PROCEEDINGS

UNITED STATES SOCCER FEDERATION
NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Virtual
Chicago, Illinois

February 27th, 2021
12:11 p.m. – 2:34 p.m.
February 27, 2021

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PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE: Good morning or afternoon depending on where you're joining us from today. Welcome to the Annual General Meeting. As President of U.S. Soccer, I hereby call our AGM to order.

A few of us are here in Chicago and while we would prefer that all of us would be together in one place like usual, the most important thing at this time is that all of us are staying healthy and safe. So as we have so many times in the past year, we will adapt and conduct our first virtual National Council Meeting.

While it's only over a screen, it's still great to see all of you, friends and colleagues who are working incredibly hard to grow soccer across the U.S. It was great to see many of you at your council meetings. We all share a love of the game and it's great to have this chance to come together and discuss ways to continue to develop, continue to improve and achieve all of our future goals.

Before we get started, I first want to thank everyone here at the Lowes Hotel in Chicago for helping us setup our production here and to Lumi Global who is helping us facilitate today's AGM via Zoom. Their assistance has been incredibly helpful to ensure our meeting today goes as smoothly as possible.

The entire National Council Meeting is being live streamed and we are also recording the meeting for our records. Lastly, due to the meeting being virtual this year, we're having For the Good of the Game being done through the chat function that has already been outlined for you.

We have a lot on the agenda, but before we get going I would like to have a moment of silence for those in our U.S. Soccer family that we sadly lost during the past year. While they may have passed, we will never forget them and their contributions to the sport.

Please join me in a moment of silence as we remember and honor the friends and members of our soccer family who left us this past year.

(Whereupon, a Moment of Silence took place.)

PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE: Thank you.
At this point, I want to invite Bob Kepner, Chair of our Credentials Committee, to come up and...
conduct the roll call and provide the Credential

MR. KEPNER: Thank you, Cindy.

Folks, before I give the report, I wanted to say
thank you to the four members, chief members, of
the staff that made it easy for the members of the
committee to function. Those are Greg Fike,
Shreeraj Shah, Leah Holt and Helen Syreggelas.
The committee members are Siri
Mullinix, Kathy Zolad, Dimitrios Elstathiou and
Tony Falcone. All of those four committee members
and the staff worked hard this week to pull
together the framework that we would use for
voting.

Now, there are a couple of
things I want to mention and the rationale behind
what we do. It is U.S. Bylaw 302 Composition and
Voting that lays out the standards that we must
follow in preparation for the voting.

Sections 1, 2 and 3 define,
first of all, who can qualify as a voting delegate
to the National Council and since we are all here
representing state associations or soccer
organizations from a variety we remember that
we're divided into groups/councils and the rule
that is in Bylaw 302 says that we must provide
equal strength among the Youth, Adult and
Professional Councils. So we'll use a multiplier.
Now, we have raw data and that is starting to show
right there, raw data Youth Council.

In order for multipliers to be
used, the first step we have to take is determine
which of the councils will be the largest. It's
obvious to you just as it is to us that the Youth
Council is the largest and it has been for many
years.

So we start with the Youth
Council and you can see 290 delegates. That's not
necessarily 290 Youth Council delegates sitting
there in a room somewhere. Instead, it's all
virtual, but the numbers associated with the
individual state organizations can, in some cases,
reflect the fact that human beings are associated
with those. Sometimes, however, the rules do
allow a single member of that member organization
to -- to handle the voting for its entire group.

So we start with Youth Council
and we can move on to the next. Now, we're at the
Adult Council. You can see the individual state
organizations and the affiliates and

members of the Youth Council. So on to the next
council, please. We have Other Affiliates. Each
of them receives a single vote. Okay. Next
council, please.

Now, I mentioned multipliers.
So we have what I told you Youth Council 290
delegates, so to speak; Adult Council 184; Pro
Council 18; Athletes 16; Others 20; Life Members
12; BOD 14; Past Presidents 4. Now, we have to
have the three councils, Youth, Adult and Pro have
equal weighting when you -- you can see the
multipliers used over on the right.

Youth Council has the largest.
It does not need to increase in size, but for our
voting purposes we must multiply the 290 by 1 and
we get 290 there. With the Adult Council, we had
184 as you can see on the far left and we
mathematically determine what the number is that
we have to multiply the 184 by to yield 290. You
can see the Adult Council weighted multiplier is
1.576. 1.576 times 184 equals 290.

The Pro Council same principle.
Pro Council has 18 people. 16.111 times the 18
equals 290. We add the voting strength of the
Youth, Adult, Pro, Athlete and the Other Members

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they add up to 1,150 with 558 are closely
associated with the number of actual people -- not
absolutely, but close. So that's what we have
to -- so now we have to calculate the weighting
for the Athlete Council and we first add the 290
plus the other members 920 and left to determine
the Athlete Council weighting.

There's two ways to do it, but
the -- sorry. My phone went off. So Athlete
council 14.375 times 16 you can see it's 230.
Now, the rules don't establish that they have to
have the same numbers as the Pro, Adult and Youth,
but that 230 you can see 1,150 -- rather 230
divided by 1,150 is 20 percent. So that's the
requirement is that the Athletes in terms of their
voting strength they hold 20 percent of the voting
strength and the Other Members 1.
So the two numbers on the bottom
right simple majority 576 that is a factor only if
everybody votes. So obviously it's simple
majority. If you -- you determine the simple
majority based on the number of actual votes
whether to receive, likewise, two-thirds majority.
Next screen, please.

Now, we all know our event was
originally supposed to be held in Atlanta and it
was moved to Chicago. Now, Georgia -- special
people in Georgia said "Golly, this isn't fair.
You need to fight it out, so to speak." So if we
go to the next screen, we have created a shootout
between the State Amphibian of Georgia and the
State Amphibian of Illinois. You can see what
they are, the green tree frog and eastern tiger
salamander.

So now as a practice I'd like
you to vote electronically to see which of the two
would win the shootout. Please do that now.

Okay. We can move onto the next slide. Okay. We
did not get any results on that vote. So,
remember, the voting process at least 20 percent
of the voters eligible must be Athletes, also the
Adult, Pro and Youth Councils all have to have
equal voting strength and another factor that we
have to consider when we're preparing the
multipliers in the overall picture of the voting
and that is that no individual delegate
organization member can hold more than 2 percent
of the total weighted vote.

Now, that does not apply to
Athletes, but all the rest it does. So that's
another mathematical factor that we have to take
into consideration. Another slide. Okay. So now
I've provided you with data. Thanks again to the
committee and staff for putting it together so
well in terms of gathering it.

I'm going to ask for a motion to
accept the Credentials Report. Cindy -- well,
hearing none, I will go ahead. Okay. Please go
ahead and vote for the test question. You saw
that. So that concludes my report.

PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE: Thank you,
Bob, and thank you to the entire Credentials
Committee for your great work. Everyone should
have received the transcript from our National
Council Meeting last year in Nashville. Do I hear
a motion to accept the minutes as written? Is
there a second? Are there any objections?
Hearing no objections, the minutes are approved.
I would like to acknowledge a
couple of groups. First, our distinguished Life
Members who continue to give so much to soccer and
our country, thank you. And to our players that
have represented our National Teams, thank you for
representing our country so well both on and off
the field and, third, to the Past Presidents that
are here I don't think I ever fully appreciated
all that you have done until I sat in the seat
myself. So thank you so much for all you have
done for U.S. Soccer and our country as well.

All right. Let's get started.
Everyone should have received the Book of Reports
with the committee and council reports. Thank you
to all the committee members on all the committees
as I know you all put in a lot of time and energy
into these committees.

As you all know, I requested
that the bylaw amendments which relate to the
changes in the USOPC bylaws or that effect
National Council structure be withdrawn. As of
this morning, they have been withdrawn. So I
thank you for that. I am hopeful that this will
provide more time to have a robust conversation
with all the stakeholders so that we can come into
compliance with the USOPC bylaws by the end of the
year.

