



MINUTES OF THE USHA WINTER BOARD MEETING

January 24-25, 2026

Tucson, AZ

President Denis Hogan opened the meeting at 8:01 a.m. MST at the USHA Headquarters & Hall of Fame building.

Board members present in person were President Hogan, Secretary Sove, Treasurer Birrell, Ben Van Arsdale, Rich Curtner, Rob Nichols, LeaAnn Martin, Frank Holquin, Max Langmack, Jim Wohl, and Greg Burns. Present virtually were Vice President Jared Vale, Alethia Mendez-Caba and Daniel Navarro. Carl Porter was absent. Also present were Executive Director Matt Krueger with Development Director Sam Esser. A quorum was present.

The minutes from the Fall virtual Board Meeting were briefly reviewed. They were deemed needing additional editing; thus, no motion was made to approve the minutes as presented. Secretary Sove was tasked to make the amendments and present to the Board to be approved either by email or at our Spring virtual meeting.

Hogan reminded all who were interested in running for office to give appropriate notice to the President. The two At-Large positions elected in 2025 were reviewed, and he welcomed back Birrell and Curtner, each of whom were elected by acclamation by the board, as allowed in By Laws, since no additional candidates were identified. There were no decisions in the past three months by the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors to review.

Hogan gave a general report, noting there were a few challenges and differences in 2025.

- The Board meetings were changed by adding three virtual sessions quarterly and deleting the in-person session during the 4-Wall National Tournament;
- The recent loss of courts at Missouri State due to flooding necessitating a change of venue for the Collegiate Nationals to the National Handball Center (NHC) next month;
- The National Handball Center opportunity;
- The magazine back on the traditional publication schedule;
- The remnants of the loss of players due to the COVID epidemic; and
- The moving of Development Director Esser to the NHC in St. Louis.

Birrell presented the Treasurer's Report. He started with the ramification of the purchase of the NHC on the endowment funds. In reviewing the budget, specifically the separate schedules, there were some discrepancies that exist due to a change in certain accounting coding, which will be fixed by February. He noted the merchandise inventory has been reduced as there is no benefit to having high value sitting on the shelves. Hence, the USHA is no longer renting storage space for inventory.

Net income was down in 2025 due to a decrease in membership. This led to a general discussion regarding USHA membership and the value it provides. Also, since the World One-Wall Championships are in New York this year, an increase in memberships will likely be seen.

At 10:00 a.m. the Board engaged in a virtual meeting with Todd Williamson, the financial advisor with Wells Fargo Genesis. He confirmed the assets are invested with a focus on safety, and not a “get rich quick” philosophy. A discussion ensued regarding the portfolio investments in domestic versus foreign products, and the overall performance. Notably, nothing is losing money. He ended with the assurance that Genesis will provide free counseling to any USHA members who wish to leave a legacy donation/investment to the USHA.

At 10:30 a.m. the meeting resumed with the Treasurer’s Report. There have been no USHA orders for any new ACE LLC product, as the inventory has not moved this past year. Birrell reported on the status of the financial obligation regarding the NHC, noting the USHA is positively moving towards reaching the goal. Due to major water damage in the courts at Missouri State, the Collegiate Tournament was moved to the NHC. Consequently, construction of the Grand Show Court has been brought forward in time for the tournament. This necessitated bringing forward specific fundraising goals to meet the construction and financial timelines.

At 11:12 a.m. the Board engaged in another virtual meeting, this time with Jeff Streibig (President of the USNHC, LLC) of St. Louis, who provided a virtual tour of the NHC showing all the latest improvements, which were impressive to all.

Vale had to leave the meeting and gave his proxy to Martin.

At 11:23 a.m. discussion once again returned to the Treasurer’s Report concerning certain schedules. Another discussion ensued regarding increasing revenue, including membership cost and member/distributor discounts on merchandise. A discount on membership auto renewal was prioritized.

At 11:52 a.m. the Board recessed for lunch.

The meeting resumed at 12:45 with the Promotion Committee Report by Sove. He started by asking for an additional volunteer for the Awards Committee. Frank Holguin stepped up. Sove then discussed the Awards Committee’s decisions regarding Volunteer and Coach of the Year Awards. He made a motion, seconded by Birrell, to accept the slate for the two Awards by acclamation. No further discussion ensued. The motion passed 14-0-1. A discussion was then held regarding the guidelines for the new Joel D. Tauber Handball Advocate of the Year award. It will fall under the purview of the Awards Committee. An article will be written describing the guidelines for the magazine and web site, and will be completed by the Spring virtual board meeting.

This was followed by the Personnel Committee report. The staff evaluation reports were reviewed. A goal achievement model was discussed, and an incentive program was adopted. Staff compensation was reviewed.

The Hall of Fame Committee report centered on potential process and criteria changes. The Committee’s slate of inductees for the Hall of Fame and Kendler Award this year was reviewed. Martin made a motion, seconded by Mendez-Caba, to approve the slate by acclamation. No further discussion ensued. The motion passed 14-0-1.

The First Ace Committee report was given by Curtner, who deferred to Esser for the discussion of 2026 Grants. After reviewing, Langmack made a motion, seconded by Van Arsdale, to approve the suggested Grant proposals in their entirety. No further discussion ensued. The motion passed 14-0-1. In the future

the Committee will focus on a strategic plan for more junior programs. Brochures for start-up programs are available. The value of cross training will be included in the strategy, including articles in the magazine to help minimize injuries from over training in one specific discipline.

