

Minutes of SSIPA Board Meeting held on 07/11/21 at 7 PM Central.  
Submitted by Chris Thomas 07/12/21.

Attendees: Dave Allenbaugh, Debbie Forrester, Tim Kuss, Vicki Noakes, Ford Roberson, Jeff Stone and Chris Thomas.

Meeting called to order by Ford at 7:02 PM.

Minutes of Board Meeting held on 06/06/21 as amended were approved unanimously.

**Exec. Director Items:**

**1. Feedback from Pickleballbrackets.com demo and SSIPA future direction:**

Ford welcomed the board members and presented reasons why SSIPA's future direction would most likely not be continuing the agreement with USAP. Among the reasons are: increased USAP membership fees (up 75% as of 7/1/21); increased USAP tournament fees and sanctioning fees; the UTPR ratings system which in general has had a negative impact on the ratings of seniors; the lack of communication initiated by USAP with SSIPA; the lack of input into USAP major decisions that impact the membership of SSIPA; USAP stopped using our logo on online tournament displays; and the recent announcement from USAP regarding partnership with APP and pro players for qualifying and "golden tickets" rights to USAP Outdoor Nationals, without formally considering or explaining why a potential SSIPA championship series could not be a part of that process.

At this point of the discussion, Ford asked for reaction and comments from those present. Tim agreed with Ford and added it has been basically a very frustrating process to communicate and deal with USAP. Vicki agreed as well saying that USAP continues to bad decisions for senior players. Chris also agreed and said pickleballbrackets.com offers a much better tournament tool and ratings system than USAP with pickleballtournaments.com. Dave agreed and said it's time for SSIPA to go its own way and focus on our membership and seniors. Jeff remarked that SSIPA is "boots on the ground" for seniors, and that the best idea is to

break away from USAP. Debbie said she totally agreed with these comments, and that USAP has not supported seniors.

Ford thanked everyone for their input. He then briefly described a potential "transition" plan. This would consist of three US zones: the East, chiefly FL, GA, NC and SC; the Center being TX; and the West composed of AZ & CA. Initial breakout would be about 10 SSIPA circuit unsanctioned events in each zone, for a total of 30 for the year. This is doable given the growth of PB tournaments, and that in 2021 SSIPA had 17 circuit events that didn't include the USAP regionals. Possible regional directors were mentioned as Lucy Kitcher for the East; Ford for TX; and Mike Hoxie for the West. Ford has briefly discussed this possibility with both Lucy and Mike.

Canada could also be a possible zone. Debbie mentioned that Mexico is just booming with PB players. The zone directors would be compensated based on tournaments in their zone, run by them or those they have oversight of. Could also have in the future SSIPA worlds based on those who qualify from their zone championships. There would be SSIPA ratings with easier guidelines and options, and with PB brackets running the algorithms.

Ford will write up an initial outline of the transition plan and send to the board in about 10 days. This will be a general plan with many details to work out, possibly by committees. A motion to approve "the separation of SSIPA from the USAP agreement effective 12/31/21" was moved and seconded and unanimously approved. It was agreed that SSIPA board not broadcast or announce anything regarding the ending of the USAP agreement at this time.

**2. Misc:** In response to a question, Ford said he would notify Jason at PB brackets to send demo S/W to us. The deadline for submittal of SSIPA director apps is 7/15/21. After that date, Chris will call a meeting with Tim and Vicki to discuss next steps.

**3. Next Meeting Time/Date:** TBD.

**4. Meeting Adjourned:** 8:09 PM Central time.