To do this, we will hold an
extraordinary National Council Meeting in
September which will hopefully be in person. And
now I'd like to take a few moments to share some
personal thoughts about the past year and the future ahead.

Welcome to everyone and thank you for joining us today. It’s been said so many times this past year that the COVID-19 pandemic truly had an impact on our daily lives unlike anything we have ever experienced.

At U.S. Soccer, we have taken this opportunity to take a fresh look at things.

We are a new U.S. Soccer. We are making significant changes to personnel as well as having a new approach to challenges and opportunities.

We have a new President, we have a new CEO, we have new leadership throughout our organization with new ideas. We are listening and empowering our staff. We are finding new ways forward to work with our players, partners and stakeholders.

Now that I’m almost a year into my presidency, and after spending much of that time listening, listening to staff, listening to members, listening to players and many others, it has become very clear that for us to reach our full potential, we have to implement change.

Sport has demonstrated time and again that it has a diversity, equity and inclusion problem. I am embarrassed that I never had conversations with my black and brown teammates about race and never really understood the struggles that they endured on a daily basis. Thus, I was never able to help them.

It is 20 years later and I want to be a better teammate. So I’ve started to have these conversations. In one of these conversations, my former teammate told me “On the field, no one cared what the color of my skin was as long as I could play and help us win. I was afraid that would change if I shared the racial challenges I faced off the field. I didn’t want to be seen as different.”

I think about the weight of this on my black and brown teammates and how heavy it must have felt to them on and off the field. I wonder how much better could they have been, how much better could our team have been without that weight or if they had allies on the team to help them carry that weight. I think about other differences besides race that people felt that they could not talk about.

It is time to open these conversations and celebrate these differences because these differences are what make us great.

It is time for us all to be better teammates by listening and deepening our understanding of others. We have not ensured that every kid that wants to play soccer has not only the opportunity, but a real chance at competing and succeeding.

I am the person and the leader I am today because I was lucky enough to have the means and the opportunity to play soccer. We all know that soccer enriches kids’ lives and helps them learn many life lessons. So when kids don’t see a place for themselves in our sport, we all lose.

So we are implementing a fundamentally different bold strategy that puts improving diversity, equity and inclusion at the center of everything we do. Before we can model the way for soccer in the U.S., our first priority is to get our own house in order.

Our vision is simple, but ambitious. Through our words, our actions and the culture we foster every moment of every day, U.S. Soccer will model the way for soccer in the U.S. to become more diverse, equitable and inclusive, increasing U.S. Soccer’s impact around the globe while reflecting the people and ideals of the U.S.

This transformation has already begun at Soccer House such as revamping our hiring practices and putting together allyship and mentorship programs and much more. We must all work together to be aligned to make our sport more diverse and more inclusive. Think about how much better all of our teams would be if each of us here today took action to become a better teammate. I challenge each of you to do just that. What can you do to be a better teammate?

Please watch this DEI video.

(Whereupon, a video was played.)

PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE: As you can see, U.S. Soccer proudly supports our players, staff and fans in all efforts to fight for social justice. We’ve only just started and we have a long way to go, but DEI is one of U.S. Soccer’s principles and will be a guiding aspect in everything we do moving forward. Along with a renewed commitment to DEI, U.S. Soccer continues to be focused on eliminating barriers and increase opportunities for players, coaches and referees.

We are engaging on a nationwide study on why minorities are not choosing soccer.
and what can we as a soccer community do to remove
the barriers. We have also pivoted our Innovate
to Grow fund to provide financial assistance
directly to members. We extended 67,000 referee
licenses at no cost. We reduced coaching
licensing courses fees. We also took a serious
step to tackle another challenge, one that is near
dear to my heart, the lack of women in
coaching by launching the Jill Ellis Scholarship
and SheChampions Mentorship Program.
This fantastic program will help
us achieve our goal of doubling the number of
elite professional female coaches by 2024. We
have been excited to see all our professional
leagues return to play and that set the stage for
our National Teams to also return safely.
We're extremely excited for our
Women's National Team as they aim to be the first
country to win the Olympics while also being the
reigning World Cup champion when they compete in
Tokyo this summer.
Our U-23 Men's Team will look to
join the Women in Tokyo when they take part in
qualifying next month. And our full Men's
National Team has one of the busiest years on
record with a shot at two trophies when they
compete in Nations League and then the Gold Cup
all before starting their 2022 World Cup
qualifying journey in September.
Our Youth and Extended National
Teams have had limited programming and canceled
events due to the pandemic, but we're also looking
forward to all of those teams coming back as soon
as possible. As we all return to play, we also
hope U.S. Soccer's comprehensive educational
campaign Play On is providing you guidance on how
to safely navigate the restart of activities with
proper health and safety protocols. I know at the
grassroots level there are varying degrees of
activity. We all hope that we will all be back
out on the field very soon.
Along with our new CEO Will
Wilson, I'm confident we will improve, mature and
develop in all areas at U.S. Soccer both on and
off the field. With hosting the 2026 World Cup on
the horizon, this is an incredibly exciting time
for all of us connected to the game. I continue
to be impressed by the people involved in this
sport every single day.
Your creativity, hard work,
we did live in the states playing sports became the way for me to do that and to become an American kid. Ultimately, it became my passion and profession.

In many ways, working for the Federation ties my past, present and future together, my international experiences and love of sport, the effort of working to make the global game America’s game and the opportunity to showcase the best of our country on a global scale. All this makes me feel American in a way that is authentic to me.

As the CEO for the past 11 months, I have been focused on a number of different areas. In addition to managing through the impact of COVID and having to make very difficult staffing and programming decisions, we have focused much of our intention internally and on our organization and its structure and stability. Right from the start I have been incredibly impressed with the staff at U.S. Soccer.

Their tireless work ethic and passion come across instantly and with the addition of our new Chief Legal Officer Karen Leetzow and Chief Commercial Officer David Wright we are positioned well for the continued evolution of our organizational structure.

Cindy has already highlighted our evolving DEI focus and its importance for our future growth, but we have also made headway in other key areas. In addition to implementing goal setting and performance management, we also went through an intentional effort to develop and articulate our principles and values. Instead of me talking about it, please watch this video explaining the staff-led process.

(Whereupon, a video was played.)

MR. WILSON: Our principles and values are even more important during difficult times, which all of us have faced in this past year. Like every organization, COVID adversely affected our financial health as many of U.S. Soccer’s key revenue streams were disrupted in our Fiscal ’21. To help mitigate, we cut back on our expenses and will continue to be prudent as we move forward.

Our Fiscal ’22 budget is reflective of the headwinds we will face with increased programming when we are not sure of when fans will truly return to stadiums and there is continued uncertainty of when our broader soccer ecosystem will be back on the fields in full force.

Having said that, a number of recent factors provide us with confidence that when our fiscal year concludes at the end of March we will end up in a much better financial position than our August forecast for Fiscal ’21 included in the Book of Reports.

As we have all learned, the effects of COVID on our business are constantly changing and projections are subject to that constant change as well. While we navigate the choppy waters of today in our immediate future, we’ve also focused our attention on our long-term goals to help us support our mission of making soccer the preeminent sport in the United States.

Over the summer months, senior leadership and myself, along with several Board members, developed ten-year goals to put an aspirational stake in the ground on where we would like to be by the year 2030. We presented these goals to our Board in September and have articulated them to membership over the course of this last week, including in our One Nation One Team 2020 and beyond presentation on Thursday night.

These goals help provide us with short and long-term direction and will act as the underpinning of our future annual strategic planning and budgeting process. They also inform our short and long-term platform and program priorities as well as align our staff around universal and measurable targets.