The Collegiate Committee is gearing up for the upcoming National Tournament. They will continue to stress recruitment of junior players. They have a program, using the USHA web site, to invite high school players and coaches to visit various college programs.

Van Arsdale gave the Technology Committee Report, starting with the outstanding success of the use of Bracket Ace and Ace Referee in the Collegiate Nationals as well as a few other tournaments. It is available for any tournament director to set up through the USHA web site. The player rating system is due to be unveiled soon, initially featuring 4-wall players, but there will soon be 1-wall, 3-wall, and women added. The rating system will be powered by Bracket Ace and require use of that application. A Bracket Ace subcommittee has been formed, populated by non-board members. The new Social Media subcommittee will be chaired by Taylor Bell and will be oriented towards Instagram and Facebook.

Van Arsdale also commented the automatic membership renewal procedure has been implemented on the USHA web site and has facilitated a 60% increase in auto renewals. The USHA web site as a whole will be revamped to become more user-friendly, expecting a March launch date.

The next topic was the President's travel expectations for 2026. It was confirmed this year's 4-wall Junior Nationals will be held in conjunction with the 4-wall National Tournament. Hogan suggested a proposed change in how the Board governs itself will be presented next year at this time. Overall, the Board needs to do better in retaining memberships and fund raising.

The Saturday session was adjourned at 3:24 pm.

Sunday, January 25, 2026.

President Hogan called the meeting to order at 8:33 am. All were present as before, Vale indicated if he had to leave early, he would give his proxy vote to Martin.

Birrell began with finalizing the 2026 budget. He started with the staff compensation. Salaries were adjusted and an incentive program was instituted. A motion was made by Martin, seconded by Birrell, to accept the salary, bonus and incentive program as presented. No further discussion ensued. The motion passed 14-0-1.

Discussion turned to ball pricing. It was noted all ball prices are identical, and no change will be made there. However, discussion centered on eliminating the distributor discount and making the four-case pricing available to all distributors, leagues and tournaments.

An in-depth discussion ensued on membership dues. Memberships have decreased, resulting in a commensurate decrease in membership revenue. The last membership dues increase was made in 2017, and it is time to consider another increase. It was noted the best funding model is to have memberships renewed automatically, Auto-pay is currently relatively easy without paperwork through the web site or via one's phone. Those who auto-renew should receive a discount. The suggested new dues level would be \$65 per year, discounted to \$60 per year for auto-pay renewals. Sove made a motion, seconded by Langmack, to accept the recommended raise in annual dues to \$65 per year, discounted to \$60 per year

for those who auto-renew, to be effective 3-1-26. No further discussion ensued. The motion passed 14-0-1.

Martin then made a motion, seconded by Wohl, to accept the recommended change in ball pricing, effective 3-1-26. No further discussion ensued. The motion passed 14-0-1. In addition, merchandise costs will increase by 10%.

Finalizing the budget was addressed. Birrell suggested the USHA is financially strong enough to cover this year; however, revenue from membership revenue is desperately needed. A membership drive would be beneficial, hopefully culminating in 20 new members per state. The Showcase Series was discussed to enable this goal. In order to mitigate the related expenses, Esser will conduct quarterly virtual shows. However, Langmack will continue with his efforts in Denver, and Burns will continue with plans for a Showcase event in Florida in the Fall.

After confirming adjustments in various accounts, Birrell presented a balanced budget. This budget stresses a positive membership increase. Langmack made a motion, seconded by Burns, to accept the budget as presented by Treasurer Birrell. No further discussion ensued. The motion based 14-0-1. Attention was next directed to a proposal from ACE LLC regarding equipment matters. It was noted that prior proposals had not been accepted and that the organization had requested a counter-proposal from USHA. A thorough discussion followed concerning the longstanding relationship between the parties, business considerations, and potential future arrangements.

Vale made a motion, seconded by Langmack, authorizing staff to present a formal counter-proposal to ACE LLC and to explore a potential acquisition of certain assets under mutually agreeable terms. No further discussion ensued. The motion passed 14-0-1. Staff will negotiate specific terms and report back to the Board for final approval. All officer positions of the Board were up for election at this meeting. Hogan declared he is running for reelection as President, likewise Vale for Vice President, Sove for Secretary, and Birrell for Treasurer. No other nominations were added to the slate. Martin made a motion, seconded by Wohl, to accept the slate of officers by acclamation. The motion passed 14-0-1. Next was election of the Executive Committee. The committee is composed of seven Board Members, the four officers and the immediate past president, plus two Board Members to be elected by the Board. There were three nominees for the two open positions. After balloting, the Executive Committee was filled with officers Hogan, Vale, Sove, and Birrell, immediate past president Martin, and Langmack and Burns.

Board members were then asked to review their committee membership and make changes, if applicable, and report to staff after the meeting. Birrell left the meeting.

The Board position of the Pacific Northwest was recently vacated. Our bylaws state the position MAY be filled by a Board election of any constituent of the Region, but is not required. In view of next years' potential change in governance, it was decided by consensus to not fill this Board position at this time and considering the Northwest Region is adequately represented at this time by at-large Board members.

Hogan made a few parting remarks, reflecting on the major events in the life of the USHA, and noting the USHA is experiencing another in regards to the inception of the National Handball Center.

Wohl made a motion, seconded by Mendez-Caba, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 13-0-2 without discussion.

Hogan adjourned the meeting at 10:28 am.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "T. Sove".

Tom Sove
Secretary
1-29-26