



MINUTES

Georgia Soccer Board of Directors Meeting March 24, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. Virtual

- I. **Call to Order** – Meeting was called to order by President Neil McNab at 7:05 p.m.
- II. **BOD Attendance:**
 - A. **Voting Members Present:** Neil McNab, Melissa Camp, Andy Boyle, Tricia Biando, Micah Wilson, Donald Barksdale, David Miles, Tommy Zavieh, Geriano Viveros, Mark Bloom
 - B. **Non-Voting Members Present:** AJ Hurst, Kevin Biando, Jim Walker (Executive Director)
 - C. **Guests Present:** Karon Beyer, Juan Castillo, Edgar Garcia
 - D. **Members Not Present:** Leigh Jakes (non-voting)
- III. **Correspondence:** None.
- IV. **Consent Agenda**
 - A. Approval of Minutes (February 24, 2025) – Motion, Seconded, Approved unanimously
 - B. Approval of Financials (February, 2025) – Motion, Seconded, Approved unanimously
- V. **Items Not on Consent Agenda**
 - A. Neil provided an introduction and welcome to GSSA's newest board members: David Miles and Geriano "Gerry" Viveros
 - B. Candidates for the Director at Large – Youth Board of Director position (Juan Castillo and Edgar Garcia) were introduced by Neil and provided the opportunity to speak to the current board members about their qualifications ahead of the board vote.
 - i. After both candidates spoke, Neil called for any questions from the current board members for the two candidates.
 - ii. Following a Motion by Melissa and a Second by Andy, Jim posted the election survey online for the board members to input their selection for the vacant board position.
 - iii. Per the election results, Juan was elected to the Director at Large – Youth position for the GSSA Board of Directors.
 - iv. Board members agreed that efforts should be made to keep Edgar engaged with GSSA.
 - C. Jim provided a brief update on the topics set forth below.
 - i. US Soccer AGM Recap
 - USYS is eliminating Regional competitions from its National Championship format and will have advancing teams progress directly to a two-tiered National competition, commencing in the 25-26 seasonal year.
 - USYS announced a change in their Presidents Cup format to include a Sub-Regional event with those advancing teams moving to a Regional event and then a National event, commencing in the 25-25 seasonal year.
 - US Soccer has implemented a Referee Abuse Prevention (RAP) policy that became effective March 1 which provided increased punishments for referee abuse transgressions. Jim noted that he has not seen an uptick in ejections as a result of the new policy.
 - USYS confirmed that they are maintaining a unified approach with US Club and AYSO regarding age group classifications, noting that the three entities are aligned to return to a school (or "seasonal") year approach, utilizing September 1 as the start of that fiscal year, commencing in Fall, 2026.

- GSSA had several excellent meetings with the leadership of USASA during the US Soccer AGM in Atlanta in late February.
 - GSSA participated in the US Soccer Foundation job fair which occurred the day before the US Soccer AGM. Jim noted that the response to GSSA's presence by the college students was fantastic.
 - The referees had a recent training session with excellent results.
 - Jim met with Oregon Youth Soccer during the US Soccer AGM to discuss their thoughts with respect to their ongoing partnership with Cogeo, a capital grant fundraising entity. While Oregon was pleased with their work thus far, it is still in its infancy so Jim recommended a "wait and see" approach, maintaining communications with Oregon regarding progress updates.
 - Jim attended the AGM for the USCSA (United States Consortium of State Associations, of which Georgia Soccer is a founding member). Jim serves as the head of the legal advisory committee of that group.
 - USASA and US Soccer elections were held with all votes trending in the direction of GSSA's votes with one exception – term lengths for US Soccer board of directors were increased from two years to four years starting with the next election cycle.
 - Jim noted that the 2026 US Soccer AGM would be held from February 19-22 in Atlanta
- ii. Jim has coordinated a Partnership with ETrainU for new clubs and clubs that expressed interest for their "Club in a Box" program that is designed to help clubs with internal operations.
 - iii. Jim met with a group that is focused on the development of player's mental health. Early discussions at this point but exploring possible alignment with GSSA.
 - iv. Jim conducted extensive research regarding strategic organizations that might be equipped to work with the GSSA board, staff, referees, and clubs. Many companies declined or did not respond to inquiries because the request was not within their scope of work. Some were outrageously priced (including one that quoted \$200,000-\$300,000). Board authorized Jim to schedule a meeting with Brad Stinson and the Collective Global to hear their presentation and work scope. [This occurred on Tuesday, April 1 with the recording and proposal sent to all board members the following day.]
 - v. GSSA has conducted excellent workshops with the referee community and the adult membership. Both were resounding successes. GSSA is working on scheduling another workshop with the youth club membership.
 - vi. Jim had multiple meetings with the FIFA Club World Cup folks to discuss their event and need for volunteers.
 - vii. Jim and Neil had several meetings with the US Soccer Foundation during the US Soccer AGM but also had a subsequent conference call with them to better identify areas where GSSA (and/or its members) and the Foundation could better take advantage of the offerings from the Foundation.
 - viii. Jim reminded the board to sign and submit the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics documents
- D.** Neil provided a list of proposed committee members and requested for folks to provide other names of individuals that might be interested in serving GSSA in the capacity of a committee member.
- E.** Youth General Update
- i. Melissa and Micah noted that the spring season was underway.
 - ii. 15U Spring Schedule is nearly completed.
- F.** Youth Recreational Update
- G.** Youth Select Update
- H.** Adult General
- i. It was noted that an adult club membership was scheduled for March 26.
 - ii. Karon noted that the Region 3 Workshop was scheduled for the end of May.
 - iii. The USASA AGM is set for late September, but Jim noted that the date for the AGM is in direct conflict with the USYS Leadership Summit, though Jim advised that someone from GSSA would be in attendance for both events.