They are focused into three distinct priority areas; performance, participation and fandom. When we think of our organization, we include Mens, Womens and Extended National Teams, our Youth National Teams, high performance and talent ID and the performance vertical.

We include youth and adult participation, licensed coaches and registered referees in our participation vertical goal and we include brand development, content and social media, event execution, infrastructure, Insiders in technology and data and our fandom vertical and all within the context of a broad diversity, equity and inclusion push because we understand...
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that we will not be able to achieve these goals
without embracing DEI.

We know that these are
ambitious, but as articulated in our principles
and values we wanted to aim high and we are
hopeful that working with you all we can achieve
them and push the popularity of our sport to new
heights.

Lastly, I want to give my
heartfelt thanks to all of you who have stuck with
the game through the ups, downs, starts and stops
of a year unlike any other. During these
challenging times, it’s more apparent than ever
that working closely with you all is a key
component of our core mission and future success.

As our world hopefully starts to
slowly open back up, I look forward to finding
ways to connect with you all in person. As we
move forward, please know that all of us at the
Federation are dedicated to a collaborative
approach that ensures that we can all be
successful and continue to grow the sport we love.

Thank you for the opportunity to
address you all and I look forward to today’s
National Council Meeting.

(Whereupon, a video was played.)

PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE: Now, I’d
like to turn it over to Pinky Raina, our CFO and
CHRO to go over the budget.

MS. RAINA: Thank you, Cindy.
Before starting, I would like to recognize Greg
Fike to address a few points raised in the chat.

MR. FIKE: Hello. I just wanted to
address a few points that were raised in the chat
earlier. Both the minutes and the Credentials
Committee Report were accepted by general consent.
There was another question in the chat about how
many people are actually logged on.

We have 279 people logged on and
more people are logging in every minute, just
slightly over 300 people registered. So I did
want to make sure we addressed those points early
on. I do want to turn it back over to Ms. Raina
to continue with the budget presentation. Thank
you.

MS. RAINA: Thank you, Greg. Good
afternoon, everyone. Thank you for your time this
afternoon. Included in the Book of Reports is the
proposed budget for FY ’22. As the Chief
Financial Officer of U.S. Soccer, I want to first
thank the Budget and Finance Committee Chair
Richard Moeller and the committee members Lisa
Carnoy, Chris Ahrens, Tim Turney and Juan Uro for
their oversight on the budget. I also wanted to
thank my finance team for their work on this
process.

Next, I want to provide
background and introduce the FY ’22 budget video
presentation. The Federation is in year four of a
five-year operating plan that runs through March
2023. We revised the projections factoring in the
impact of the pandemic. In FY ’22, we are
budgeting a deficit of $40.6 million. This is
lower than our FY ’21 projections. Deficits are
planned through 2022 with continued investment in
the game.

In November 2020, the Budget and
Finance Committee reviewed the FY ’22 budget and
how it fit within our five-year operating plan.
The Committee recommended approval of the budget
to the Board of Directors and subsequently to the
Board for approval. The Board approved the FY ’22
budget.

With that context, I will ask
you to turn your attention to the FY ’22 budget.

(Whereupon, a video was played.)

MS. RAINA: Now, I would like to
call for a motion to approve the FY ’22 budget.
Any objections? Voting is now closed. The FY ’22
proposed budget is now passed. U.S. Soccer’s
General Counsel Greg Fike will be presiding over
the membership approvals process.

Greg, please come up to the
podium.

MR. FIKE: Thank you, Pinky. We’ll
next go on to membership applications of which
there is one membership change. It’s included in
your Book of Reports. It has been previously
approved by the Board. The application is from
the Armed Forces Sports Council to change from
Associate Member to National Affiliate.

Membership applications require
approval of the majority of the National Council.
Unless there is an objection, we will handle the
membership applications by the general consent
process. So the Armed Forces Sports Council was
approved by the Board to switch from Associate to
National Affiliate last year.

Unless there is an objection,
Armed Forces Sports Council’s membership change to National Affiliate will be approved by general consent. If there is an objection, please right point.

Hearing no objections, congratulations -- I'm sorry. I recognize Janet Campbell from North Texas. Please raise your hand in the Zoom function to be unmuted and state your point.

Sorry. I see that Janet Campbell has withdrawn her point from this motion. Congratulations to the Armed Forces Sports Council on being a National Affiliate of U.S. Soccer.

The next item on your agenda are bylaw amendments. I'll recognize Ms. Campbell now for a point here. Please state your point.

MS. CAMPBELL: Yes, can I be heard?

MR. FIKE: Yes, we can hear you.

MS. CAMPBELL: Okay. So I would like to make a motion to refer all remaining proposed bylaw amendments Items H through K to special committee.

MR. FIKE: A motion to -- two things. Sorry. Say that one more time, Janet.

Can you restate your motion?

MS. CAMPBELL: So I would like to make a motion to refer all remaining proposed bylaw amendments Items H through K to special committee.

MR. FIKE: Okay. So a motion to refer all the -- all of those combined bylaw proposals is out of order because the bylaw proposal is unrelated.

MS. CAMPBELL: Okay. If you would let my motion carry into section -- to the next section, please.

MR. FIKE: You'll have an opportunity to raise that. Thank you.

So the -- just so -- the Chair has been informed that bylaw proposals A through H just to make sure it's clear there was an e-mail sent out earlier today to the National Council members that bylaw proposals A through H have been withdrawn by the proposers and will be considered by the National Council after U.S. Soccer gathers additional information from stakeholders. So thank you to the proposers for letting us know in advance of the meeting.

So the next item on the agenda is the proposal from Mr. Galena Bylaw 412. It is in Section 8 of your Book of Reports Item I. The Chair has been informed that Mike Galena would like to be recognized for consideration of the proposal.

Mr. Galena, can you raise your hand in the Zoom call and you will be unmuted.

Thank you.

MR. GALENA: Thanks, Greg. Am I good?

MR. FIKE: We can hear you, Mike.

MR. GALENA: Thank you. So a year ago before the group was a promise to bring forth a bylaw we can all support to allow all of our members to vote for representation. The At-Large group is an impressive group of diverse organizations that grow and support the sport and more importantly the people that play this wonderful game. We have always worked toward consensus in decisions and conversations and this process was a perfect example.

I'm proud of the work we've done collectively. With that said, the divisiveness within the Federation and member organizations has grown over these past few months and we as a collective group prefer to contribute to a more productive conversation that recognizes the tremendous contributions of every member.

As such, and with broad support from the member organizations, I'm very fortunate to represent that I'm withdrawing this bylaw for consideration during this AGM.

MR. FIKE: Thank you, Mike. So this bylaw amendment Bylaw 412 and 413 will be withdrawn. Thank you.

The next amendment is Bylaw 413 proposed by the Nominating Governance Committee. It is included in your Book of Reports in Bylaw Section 8, Subsection J. The proposal is to reduce the immediate past President as a non-voting Board member from six years to one year.

The proposed amendment has been reviewed by the Nominating Governance Committee. It is included in your Book of Reports in Section 8, Subsection J. The proposal is to adopt the proposed amendment. The Rules Committee report is printed in the Book of Reports.

The Chair would like to recognize Cindy Cone on this bylaw amendment.

PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE: To follow
along and in support of all the other bylaws, I move to refer this as well to the Board and to report back at the next National Council Meeting.

MR. FIKE: Motion to refer it back to the Board is on the table and will be considered. Unless there is any objection, please state an objection by right point now so I can tell if there is an objection to this bylaw proposal being referred back to the Board.

Seeing no objection to the referral, the motion passes by general consent.

Thank you.

The next item for consideration is the amendment to Bylaw 431 proposed by the Nominating Governance Committee. It is included in your Book of Reports Bylaw Section 8, Subsection K. The proposal is to vest responsibility for review of conflict of interest statements and conflict of interest policies with the Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee. The pros for the amendment has been reviewed by the Board which recommends the adoption of the proposed amendment, the Rules Committee report as printed in the Book of Reports as well.

