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrea Norman  
Secretary

This document contains all committee recommendations made (or not included) since the previous board meeting on June 21, 2023.

### **Adult League Committee**

- 1. (NorCal LLAR) USTA League Suspension Point System Applies to all NorCal Leagues.** Approved by Unanimous Written Consent on July 10, 2023, by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions.

**RESOLVED:** That effective immediately all NorCal Adult Leagues will follow the USTA League Suspension Point System. The National & NorCal Local League Area Regulations (LLAR) shall be amended as follows to reflect this change (underlined language is proposed addition):

**3.03D(4)** The decision of the USTA League Grievance Committee, excluding for an Administrative Grievance, shall conform to the USTA League Suspension Point System, which shall be established prior to each League Year by the USTA National League Committee.

**(NorCal LLAR) USTA League Suspension Point System applies to all NorCal Leagues. All NorCal Leagues, regardless of whether or not they advance to a National Championship, shall follow the USTA League Suspension Point System.**

**(NorCal LLAR) Completed Matches Stand.** Matches played in good faith shall stand.

**Rationale:** USTA NorCal has been following the USTA League Suspension Point System for all USTA NorCal Leagues. This addition to the rule is just to clarify what NorCal is already doing per the 2023 Suspension Point System Q&A. It is also recommended by National that non-advancing leagues follow the USTA League Suspension Point System for consistency and clarity by players and captains.

## Adult Tournament Committee

1. **2024 NTRP National Championship Endorsement Criteria.** Approved at a meeting held on July 5, 2023, by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

**RESOLVED:** That the following criteria will be in place for players to qualify for the 2024 NTRP National Championship:

### HOW TO QUALIFY FOR THE 2024 NTRP NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS FROM THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA SECTION

#### Divisions:

- 18 & Over Men's & Women's 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5, 5.0 Singles/Doubles/Mixed
- 18 & Over Men's & Women's 2.5 Singles/Doubles
- 40 & Over Men's & Women's 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 Singles/Doubles
- 55 & Over Men's & Women's 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 Singles/Doubles

**Northern California's Quota for 2024:** Northern California's quota is 2 players in each singles division, and 2 teams in each doubles division. Players for the 2 quota spots will be selected using the following criteria:

#### Selection Criteria

Qualifying events:

- For the 18 & Over 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5, 5.0 Singles/Doubles/Mixed divisions - USTA NorCal will host a Grand Prix tournament
- For the 18 & Over 2.5 Singles/Doubles divisions and the 40 & Over and 55 & Over (all divisions) - A NorCal Qualifying event will be held.

**Spot #1:** The **Champion** of the Grand Prix or NorCal Qualifying event will receive NorCal's endorsement to the 2024 NTRP National Championships. The 2nd place finisher will be the #1 alternate. The 3<sup>rd</sup> place finisher will be the #2 alternate and the 4<sup>th</sup> place finisher will be alternate #3. If a draw is not possible due to lack of entries, or if the champion and all three alternates cannot participate, Spot #1 will be filled using the same criteria as spot #2.

\* Doubles players qualify **as a team**. If one player from the team cannot go to the NTRP National Championship, the spot will go to the team in 2<sup>nd</sup> place, followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> and then 4<sup>th</sup> place. If a draw is not possible due to lack of entries, or if the champion and all three alternates cannot participate, spot #1 will be filled using the same criteria as spot #2.

**NOTE: If a qualifying event is not held, both spots will be selected using criteria for spot #2**

**Spot #2:** The **highest ranked NorCal player on the last published National Standings List prior to entries closing** will be selected into the 2024 NTRP National Championships. If the top player already received the endorsement as champion of the Grand Prix, the spot will go to the player in 2<sup>nd</sup> position.

**Important:** Players must have played at least one (1) tournament in the NorCal section

\* For Doubles, the spot will go to the registered **individual** who is the highest ranked NorCal player on the NSL prior to entries closing. They will be able to choose their partner. However, the partner **MUST** also be on the standings list for the same division.

#### NTRP Rating Validation (important changes):

- Players will use their most CURRENT year-end rating, valid in the year of the NTRP National Championship. Players will NOT be allowed to play below their CURRENT level. If a player qualifies for spot #1 or spot #2, but is moved up a rating level, they will be able to participate at the NTRP National Championship at their NEW level. Their spot at the prior level will be given to the player next in line. (see criteria above)
- Self-rated players are not eligible to participate.

#### Rationale:

NorCal has traditionally offered a qualifying event for the National Championships, for this reason the Champion of the Grand Prix and/or the NorCal Qualifier will still earn the "Golden Ticket" to the National Championship. The second spot given to NorCal will be reserved for the player with the highest ranking on the National Standings List as of entries closing. This offers the spot to the player that, while participating in other events, including at least one (1) tournament in the NorCal section, was potentially not able to participate in the qualifying event. This also allows players to work throughout the year on qualifying, rather than depend only on one event. This conforms with changes introduced by USTA National to the eligibility criteria.