



British Fencing Board Minutes

DATE 06 February 2014
TIME 17:30
VENUE Beazley, Plantation Place South, 60 Great Tower Street, London EC2R 5AD

Present

In the Chair David Teasdale (DT)
Directors: Paul Abrahams (PA) (by telephone)
Tom Cadman (TC)
Clare Halsted (CH)
Alp Orge (AO)
Graham Paul (GP)
William Pitt
John Troiano (JT)

In attendance: Peter King (PK)
Penny Moseley (PM)
Kim Robinson (KR)
Margaret Nolan (MN)
Alex Newton (AN)
David Moseley (DM)
Helen Nicholls (HN) UK Sport
Ray Stafford, EF President (part of meeting)

Apologies Janet Campbell.

Introduction

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked William for Beazley's hospitality.

1. New Declarations of Interest

AO reported that he now runs a new fencing club. PA reported that his son had been selected for the talent programme.

2. New Risk Management Items

The Board noted three items.

PK noted the *transition management* identified by the AGRC at their last meeting. JT reported that the transition management needed more time for consideration and should not be attempted at this meeting. DT confirmed that the Directors had discussed the CEO process, but there was nothing to announce currently. He also confirmed that DM would carry on in his position for at least six months from 1 April; and that the Board cannot make the Development Director recruitment, which is for the new CEO. JT stated that it is important to understand how transition will work,

with each role. It was noted that PK and the new CEO (when appointed) will bring transition plans back to the AGRC in the first instance.

I.T: PK confirmed that the *IT project* is on hold as recommended by Georgina Usher and Peter Smith. There were no extra budgetary provisions made other than that last year. DT suggested that we wait until Georgina is able to discuss the situation, he will put the item on the Agenda for the Board meeting in March.

Competitions: Reference was made to the resignation of the Chair of the Competitions and Calendar Committee. PK confirmed that the two major competitions coming up, the British Junior and Cadet Championships and the British School Teams Championships, were running to schedule and both he and PA believed that we are “in good shape” for these competitions.

AO asked if we needed in future a Competitions and Calendar Committee. The Board noted that PA, who is reviewing BF’s competitions strategy, would discuss what was needed with K Dolan and review/report. CH pointed out that the Competitions and Calendar Committee usually helps out with domestic programmes.

3. Urgent Catch up Items

There were none to report.

4. Gold - Review of UK Sport funding settlement

Helen Nicholls of UK Sport reported on the funding settlement; she said it was important to explain the decision that was taken and the context. The BF funding news was excellent. One year ago UKS would fund just men’s foil but now they will also fund another weapon.

The Rio Games are very expensive, training camps in particular, so monies available to NGBs are restricted. UKS is aware that BF has not had an easy year but has proved that the programme is working. The Panel was very impressed with the performance programme. The independent reviewers were also very impressed that the BF team is doing the basic stuff very well.

The support that the performance programme has had from the Board and the CEO is fundamental to its progress. Part of the decision for the one year funding was the new CEO appointment and the understanding that things will take time to settle down. In October there will be an annual review and the situation will be looked at again. AO asked if there was room to add more weapons. HN confirmed that BF needs a very strong case, and the closer to Rio and 2020, the harder it will be. HN advised the Board to “keep doing what you are doing, keep the performance programme going”. Fencing had percentage wise the second highest increase in funding. UK Sport will keep working with AN across the WC programme.

AN confirmed that training will be centralised and that a funded athlete has to commit to the programme. In response to CH’s questions, AN confirmed the sabre coach appointment will be by open recruitment; he/she will not be at the same level as the Head Coach, more on a development level. The funding kicks in by 1st April and hopefully the squad and coach will be in place by then. In March the WCP will re-nominate all athletes. If after the review of the athletes someone does not meet the expectations, he/she will come off the programme and be replaced.

PK asked the Board to record its thanks to AN and her team - and for the Board to reflect on how things have changed in the last twelve months and how the programme has got to where it is now. DT thanked AN formally on the Board's behalf; she noted the whole team deserves the credit.

6. BF Finances - report by DM

DT asked for item 6 to be brought forward.

PK reminded the Board of the budget and deficit approved in May 2013. DM confirmed that the purpose of the sheet was to say what the expectation was. The Management Accounts show the negative impact of the lack of England Fencing funding. There were a small number of variances. DM explained that BF was in a better position than we expected to be in having spent less in Corporate Services and in events (due to the sponsorship from Leon Paul and not paying referees). PA confirmed that the Cadet and Junior Championships and the School Games should show a small surplus. DM also reported that membership is down and we are behind where we planned to be.

THERE FOLLOWED A JOINT BOARD MEETING WITH ENGLAND FENCING.

6. BF Finances - continued. PK introduced the budget for next year, which DM talked briefly through. JT stated that the planned deficit cannot be sustained; we must review urgently and bring ideas for savings or new policies. After discussion, it was agreed that this required a small group, which should not be the AGRC; the Board agreed the task should lie with JT, PK, DM and the new CEO. This group will report back to the March Board meeting.

7. Any Actions off line The only item was the new Marketing Group, which meets next week to review ideas for promoting the sport and to grow participation. The Group is to make a report to the Board.

8. Any matters arising from December Minutes: CH raised three items -

- PA's competitions report; he had mailed Directors that morning;
- The Sword; discussion deferred till the March Board meeting;
- Nationals; options for next year to be discussed with PA.

9. AOB - CH raised the question of the Camden tournament, which R Velden hoped that BF would take over. The Board agreed this should be part of the competitions review and the new budgeting exercise (ACTION PA, PK); CH also asked for consideration by the Board of Honours awards, for volunteers; it was agreed the process should be reviewed (ACTION DT); TC asked for confirmation of the proposal he circulated recently re the Disciplinary process; Board agreement was confirmed (ACTION; TC).

The Chair gave special thanks to RS for his long and distinguished service as EF President, and as an observer on the BF Board.

DT thanked Directors, observers and staff for attending the meeting at great effort because of the travel difficulties.
The meeting closed at 21.00.