The question is on the adoption of the proposed amendment to Bylaw 431 as found in your Book of Reports and as recommended by the Board. This motion does require a two-thirds vote for adoption and the vote will be taken electrically.

Are you ready for the question?

Mr. Kepner, please proceed with the vote.

MR. KEPNER: Begin voting now.

MR. FIKE: The vote is 70.19 percent of the weighted vote in favor and 29.81 percent opposed. Therefore, there are two-thirds in the affirmative and the motion is adopted. Bylaw 431 is amended as proposed. Thank you.

Can we bring the points back up, please, on my screen? Thank you. I'd like to recognize Tom Moore from California North had a point.

Please raise your hand to be unmuted and you can speak.

MR. MOORE: Can you hear me okay?

MR. FIKE: Yes, I can, Tom. How are you?

MR. MOORE: Very good. Thank you, Mr. Fike. So I have placed in the chat the text of the motion which you should be receiving now. It's a little bit lengthy. So I hope you'll be able to place it on the screen, but I'll go ahead and read out the motion. If it receives a second, I would like a moment or two just to talk about its intent to make sure we're clear and if there are any potential questions to answer any questions about it.

So here's the motion. I move to establish a special committee consisting of not more than six representatives selected by each of the Athletes Council, the Pro Council, the Adult Council, the Youth Council, the National Board of Directors and six representatives of the so-called At-Large group not otherwise represented for the purpose of, but not limited to, developing consensus on amendments to U.S. Soccer's bylaws and policies that align U.S. Soccer's bylaws and policies with the recently amended Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act to be considered for adoption by the National Council at the 2022
Annual General Meeting of the United States Soccer Federation.

This special council will be chaired by a representative of the council that represents the largest number of registered players registered with USSF in 2019 and will begin meeting not later than July 10, 2021, and conclude its work not later than September 30, 2021. The chairperson will determine the form and format of the special committee meeting.

That is the text of the motion.

If you tell me it gets a second, I would like a moment or two to speak about the intent and clarify anything that might be unclear.

MR. FIKE: So since this item was not on the agenda, it requires a two-thirds vote for -- even to consider this proposal. So -- pursuant to our bylaws. So that motion is not a debatable motion.

So what we need to do is set up to call for the question of whether we're going to consider that. So in favor of consideration of the amendment needs a two-thirds majority in order to -- to be considered at this meeting.

MR. MOORE: Would you like any clarification on intent?

MR. FIKE: Not at this point. So we really do need to go to a vote. So before the vote, Dave Guthrie from Indiana Soccer Association has a potential point of order, which is the only thing that could be considered since this is a non-debatable motion. So please raise your hand, Dave, and you'll be recognized.

MR. GUTHRIE: I would like to challenge the decision and that is it takes a two-thirds vote and that there is some -- I'd like you to cite in Robert's Rules where this is -- should be a two-thirds vote. This should be a 50 plus 1 vote, not a two-thirds.

MR. FIKE: I am going to ask the Parliamentarian Michael Malamut, who is here with the Board today, to come up to the podium to address this issue.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: The member is correct. According to Robert's Rules, it would take a simple majority vote. However, there is a specific bylaw in the rules of -- the bylaws that apply to the National Council Meetings that any item that was not placed on the agenda and submitted in advance requires a two-thirds vote only in case of something urgent, which this might qualify as, but the precedent of the body has been that anything that would be new business requires a two-thirds vote taken without debate. That is the precedent that we have used in this body to interpret the bylaws. Thank you.

MR. FIKE: Mr. Kepner, are you ready for the vote?

MR. KEPNER: Please vote now. I will count down, 10, 9, 8 --

MR. FIKE: The vote is now closed. In favor of the vote or in order to place this item on the agenda is 51.34 percent, opposed is 48.66 percent. Therefore, the motion did not reach the required two-thirds vote. So this item will not be considered at this time. I would point out that, Mr. Moore, you should feel free to bring this proposal to the Board of Directors as they can consider it at any time. Thank you.

On to the policy changes in our bylaws. So the next business is affirmation of policies modified by the Board of Directors in the past year found in Section 9 of the Book of Reports. We will now consider the Board's amendment to Policy 102(4)-1. It can be found in Section 9 - Affirmation of Board Policies of the Book of Reports.

The deletions in this policy made by the Board on January 20, 2021, are indicated by the strike-outs in the text in your book. Yesterday, the Board approved one additional change related to this policy amendment which should be up on the screen shortly.

There was one sentence struck out at the end so the purpose of this policy amendment was simply to allow professional teams to use their standard professional roster as part of the Open Cup. Is there any discussion?

I recognize David Guthrie from Indiana Soccer Association. He has a point.

MR. GUTHRIE: Yeah, Mr. Fike, I made the point back on the last item. I would like to challenge again the fact that we don't have an agenda. We didn't approve an agenda. So it's more of a guideline according to Robert's Rules. So based on that, I'd like to ask for the Parliamentarian to weigh in since we don't have a formal agenda and because the motion
was made it should still be 50 plus 1, not
two-thirds and since it received more than 50 it
should be accepted as approved.
MR. FIKE: I'll ask the
Parliamentarian to come up and address the
question.
THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: As we had said
before, the bylaws are a higher authority and
would overrule Robert's Rules when there is an
explicit disagreement. In this case, we have been
using the shorthand agenda because everybody in
the community knows that to get placed on the
agenda you have to submit a proposal significantly
far in advance, but I'll read the actual bylaw,
which is Bylaw 303, Section 3.
"Any business item other than
approval of Life Member nominations and proposed
amendments to these bylaws to be presented to the
National Council at the Annual General Meeting
shall be submitted to the Secretary General at
least 60 days before the meeting. In urgent cases
upon a two-thirds vote, the National Council may
consider an item not so submitted."
So it's not technically whether
it's on the agenda or off the agenda. It's
whether the members have had sufficient time to
bring it back to their groups and get the feedback
necessary to truly represent their constituents in
the consideration of the matter and only on a
two-thirds vote is it warranted in an emergency
situation to bring it before the body of us as a
whole.
So thank you very much. The
bylaw will take precedent over Robert's Rules in
this circumstance.
MR. FIKE: Thank you, Michael. So
we are on consideration of the motion to ratify --
sorry -- the ratification of the Policy 102(4)-1
in your Book of Reports.
Is there any discussion on that
policy? Janet -- I recognize Janet Campbell from
North Texas with a point. Please raise your hand
in Zoom to be unmuted. Thank you. I apologize,
Janet. It must have been a previous point.
As there is no further
discussion on this policy proposal, the question
is on the affirmation of the amendments to Policy
102(4)-1 as recently revised by the Board. This
motion requires a majority vote for adoption and
the vote will be taken electronically.
the Professional and/or Athletes Councils and the
NBA teams largely rolled over, I would like to
speak against this policy in particular as it's
the most abrasive, divisive and insulting of these
two policies.
In particular, unless I got a
package that is different than everybody else, I
don't see any of the normal statement of the
policy and statement of the changes. All I see is
what appears to be a politically correct press
release in my package, unless I'm missing
something. So I think on form only we aught to
vote against this, not even getting into the
substance of it.
MR. FIKE: Thank you. I'd like to
recognize next Rick Kelsey from Arizona Youth
Soccer Organization. He'll be speaking against
the repeal. Please raise your hand in Zoom and
you'll be unmuted. Do we have Mr. Kelsey?
Mr. Kelsey, I'll come back to you. I'm going to
recognize Dave Guthrie who is speaking against the
repeal as well.
MR. GUTHRIE: Thank you, Mr. Fike.
I would speak against the repealing of this
particular policy at this time. It sounds like
there was a small number of folks in lieu of the overall size of this council that had the benefit of the conversation about the pros and cons for repealing this particular policy. I think it would be more respectful to give the entire council the benefit of those discussions to hear what is positive, what is negative, rather than just have a few steer U.S. Soccer in one direction or another. My comments should not be at all construed as being opposed to the efforts of DEI and I don't want it to be construed that way and I'm not suggesting that I would vote one way or the other, but what I'm asking is for a robust, fully illuminated conversation among all the council about a policy that is so important as this one.

