



**USA Softball Board of Directors
Video Meeting
August 18, 2020**

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Cobb called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. CT

2. ROLL CALL

Board of Directors (BOD) members present were Rodney Cobb; John Gouveia; Joe Patterson; Beverly Wiley; John McPhail; Carlton Benton; Walker Clark; Drew Wells (left the meeting at 1:24 p.m. CT and rejoined at 1:44 p.m. CT); Darrin Duistermars; Mary Mahoney; Dick Gulmon (left the meeting at 3:24 p.m. CT); Roger Garcia; Anna Louie; Donn Addante; Sandy Searcy; Kim Ng; Valerie Arioto (left the meeting at 2:03 p.m. CT); and Janie Reed (joined the meeting at 1:09 p.m. CT).

Absent: Michelle Moultrie and Nick Mullins.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Craig Cress, declared that a quorum had been established.

Staff: Craig Cress, Mark Loehrs, Chris Sebren, John Miller, Rich Cress, Savannah Edwards, Jay Hedrick, Devin Loehrs, Destinee Martinez, Andrea McKee, Kevin Ryan, and Codi Warren.

3. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

4. DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

A. Operations (Communications, Marketing, IT, Membership, Sport Development)

Communications – Codi Warren, Managing Director

Ms. Warren provided a written report on the launch of the redesigned USASoftball.com. The redesign took place and was fully operational on July 20, 2020.

IT – Savannah Edwards, Managing Director

Ms. Edwards provided the latest production report numbers through July 31, 2020.

IT - Devin Loehrs, Registrations Administrator and Project Manager

Mr. Loehrs provided the BOD with a report on results from the August COVID-19 Impact Survey conducted by the National Office. Results included a 2020 season forecast, projected losses in registrations by association, feedback on refunds/credits/insurance extensions, forecasts on the possibility of a fall season, anticipated reopening dates and overall traffic to RegisterUSASoftball.com.

Membership - John Miller, Chief Operating Officer (COO)

USA Softball Commissioner Openings

COO Miller provided a verbal report on the San Antonio Commissioner vacancy. The National Office and interview panel are currently in the process of scheduling virtual interviews with the candidates. There have been no updates on the open position for the Kentucky Commissioners vacancy. The National Office was notified that Henry Pollard, the Central Virginia Commissioner, will retire at the end of the 2020 season. Mr. Pollard will forward a formal letter of retirement shortly.

Championships - Rich Cress, Managing Director of Membership Services

Junior Olympic (JO) National Championship Finals Report

Mr. Cress provided a written report including participation numbers from the 2020 JO National Championship season. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only 25% of available JO National Championships took place in 2020.

Events - Rich Cress, Managing Director of Membership Services

July 4th Showdown

Mr. Cress gave a verbal report on the final budget and finances for the July 4th HFL Showdown, which demonstrated a surplus of a little over \$4,000.00. In total, 26 teams competed in the event, with eight teams in the 14-Under division and 18 teams in the combined 16-Under and 18-Under division.

Girls' 18-Under GOLD National Championship Finals

Mr. Cress reported on the 2020 Girls' 18-Under GOLD National Championship Finals. Held at the USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex, 71 teams participated in the event. The financial report is being finalized as of this BOD meeting.

USA Softball JO Cup

Mr. Cress provided a verbal report on the 2020 USA Softball JO Cup, which was held in Spartanburg, S.C. Expenses are being finalized as of this BOD meeting.

General Comments Concerning Events

CEO Cress reported there have been a few letters received by the Oklahoma City Mayor's office expressing concerns about hosting events at the USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex during the COVID-19 pandemic. USA Softball continues to provide clarification and guidelines that are being forwarded to the Mayor and City Manager. CEO Cress added that while there have been a few concerns raised, USA Softball has also received numerous positive responses from coaches, parents, managers, and teams for hosting events during the 2020 season during this difficult time. USA Softball has not been informed of any COVID-19 outbreaks tracing back to USA Softball events. Southeast Region Vice President, Carlton Benton, commended the live streaming at the USA Softball JO Cup, which was aired on MLB.com, noting that it was a great addition to this year's event.

B. Umpires – Kevin Ryan, Director of Umpires

Mr. Ryan provided a written report on the status of the 2021 Umpire-in-Chief (UIC) Clinic, which will be moving to a virtual clinic as a result of feedback received by the planning committee and attendees. The National Office has been in contact with the host hotel regarding 2021 to consider the possibility of rescheduling for an in-person UIC Clinic in 2023. In addition to the UIC Clinic, Mr. Ryan also informed the BOD that the 2021 Advanced Camps for Fast Pitch and Slow Pitch are also relocating from Portland and Oregon based on the recommendations from the Local Association staff.

So far, two cities have expressed interest in hosting the Fast Pitch camp, while there has been no interest in the Slow Pitch camp from cities. Mr. Ryan also commended umpire efforts during the GOLD Nationals and JO Cup, noting that although umpire participation was down by about 40%, the umpires had a great experience at both events.

C. The Alliance Partnership – Chris Sebren, National Teams Director

Mr. Sebren provided a written report covering questions that the National Office has received from Council Members regarding our registration partnership with The Alliance, a girls' fast pitch travel league that was recently launched. Commissioners will receive notification from the National Office regarding any registrations that occur through this partnership. Mr. Benton commended the National Office for working through this partnership agreement, which he believes will be a benefit for USA Softball and a great addition to the services that USA Softball currently provides to its members.