- iv. Andy noted that due to increased work activity, he needed to step down from his GSSA board position but recommended Karon Beyer as his replacement. Melissa made a motion to this effect which Tricia seconded. Karon was approved unanimously to Andy's vacated seat on the GSSA board.
- v. Donald provided an update on the Adult State Cup, advising that he had received survey responses from ADASL, Cobb, and GAWSA. He will be getting with Cristina Coca to discuss format and venues.

I. Referee Update

- i. RAP (Referee Abuse Prevention policy)
 - Kevin noted that US Soccer provided a better understanding of the RAP, noting that it is not intended to change how individuals referee the game but is simply a tool utilized to enact more significant punishment for transgressions.
- ii. SRC Workshop 3/9
 - Kevin provided an update on the workshop with the referees and GSSA noting that their first priority is to identify a replacement for the SRA position. He advised that the referee newsletter was going out this week and that it would contain a call for SRA applications. [The newsletter did go out with this call for applications on Sunday, March 30.] Kevin noted that the SRA search request has also been sent out to all assignors. In fact, as of the board meeting, Kevin noted that he had already heard from four individuals expressing interest in the SRA position.
 - Kevin further advised that the workshop was well attended with senior refs, assignors, SRC members, etc.
- iii. Regional Referees
 - Kevin advised that the SRC was working on identifying Regional referees.
 - The need for sizing for shirts for the Regional referees was noted. GSSA is providing staffing support around such deadlines for ordering things (ex. Shirts, coins, whistles, etc.).
- iv. General Discussion – There was general discussion regarding the structure of the SRC, along with mentorship development – specifically referencing Jim's concept of Mentors (capital M) and mentors (lower case m) and had to increase both. Additionally, the need for strategic planning on the SRC was discussed.

J. Future of GSSA – See references to strategic planning (Collective Global) and exploration with capital funding groups like Cogeo set forth above.

K. Board Member Updates – Nothing else other than what is set forth above.

VI. Good of the Game

- A.** Jim noted that 92.9 The Game was doing there 3-4-3 radio segment at 10:00 p.m. that same night and that Jacob Crumbley from Columbus, GA would be featured as a possible candidate for Cerebral Palsy National Player of the Year. The recording can also be heard on the Audacy app.
- B.** Neil referenced recent GSSA efforts in the Adaptive Soccer/TOPSoccer space with UASA, including UASA's recent clinic the Friday player with many of Georgia's adaptive players.
- C.** Shoutout was provided to Kostas for all of his efforts in the coaching education world.
- D.** The idea of a possible Drive for Cleats was raised, noting that many younger players have cleats in excellent condition at the end of the season that will not fit them by the next season.

VII. Executive Session: None.

VIII. Adjournment: Melissa made a motion for the adjournment of the meeting which was seconded by David. Meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.