MR. FIKE: Thank you, Mr. Kelsey, I recognize you again and see if you can't raise your hand to be unmuted in Zoom.

MR. KELSEY: Can you hear me now?

MR. FIKE: Yes, I can.

MR. KELSEY: Thank you. First and foremost, I want to acknowledge the fact that we should respect each individuals' right to protest and demonstrate however they feel is appropriate as long as it's done in a respectful manner.

However, the reason why I speak in protest of repealing this particular policy is not about what we do, it's about what we're letting others do.

My concern would be what we do when we're playing an opponent and the opponent takes a knee during the playing of our national anthem because we've now let them know that's okay. My concern would also be the athlete who may decide to take a knee when we're playing in a visiting team's stadium, the playing of their national anthem because we have let them know it's okay.

I think when we're representing the country we should be able to stand with respect. We don't have to acknowledge -- the hand doesn't have to go across the heart, we don't have to salute, whatever acknowledgement has to be, but for any individual that is going to represent the country we should all be expected to stand respectfully, courteously during the playing of any national anthem, not just the American, but every country and every anthem. Thank you.

MR. FIKE: Just a clarification for the group in case anyone is unsure about what the policy amendment is -- what was repealed. I'm going to provide a summary, not a verbatim statement of that, but essentially the policy was that you had to stand respectfully during the national anthem and it was a requirement at all U.S. Soccer events. That was repealed in its entirety by the Board of Directors.

I would next like to recognize Chris Ahrens who is going to speak in favor of the repeal.

Please raise your hand on Zoom and you'll be unmuted.

MR. AHRENS: Thank you. Can you hear me, Greg?

MR. FIKE: Yes.

MR. AHRENS: Great. Hi, everyone.

Last summer the Athlete Council met to discuss exactly this proposal and we submitted a public statement encouraging the Board of Directors to repeal this policy with the council that was seated at that time. We believe that the athletes have a right to choose how they -- how they want to demonstrate and, quite frankly, the longer this dialogue goes on of kneeling versus standing we're not actually talking about the reason that people are kneeling and we're not trying to make anything better.

There is a lot of improvement we can make in this organization. We're far from perfect. We all acknowledge that. We all look around and see that, but the longer that this policy is in place we're just going to be talking about kneeling versus standing and not any of the systemic issues that are presented to us.

So I do not believe the policy is actually about forcing one person to kneel and one person to stand. It's simply about providing athletes their choice and with a policy in place we can't have any real dialogue around the issues that are presented in front of us in the area of diversity, equity and inclusion. Thank you, Greg.

MR. FIKE: You're welcome.

Tim Frament from Eastern New York Youth Soccer Association, I'd like to recognize you now for a point of order. Please raise your hand and you'll be unmuted and state your point regarding this policy.

MR. FRAMENT: You stated that this was for the national anthem. The rule as printed
MR. FIKE: Thank you for the correction. My apologies. It did say national anthems plural. It was not intentional. Thank you.

Next, I'd like to recognize Seth Jahn from the Athletes Council speaking against the rescission of the policy. Seth, please raise your hand and you will be -- on Zoom and you will be unmuted.

MR. JAHN: Hey, guys. Can you hear me, sir?

MR. FIKE: Yes, Seth.

MR. JAHN: I'm Seth Jahn, a former captain of the U.S. National Seven-a-side team. I'm sure I'm going to ruffle some feathers with what I'm about to say, especially given the evolution of our, quote, unquote, progressive culture where everything offends everybody those who want to exercise their First Amendment right where I'm here to give a different perspective.

I also feel compelled to articulate I'm of mixed race and represent undoubtedly the most persecuted people in our country's history - Native Americans, more specifically the Aniwaya Clan of the Cherokee Nation and with the current obsession of identity politics and my resolute belief after countless examples in my life my voice holds less relevance when I identify with my Caucasian side than it does when I identify with my Native side over these issues. So that's why I articulate that.

So if we're so bent on politicizing sport, then we need to talk politics. First, politicizing sport is the last thing anybody really wants. Why would the general public care to watch a bunch of, you know, privileged people politicize their entitlement which, to be clear in the industry we're in, is entertainment. It's an escape from the exhaustive rhetoric on both sides being shoved down our throats.

Sport is the one thing that can unify our country. In 2020, when every citizen was craving an outlet as they were locked down in their homes, sports should have had the highest ratings ever in history, yet nearly every major sports organization saw an incredibly massive decline in viewership as they expressed an inundation of varying displays of their politics. It doesn't take an economics expert to see how recklessly crazy this is regarding our monies and the resources it's costing in allocating to our athletes, underprivileged areas and the tremendous opportunities that are squandered to minorities by not nipping this in the bud.

So we have to talk about it. Right? This is what we're doing, so politicizing sport. So why do athletes kneel? After talking to a number of my fellow minority colleagues' perspective, even though every minority in our country faces the same socioeconomic bias, it's predominantly facing the black communities of police brutality and slavery. I'm just basing this solely off of the facts and the statistics and my personal experience.

So the first issue, police brutality is a narrative with relativity zero data to substantiate it. The facts just don't have time for the feelings. Per the FBI statistics, there are nearly 400 million police interactions annually, 95 percent of the deaths in the black communities come at the hands of another black man, 3.7 percent at the hands of law enforcement with 3.2 percent of those deaths being a justified use of force.

That's less than half of a percent. When these tragic events happen, it's truly a statistical anomaly. I worked in law enforcement in two large agencies alongside my black, brown, white, yellow, red, purple peers. I never once saw a hint of police brutality. Does that mean it doesn't exist? Absolutely not. And it's important to address those atrocities when they manifest to exercise critical thinking and to also rebut the divisive narrative exacerbated by the media in order to garner their ratings as they exploit our emotive state, but I've also lived all over the world.

I grew up in the bricks of Miami. I spent my summers on reservations where I have been jumped, in the hospital twice, I had my car shot up, my house shot up with my little cousins inside just from being too light-skinned. There is racism in every race. So why aren't we using our individual platforms to exercise our
social justice worries and bring to light the disproportionate number of deaths in those communities within their communities?

And, secondly, slavery I keep hearing how our country was found on the backs of slaves, even though approximately only eight percent of the entire population even owned slaves. Every race in the history of mankind has been enslaved by another demographic at some point in time. Blacks have been enslaved, Hispanics have been enslaved, Asians -- most recently in our country in the friggin' 20th century have been enslaved. Natives have been enslaved, whites have been enslaved.

Shoot, I lived in Africa for two and a half years where I could purchase people, slaves, between the price of $300 and $800 per head depending on their age, health and physicality. Where are the social justice warriors and the news journals to bring illumination to these real atrocities?

Yet in all of history only one country has fought to abolish slavery, the United States of America, where nearly 40,000 men died to fight for the abolishment of slavery under the same stars and bars that our athletes take a knee for. Their sacrifice is tainted with --

MR. FIKE: Mr. Jahn, I'm sorry to interrupt, but please wrap up your comments as they have been going on for a little while, so if you can wrap up I would appreciate it.

MR. JAHN: Thirty more seconds.

Thirty more seconds. Their sacrifice is tainted by every knee that touches the ground and it's shameful and embarrassing. I've lived in nine countries, I've been to 98, I served as a counterintelligence special agent abroad over half the countries -- served 11 years in the military, seven of those special forces, I've been injured multiple times, spent two years in the hospital, inpatient, was paralyzed, all while fighting for people of color all over the world who do not know my name or even knew I was there sometimes. I have draped nine of my brothers' caskets who died fighting for those oppressed with that same flag that is humiliated every time I see an athlete kneel.