5. MOMENT OF SILENCE

CEO Cress spoke on the passing of family members of National Office staff members which has occurred in recent weeks, and the BOD participated in a moment of silence. Our thoughts and prayers as an organization are with the Families of Savannah Edwards and Megan Schallom.

6. OLD BUSINESS

Registration Period

COO Miller provided a written report detailing the current registration periods of state/metro associations who use either a January 1 or September 1 registration period for their JO individual and team registrations. The report included a breakdown of percentages for JO registrations that took place between September 1 – December 31 over a five-year period. At this time, the National Office believes it is in the best interest of USA Softball to move to a standardized September 1 registration period for all JO individual and team registrations, starting with the 2022 season. The 2022 season will begin on September 1, 2021. Immediate Past President, John Gouveia, asked the Regional Vice Presidents about their feedback from associations within their regions, as each Regional Vice President was tasked to speak with their respective regions regarding the registration period. The majority of Regional Vice Presidents reported their associations would prefer a September 1 registration period. Pacific Coast Region Vice President, Anna Louie, advocated for a January 1 registration period, asking how moving to a registration period that included two different years would affect USA Softball and association financials. CFO Loehrs informed the BOD that that process is currently in place for USA Softball, and it would not affect USA Softball since the registration period would only affect JO members. Northwest Mountain Region Vice President, Roger Garcia, asked COO Miller about a recent conversation with Washington Commissioner, Rick Hansen, regarding the total number of registrations that were occurring before December 31 of each year. COO Miller had told Mr. Hansen that only about four percent of registrations for USA Softball came during that September 1 – December 31 timeframe. Mr. Benton supported moving to a September 1 registration period as it aligns with USA Softball's Championship season, to which Mr. Gouveia added that this registration period would not align with the recreation leagues that make up a majority of USA Softball's registrations and the data does not support moving to a September 1 registration period. At-Large Member, Donn Addante, voiced his support for a September 1 registration period, while Northern Region Vice President, Dick Gulmon, noted that although he's in favor of a January 1 registration date he would support a September 1 registration period to support those associations who need it to be competitive. Mr. Garcia asked if moving

the registration period would affect USA Softball's relationship with The Alliance, which it would not. COO Miller added a final note that about 42% of USA Softball's JO individual and team registrations come from Regions 9 and 10, which have a January 1 registration period with the exception of Washington State.

M/S/C – Motion to move the registration period for JO team and individual registrations to a September 1 to August 31 registration period beginning with the 2022 season.

Uniform Company Agreement

The National Office provided an update on the partnership for a uniform pilot program with Champro, a uniform provider. This partnership will provide for a revenue split between Local Associations and the National Office. Ms. McKee informed the BOD that due to COVID-19, the partnership for the uniform pilot program has been delayed. The National Office will provide a follow up to the BOD at a later date with more specifics on the revenue split that was originally agreed upon with Champro.

7. NEW BUSINESS

GOLD National Championship Finals

CEO Cress informed the BOD that after the 2021 GOLD National Championships, which will be held in Salem, Va., there have been discussions and requests to keep the GOLD National Championships in Oklahoma City at the USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex. The BOD voiced their support and positive feedback they have received from teams who would like to keep the GOLD Nationals in Oklahoma City to play at the historic Hall of Fame Complex. A formal report will be provided during the September BOD meeting to finalize the process of moving the GOLD Nationals permanently to Oklahoma City starting in 2022.

USA Softball JO Cup Dates and Locations

Mr. Benton asked about the possibility of establishing an agreement with Spartanburg, S.C. to place the USA Softball JO Cup at that location on a more permanent basis. CEO Cress noted that there could be some small issues moving forward because of the current dates for the USA Softball JO Cup, and that traditionally events are awarded based on the Local Association relationship and not with specific city or venue partners.

National Championship Finals Bid Process

Mr. Benton brought up the possibility of no longer bidding on National Championship Finals but establishing a Committee to review interested cities and provide recommendations to the CEO for his approval. This would make USA Softball's National Championship Finals more appealing to teams as they can be placed in areas that teams are more interested in traveling to. Mr. Benton asked the Regional Vice Presidents to reach out to associations within their region to obtain feedback on this proposal so it can be discussed at a future BOD meeting.

National Championship Finals Berth Discussion

Mr. Benton asked about the possibility of creating a certificate for a returning berth to a National Championship Finals that could be given to teams who are eligible to receive an automatic berth based on their finish at a USA Softball National Championship Final. This would inform the teams immediately that they have a berth to next year's National Championship Finals rather than them finding out months after the fact. CEO Cress informed the BOD that there are a few caveats that the National Office would have to work through, such as age eligibility and roster verifications, but that the overall concept for presenting a certificate was a good thought.

USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex Events in the Future

Mr. Clark asked about the opportunity to bring more youth and adult events to USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex now that renovations have concluded. President Cobb and Mr. Clark will meet offline to discuss potential events to bring before CEO Cress and the National Office staff in hopes of providing a more formal report to the BOD.

8. BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

President Cobb and CEO Cress are working to finalize the details for the virtual Fall BOD meeting, which is scheduled to take place September 15, 2020.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

M/S/C – Motion to enter into Executive Session.

M/S/C – Motion to exit out of Executive Session with the following motions made:

A. Motion to approve a four-year and four month agreement with AVNU Group.

B. Motion to approve a four-year agreement with Champro as the official uniform of the Men's and Junior Men's National Team programs, pending feedback from the members within the program.

C. Motion to approve Team IP as the exclusive merchandise vendor for the USA Softball JO Cup through 2021.

10. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m. CT on Tuesday, August 18, 2020.