So why kneel? What does that do? What does that represent? Is there a better way to express your disgust and your personal belief system? I want to be clear. I would gladly give my life to preserve every athlete's right to express their First Amendment right, though, I doubt they'd reciprocate the same gesture, but not only representing our country on the pitch -- do that on your own individual platforms and I'll support that all day. I'll help you.

The individual athlete does not speak for every athlete in the Federation or our organization, yet they represent us all and cost an exorbitant amount of funds that could be allocated to the same communities they say they're advocating for. Every company in this world has these policies in place to ensure employees do not embarrass or speak on behalf of the company unless in an elected position. So why is it not the same here?

After being on senior teams, youth national teams and a player with the National Team, a great number of our biggest names in our Federation vehemently agree with me behind closed doors, of course, but they are ostracized for voicing their positions within the team publicly, which I'm not afraid to do. I've earned the right. I promised I'd keep their identities concealed, but how do you think this ultimately affects the culture cohesiveness of the team and their performance?

United we stand, divided we kneel. I vote to preserve Policy 604-1. Thank you.

MR. FIKE: Thank you. Mr. -- I recognize Mr. Pinori from Eastern New York State Soccer Association. The indication on the screen is a second. So I'm not a hundred percent sure, but please state your point after you raise your hand to be unmuted.

MR. PINORI: Can you hear me?

MR. FIKE: Yes, I can, Peter.

MR. PINORI: Greg, the only thing I did is I seconded the motion that Jim made.

MR. FIKE: That's the only thing I wanted to do.

MR. PINORI: Can you hear me?

PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE: Let me be
clear this is not about disrespecting the flag or
about disrespecting the military. This is about
the athletes and our staffs’ right to peacefully
protest racial inequality and police brutality.
So I urge our membership to
please support our staff and our athletes on this
policy. Thank you.

MR. FIKE: Thank you, Cindy. Next,
the Chair would like to recognize Janet Campbell.
She raised a point, at least that's what is
showing up on my screen. So I apologize, Janet,
if this is just the one coming up again.
So please raise your hand in
Zoom and you'll be unmuted. All right. Janet,
I'm assuming that that point was about something
else. So as there is no further discussion, the
question is on affirmation of rescission of Policy
604-1 as found in Section 9 - Affirmation of Board
Policies in the Book of Reports. The motion
requires a majority vote for adoption and the vote
will be taken electronically.
Are you ready for the question?
MR. KEPNER: Please begin voting
now. Begin winding up your voting now. 10, 9 --
voting has stopped.

MR. FIKE: The vote is 71.3 percent
of the weighted vote in favor and 28.66 percent
opposed. Therefore, there is a majority in favor
and the Board’s rescission of Board Policy 604-1
is affirmed. The Board’s rescission of Policy
604-1 will continue in effect. Thank you.
On to the next item of business.
Included in your Book of Reports in Section 10 as
discussion item is a policy proposed by
Metropolitan D.C. Virginia Soccer Association.
U.S. Soccer’s legal team, in consultation with
outside experts, have determined that
consideration of the proposed policy at this AGM,
and National Council Meeting, is in conflict with
the procedures required by Bylaw 214 because the
proposal did not receive the assent of the Board
as required by the bylaw.
The proposed policies,
therefore, are brought forward as a discussion
item at this time. This item is open for
discussion at this time for ten minutes. All
speakers who wish to speak may indicate pro or
con. Pro simply means you're speaking in favor of
the idea. Con means you're speaking against the
idea. Now -- in the order recognized
by the Chair, we will end our discussion when
there is no one else requesting recognition to
speak, or ten minutes, whichever is sooner.
Please remember that there is no vote at this
time.

Is there any discussion? The
Chair recognizes Jim Sadowski from Metropolitan
D.C. Virginia Soccer Association. Please raise
your hand in Zoom and you will be unmuted to speak
in favor of the idea of the policy change. Thank
you.

MR. SADOWSKI: Greg, can you hear
me?

MR. FIKE: Yes, I can.

MR. SADOWSKI: Okay. Great. Thank
you very much. As we discussed before this was
put on the agenda, I appreciate that you guys put
it on the agenda. The reason I proposed this
policy was to start the discussion on barriers to
affiliation, including the player fee structure.
So I thank you.
I'm going to try to do this
without objection, but I would ask that this
policy be referred to a task force to be appointed
by the President in consultation with the Board of
Directors to examine not only the player fee
structure, but all barriers to affiliation.
This would be consistent with
the task force that was promised in Nashville. So
I'd like to refer this to a task force without
objection on all barriers to affiliation.

MR. FIKE: Yeah. Thank you, Jim.

MR. SADOWSKI: Okay. Would you please
add that particular item to the Board's next regular agenda
for consideration of creation of a task force.
Is that okay with you, Jim?

MR. SADOWSKI: Yes.

MR. FIKE: That item -- I will
request that item be added to the agenda for the
next regular Board meeting. Thank you, Jim.
Yeah, the Chair recognizes Cindy
Cone for discussion.

PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE: So, Jim, I
just wanted to chime in here and tell you that it
will be added.

MR. FIKE: Thank you, Cindy. The
end of our discussion time has arrived. The Board
will take this discussion and obviously the

request of Mr. Sadowski and the agenda as requested by Ms. Cone in its future -- into future consideration on this issue.

Thank you for your time and consideration this afternoon. I've got a -- well, I'll recognize one more pro Michael Hill from Pennsylvania West Soccer Association.

Please raise your hand to be unmuted in Zoom.

MR. HILL: Can you hear me?

MR. FIKE: Yes, I can, Michael.

MR. HILL: I just want to thank the Board for accepting this committee. I would like to make a point, though, that they also committed to the same thing in the minutes at the national meeting and 12 months have elapsed and it hasn't happened. Thank you.

MR. FIKE: You're welcome. I recognize David Guthrie for a point of order from Indiana Soccer Association.

Please raise your hand and you'll be unmuted.

MR. GUTHRIE: Thank you again, Mr. Fike.

I'm going to offer an incidental main motion. That motion is to move to establish a special committee consisting of not more than six representatives selected by each of the Athletes Council, Pro Council, Adult Council, Youth Council, National Board of Directors and six representatives of the At-Large group not otherwise represented for the purpose of, but not limited to, developing consensus on amendments to the U.S. Soccer's bylaws and policies that align U.S. Soccer's bylaws and policies with the recently amended Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act to be considered for adoption by the National Council at the 2022 Annual General Meeting of the United States Soccer Federation.

The special committee will be chaired by a representative of the council that represents the largest number of registered members with USSF in 2019 and will begin meeting not later than July 10 of 2021 and conclude not later than September 30, 2021. The chairperson will determine the form and format of the special committee meeting.

MR. FIKE: Thank you, Dave. That was another motion. Again, in order to get on the agenda -- this is the exact same motion that was proposed before. In order to get on the agenda, it would require a two-thirds vote. It failed and, therefore, it is out of order.

MR. GUTHRIE: Mr. Fike, it is an incidental main motion and I believe it should be handled differently. I would ask the Parliamentarian to -- and I want to keep -- I'm sure these will be in the minutes, but I want to make sure the Parliamentarian has an opportunity to review that.

MR. FIKE: Yes. Thank you. I'm happy to bring Michael up to address that issue. Thank you. You have to wait one second, Michael.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you, Greg. Thank you. The bylaw does not make any difference between main motions and incidental main motions in this regard. The bylaw says "any business item." This is a business item. It creates a new committee or task force, which is an item of business, and, therefore, whether it's categorized as incidental main motion which is basically for those who are not intimate with Robert's Rules means a procedural main motion or whether it's a substantive main motion which is a motion that introduces a completely new business item, it is still an item of business before this body.

If it were on the agenda, it would have to be listed as an agenda item as a general special order for consideration even if it were an incidental main motion as opposed to a substantive main motion and, therefore --

MR. GUTHRIE: We raised that issue earlier.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: -- there is no significant difference because a bylaw requires business items to be raised 60 days in advance. Thank you very much.

MR. FIKE: Thank you, Michael. That concludes our discussion on the policy proposal that we'll soon be discussing at the Board meeting next. I'd like to recognize Michael Malamut to come up next and conduct the elections. Thanks so much.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you, Greg. The next item of business is the Independent Director election. I understand that we have one nomination for that position from the Board of Directors. Cindy, you may now make the
nomination.

PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE: As all of you know, our Federation and our Board of Directors benefit from the service and contributions of our Independent Directors. One of our independent directors, Lisa Carnoy, is up for re-election this year. Lisa brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to our boardroom. She is the Chair of the Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee and she serves on the Budget Committee. Her advice and expertise truly makes our Board stronger. The Board unanimously recommends re-electing Lisa. So on behalf of the Board, I am nominating Lisa to be re-elected to another three-year term as an Independent Director. Thank you.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you, Cindy. Now, we are ready for the election to fill the open Independent Director position on the Board.

Lisa Carnoy is the only nominee. Is there any objection? Seeing no objection, Lisa is elected by acclamation. Congratulations, Lisa. Thank you. Cindy, do you have any words of welcome for Lisa at this time?

PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE: Yeah, welcome, Lisa, back to the Board. We're excited to have you.

Lisa, did you want to say anything or anyone else from the Board want to talk on Lisa's behalf? Chris would like to make a statement.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Chris, please raise your hand in the Zoom to be unmuted.

MR. AHRENS: I just wanted to welcome Lisa on the Board and bringing her expertise from the business world is only going to make the Board stronger and she truly cares about the game and is just a great addition to the Board and I know the members don't always get to know the Independent Directors. So I just wanted to welcome Lisa and encourage her to continue to be the positive force that she has been on the Federation.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you very much. I want the members to know that Lisa has sent a direct message saying thank you on behalf of your support and your vote.

Lisa, do you wish to be unmuted at this time to say anything? If so, please raise your hand in the Zoom.

MS. CARNOY: Can you hear me?

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Yes, we can. Welcome, Lisa.

MS. CARNOY: Thank you. I just wanted to say thank you. I appreciate your confidence in me. It is a privilege to be on this Board. I know we have a lot of work to do. I have great confidence in Cindy and Will and the entire team and look forward to seeing you all in Atlanta next year.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you. Now, the next order of business is the presidential election. Under our bylaws, nominations for President need to be submitted in advance. Nominations are now closed. The election is to fill the remaining year of the current term for President.

Only one nomination was submitted timely for the election for President, your current President Cindy Parlow Cone. As there can be no other nominations, Cindy is now declared elected by acclamation for -- to fill the vacant term for the remainder of her term as President. Congratulations, Cindy. Do you wish to speak?

PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE: Yes.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you. PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE: Thank you for re-electing me. It is truly an honor to serve as your President. I know we have a lot of work to do, but I'm looking forward and excited about continuing to work with our Board, our members and stakeholders and our players to move the Federation forward in a positive manner. Thank you.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you very much, Cindy. Now, in accordance with our bylaws and policies, the nomination process for the Vice President is up for consideration. The process is public and it was closed for nominations in December pursuant to our bylaws. Four candidates completed the nomination process timely; Cobi Jones, Bill Taylor, Tim Turney and Jim Sadowski. A draw was conducted on Thursday that determined the order in which the candidates would be on the ballot and the order in which you will see the veto -- the videos, excuse me, that they prerecorded. Please roll the videos from the candidates at this time.
Thank you.

MR. JONES: Thank you, everyone, for your time. My name is Cobi Jones and I am running for the U.S. Soccer Vice President position. I get asked consistently why am I running. Well, it comes down to a simple reason really. I wish to give back to the game that gave me so much and tackle some of the issues to date. I bring the experiences and perspectives that are broad enough to bring everyone together under U.S. Soccer, a team where everyone can have a sense of belonging, where one feels represented, where one feels heard and communication regularly occurs. The overarching ideas that carry weight with me, and will throughout my term, will be representation and access with advocacy, representation from the boardrooms to the playing field. This increased diversity will not just be a race and gender advocacy, but lead to diversity of thought, experience, leadership and communication. This will give new ways to look at and handle problems which, in turn, will benefit not just U.S. Soccer but soccer in all its forms. I have a vision for U.S. Soccer over the next three to five years to improve transparency, to increase membership through the recruitment of unaffiliated clubs and individuals. I will look to establish partnerships to focus on underrepresented communities and, in turn, increase minority participation in the game and finally look to settle internal disputes without lawsuits, which will make U.S. Soccer more harmonious and appealing to sponsors.

To make the game more accessible to underserved communities, I believe that I will need to first establish the will and commitment to do so outside of current subsidies for kids and a key strategy is to create safe places for kids to play. I will propose working in inner cities to create access to blacktops for mini soccer pitches and available green spaces for small-sized fields. This initiative will require us to work with departments, groups and organizations that are already doing this.

To ensure the appropriate project management and accountability, I will establish a committee or task force to focus on implementation and local programming. To help U.S. Soccer’s numbers in the youth game, we need to look at the social issue of kids and parents understanding that the game is played for fun. Soccer needs to be community-based. So let’s get to the grassroots and go hyper-local and reaching out to the unaffiliated teams is a necessity. Let’s do this through local representation. That said, I propose establishing a fun first initiative directed at bringing back the elements that make the game fun to play for kids.

This includes less structure, less emphasis on competition and winning at the younger age groups and helping both parents and players understand the importance of technical, tactical and physical development.

I would look to our National Teams and see where we can harmoniously solve issues and address concerns. This includes establishing stability and awareness in our various extended National Teams and offering membership to other soccer organizations under our tent.

With my 30-plus years involved in the game and having played at every level, I have a broad view of the landscape, most of my time on the field as a player, I have been a coach, a fan, a parent and an investor in the game. As Vice President of U.S. Soccer, I want to bring unity and simplicity and guide U.S. Soccer in the direction that benefits all of its members.

Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: I’m glad the election is finally here and we can move forward together. After literally hundreds of phone calls, I feel like I have a much better understanding of the membership I hope to serve as Vice President.

Thanks to each of you that took time out of your busy day to talk with me. I am grateful to be a part of this organization. The love I have for the game stems from my personal enjoyment in playing the game as often as I can and being on the field with my teams.

It comes from helping my players to become young adults and preparing for life experiences. It also comes from being a fan watching and attending professional and National Team games.

I believe that my near 20 years as a physician, businessman and administrator as a...
state president give me a depth of experience that
uniquely qualifies me for this position. While we
are exiting the pandemic, I believe we are
to enter one of the most trying times in U.S.
Soccer history, one that will require a lot of
action and effort to clear the financial hurdles
while trying to regain the losses of our
membership numbers.

Additionally, while we make our
way through the changes of governance, I believe
that instead of fracturing us, this provides us
the opportunity to come together in a way that
will allow us to communicate and come up with
unified ways that we can grow the game together.

I stand by my mission statement to work together
with the youth, adults, athletes and professional
members to find, develop and play.

We have a short window to build
bridges, to find clear pathways and unite our
country to be prepared for the growth of soccer
leading up to and beyond the Mens '26 World Cup
and hopefully Women's World Cup as well as the
'28 Olympics. The time is now. We must unite. I
am ready to hit the ground running and work with
you. I hope I have earned your trust and your
support. Thank you.

MR. TURNEY: Good afternoon,
everyone, and welcome to the 2021 USSF AGM. This
has been quite a year. It is bizarre and strange
to say the least. As I speak to you now eight
days before the convention, so much can happen
between now and the election. So much has
happened in the past year since we last met in
Nashville.

Who could have thought the
dramatic outcomes with COVID; the rescheduling of
games, no games, no fans in the seats, only
playing a few national games for the entire year,
postponing the Olympics.

As we look to the future and
what next year holds as we meet next year at this
time there will undoubtedly be anywhere from six
to eight new members on your Board of Directors.

Change is inevitable. Change for progress is
good.

As we move down this road to
look forward to the good things that come, we must
unite. We must act as one Federation made up of
four councils. We must come together. I believe
in order to do that I possess a wealth of
knowledge to help move this Federation forward.

It is through relationships from individual
communication that we can do this.

My pledge to you is I will reach
out on a regular basis and consistent basis to
talk to the members openly, very frankly and
sometimes probably aggressively so that we can
move this Federation in the direction it needs to
go. We are one Federation made up of all the
members. Together we can do great things.

Thank you very much and I hope
everyone is safe and healthy. God Bless America.
Let’s go.

MR. SADOWSKI: Welcome to the 2021
AGM. To start, I am thankful. I thank my wife
and the other people that helped me during the
campaign and over the last two decades. There are
too many of you to mention by name, but thank you
for your dedication, your guidance and friendship.

You have made me a better person.

I thank the candidates. Their
presence has made the election competitive.

Competition and an exchange of ideas are both good
for the game. I cheered Cobi on the field and I
cheer him again for stepping up to the challenge.
important to U.S. Soccer. Soccer starts locally
and having a strong base drives the success of all
levels above the base. Without quantity, you
don't have quality.
In my vision, we must build a
base and quantity by growing the number of players
and coaches and by developing referees early on.
In my vision, there is a shared number of goals to
help build and support the base.
As a referee in a tournament, I
heard a presenter say, "Treat every game like it
is those players' World Cup." That simple
philosophy of treating everyone with importance is
what I will champion if elected. If we treat
every member, player, coach and referee as
important, U.S. Soccer will thrive.
We have just suffered through
the darkest days of the pandemic, but our future
is bright. The sun is finally shining on our
fields and we will all soon safely return to play.
In my vision, U.S. Soccer reaches out again to all
members to provide more COVID relief such as a
partial reduction in registration fees.
I will now end with what I heard
Hank Steinbrecher, a Life Member, tell us at an
awards banquet. The word American ends with "I
can." We are all Americans. I can and we can
together get our players back on the field safely
and quickly. I can and we can together make
soccer a more diverse, inclusive, transparent and
accountable place. I can and we can together
ensure that U.S. Soccer provides better service
and value.
And while we build a soccer
nation remember that soccer teaches us much more
than soccer playing skills. It teaches teamwork,
character, patience, humility and how to respond
to failure.
So in my vision, soccer is not
just about winning player development, but having
fun, teaching our children life skills and
building friendships. Service to the members for
me is all about the service. I will be honored
and humbled to serve as Vice President. There is
hard work ahead and I am ready to get started.
Our fans chant in voice "I believe that we will
win." It’s true we will win if we work together.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you very
much to all the candidates. This election is to
fill the remaining three years of the current term
for Vice President. Election requires a majority
vote. We will now call on Bob Kepner to conduct
the vote.

MR. KEPSNER: Begin voting now.

Voting will close in 10, 9 --

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you.
The vote results are as follows: Cobi Jones 44.67
percent, Bill Taylor 34.10 percent, Tim Turney
7.99 percent, Jim Sadowski 13.25 percent.
No candidate obtained a majority
at this round of election. Therefore, we will
need to have a second round of voting in order for
a candidate to obtain a majority. Before we do
that, we will take a five-minute recess. It is
now -- it is now 2:21. We will resume -- it is
now 2:22. We will resume at 2:27 promptly. Thank
you.

(Whereupon, a break was taken
after which the following
proceedings were had.)

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you.
Now that we've had a time for a brief recess, my
understanding is that all four candidates wish to
be considered in another round of voting. All
four candidates will be before you again.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you.

If we are unable to receive a
majority at this round of voting, we will then
proceed according to the procedures that were
adopted in the last contested presidential
election wherein subsequent rounds of voting the
lowest vote count recipient will be dropped in the
next round.

In this round, all four
candidates -- sorry. One of the candidates I
understand has agreed to withdraw. Tim Turney has
agreed to withdraw and, therefore, I'm going to
ask -- I'm sorry. I was misinformed. Tim Turney
remains a candidate. Jim Sadowski has informed
the body that he wishes to withdraw at this time.
Jim, if you wish to make a
statement at this time, you'll be recognized.
Please raise your hand in the Zoom to be unmuted.
Okay. I don't hear anything. So I assume that
Jim does not wish to make a statement at this
time. Thank you very much for the issues that you
raised in your candidacy, Jim. They are all
important issues that have been raised by all the
candidates and the Board will consider them.
The next round of voting will
consist of three candidates then: Cobi Jones,
Bill Taylor and Tim Turney.

Mr. Kepner, will you prepare the vote?

MR. KEPNER: Begin to vote now.

Voting will close 10:09 voting has ended.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you.

Voting has ended. Cobi Jones received 40.47 percent. Bill Taylor received 55.94 percent. Tim Turney received 3.6 percent. Therefore, Bill Taylor obtained the majority and is elected as your new Vice President for the remainder of the current term.

Everyone, please join me in welcoming our new Vice President of U.S. Soccer Bill Taylor.

Bill, if you wish to speak, please raise your hand in the Zoom and you will be unmuted.

MR. TAYLOR: Can you hear me?

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Yes, we can hear you.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, I'm kind of speechless. I first want to make sure that I thank everyone that I was running against. It was an honorable election and a race that was filled with lots of ups and downs, but I really appreciate the manner which each of the candidates ran the race.

We all just focused on our platforms and there was no negativity in the process and, for that, I'm very proud to be able to have stood on the stage with each and every one of them and look forward to the time where we'll be able to go get some drinks and share stories.

So with that being said, I want to thank the membership for their support of me, for those that voted for me as well as those that did not. I'm very committed to being able to work together across the membership, especially as we move through these governance changes that we have to have, that we will be able to use this as an opportunity to unify our country instead of allowing it to fracture us.

I'm also excited to help us really focus on growing the game and regaining the membership that we've lost through this pandemic. I appreciate all of your support and I look forward to speaking to you and continuing our relationship as we move forward. Thank you, all.

THE PARLIAMENTARIAN: Thank you very much, Bill. And now I turn it over to Cindy.

Thank you, Cindy.

PRESIDENT PARLOW CONE:

Congratulations, Bill. I am grateful that you have taken on this role. We have a lot of work ahead of us and I look forward to partnering with you in tackling all of this work.

As you all know, it's been a really challenging year, but I truly want to once again thank all of you for your time, commitment and passion. We are looking forward to working closely with all of you. We want to hear from you, be inclusive and work with you to deliver the change in progress we all know is possible.

As we close things up, I do want to announce one last thing. Although Lisa let the cat out of the bag earlier, next year's AGM will be in Atlanta in early March.

I appreciate everyone's patience as we did this year's event virtually and I look forward to seeing you all in September for the extraordinary National Council.

Please stay as we will scroll through for the Good of the Game. Thank you to everyone. This meeting is adjourned.

(Whereupon, the Good of the Game video was played.)
REPORTERS CERTIFICATE

I, Steven J. Brickey, RMR, CRR, appointed to take the meetings of the U.S. Soccer Federation, do certify that the within proceedings of the Board of Directors Meeting were taken by me stenographically virtually on February 27th, 2021, then reduced to typewritten form consisting of 86 pages herein; that the foregoing is a true transcript of the proceedings had.

In witness hereof I have hereunto set my hand this 15 day of March, 2021.

___________________________
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