

2024 NHPA Delegate Meeting Minutes (Summary)

August 4, 2024

Kennewick, WA

(Meeting being streamed by Blaine Scott on Facebook Live)

Meeting was called to order at 8:30 am, by acting NHPA President, Austin Bailey. The delegation recited the Pledge of Allegiance. NHPA Chaplain, Ken Heinritz, delivered the invocation.

Sec/Treas, Brian Poole, conducted role call and calculated credentials –

55 delegate votes present

37 votes (2/3) required to pass proposals

*Brian Poole asked for an extension to audit and create a correct financial report, due to discrepancies from previous two years.

Question arose pertaining to expenses for photography, World Tournament banquet, travel and travel meals, outstanding loans, paypal bank and World Tournament rooms.

Seth Ohms, UT, queried about the increase in insurance on the Hall of Fame facility in Wentzville, MO. Brian stated that replacement cost of the building tripled and insurance went from \$17,000 to \$65,000. Efforts are being made to locate more reasonable quotes.

When prompted for a deadline to produce corrected report, Brian gave September 1, so that it could be published in the next issue of Newslite. He will perform an audit, with assistance from the NHPA accountant.

Seth Ohms, UT, asked if Brian would be willing to step down if a correct report could not be produced in time, to which Brian said, Yes.

Motion was made, seconded and approved by show of hands to suspend approval of financial report with revised report being approved by ballot through charter presidents.

*Representatives from "Visit Salt Lake" gave a world tournament report for the 2025 location in Sandy, UT. Information included

- Flight options
- Public transportation
- Rental car agencies
- Great road ratings
- Low fuel prices

The amenities of the Mountain America Expo Center were said to include

- All activities under one roof, including practice areas

- Free parking
- VIP village for those staying at official housing providers

Lodging includes 18 hotels around the Expo Hall, as well as RV options nearby (no on-site RV spaces).

Representatives spoke of the abundance of restaurants and bars.

Other attractions include an aquarium, mall, bowling & entertainment center, movie theatres & amphitheater, Utah Olympic Park, where Olympic athletes train, genealogy museum and nearby National parks.

The email address volunteer@sportssaltlake.com was offered for any questions.

Host hotels had not yet been determined at the time of this meeting.

Questions were fielded about world tournament vendors, golf courses, tournament dates (July 21 thru August 2), spectator seating and the “2-year bid.”

*Austin Bailey listed three sites that were vying for the 2026 World Tournament hosting rights:

- Lansing, MI
- Wausau, WI
- Grand Island NE

And announced the unanimous council decision to award the event to Wausau, WI on a 2-year contract for the 2026 and 2029 events.

A video presentation depicting that facility and some local attractions was shown.

*After a break, Austin Bailey called the meeting back to order and performed role call showing all voting delegates had returned.

*The meeting was turned over to Jerry LaBrosse, to introduce rules and bylaw proposals.

PBC #1 Pertaining to number of delegates allotted per charter.

Dalton Rakestraw, CA, explained that the proposal would increase the power of the voting body. There was ensuing discussion to further clarify the numbers and delegate voting procedure. Delegates were reminded that the charter chair person has authority to cast the total number of votes allotted to said charter, even if they were not all present.

With no further discussion or ammendments, instruction was given to mark ballots.

PBC#2 Regarding nominations from the floor for NHPA officers

Seth Ohms, UT, proposed an amendment to the proposal to add “if there are 2 or more established candidates.” After discussion for and against the change, there was a vote by show of hands – the amendment to the proposal failed.

With no further discussion, ballots were marked.

PBC#3 Proposed returning the selection of world tournament sites to the delegates.

Kevin Lewis, with “Visit Tri-Cities” and formerly St. George, UT tourism, spoke at length about the expense and hardship on the bidders to attend the world tournaments to vie for the event. We were also reminded of sites bidding multiple years only to lose by one vote for whatever reason the delegates awarded the event to a different site – getting no return on years of investment.

He also explained that the return on investment is for the COMMUNITY - not the convention and visitors bureau – through all the “spending” of participants while in town (meals, hotels, shopping & site-seeing) as well as publicity for future tourism.

With no further discussion, ballots were marked.

PBC#4 Proposed to change the deadline for submitting rule and bylaw changes.

Jerry LaBrosse assured the delegates that the proposed deadline would give sufficient time for the rules committee to review all proposals.

There was no discussion. Ballots were marked.

Moving on to rules proposals –

PRC#1 Proposing to change cadet ages to align with sports in public school systems.

Seth Ohms, UT, pointed out that this proposal had been voted down numerous times in past meetings.

Jerry Labrosse explained the process for deciding which proposals have enough merit to be presented to the delegation and why some items may be revisited through the years.

There was much discussion in favor of keeping the current age, so youth players would not be struggling to reach the pit and could, instead, develop proper form and pitching habits before moving to the next level.

After allowing time for delegates to deliberate, ballots were marked.

PRC#2 Adding a new pitching division for Elder Women

Ron Highley, MO, questioned how this division would play out at the world tournament. Brian Poole indicated that if there weren't enough for a division in the event, perhaps a small tournament would be held on the side to allow these women to have a world tournament experience.

Delegates spoke for women simply asking for one step over the line and not a 20-foot foul line. It was pointed out that, like all other divisions, a player can pitch from anywhere behind the designated foul line and was not required to move all the way up.

There was much support for keeping the women active when they've lost the ability to pitch with control from their full distance.

It was suggested to designate the 20-foot Elder Women division as "league only," but no official proposal was made.

Delegates pointed out such things as the fact men are allowed compensation for age and physical handicaps, therefore, women should be given equal consideration, and the fact that we can't ever be certain how many members would fall under this ruling until we create a MEASURABLE division to track them.

It was stated that we have to "DO SOMETHING" to keep these ladies active in the sport.

Delegates were instructed to mark ballots.

Ballots for all proposals were gathered for tabulation and a recess was called.

*The meeting reconvened with roll call indicating all delegates returned.

Brian Poole asked for comments on the "switched format." It was pointed out that as a one-week event, it wasn't a true judge of "flipping the weeks." There was concern voiced over smaller classes, as all players pay the same entry fee and expect the same number of games. In addition, delegates were unhappy that some people had no opportunity to watch the championships, as they were pitching at the same time. It was suggested that no other classes be in play while the championships are underway.

Brian Poole touched on the aging computer equipment that may need to be updated.

Delegates asked about live stream cameras. It was reported that the streaming site previously used had been bought out and services shut down, rendering the NHPA's Nest cameras useless. Other options are being sought out. In the interim, pitchers are allowed (and encouraged) to livestream with their phones.

Fifth Vice President, Josh Olson, explained some of the obstacles in finding livestream options.

Mention of the new "live" eShoe integration, thanks to the expertise of Kurt Whaley, brought on a round of applause.

Switching weeks was revisited, with Brian asking for a show of hands for a second trial, receiving a split decision.

Delegates commented on the lack of local marketing and that businesses located next door to the venue weren't even aware of the event.

There was concern that the later dates contributed to lower entry numbers.

*Proposal tallies were received and Jerry Labrosse again took the podium to deliver the results.

PBC#1 Passed – A charter is entitled to one delegate for being an active charter, plus an additional delegate for every 50 NHPA members.

PBC#2 Passed – No nominations will be accepted from the floor of the convention, as long as there is an established candidate who met the submission deadline.

PBC#3 Failed – Selection of future world tournament sites continues to be determined by the NHPA Executive Council

PBC#4 Passed – The deadline for submitting rules and bylaw changes was changed from September 30 to February 1 of the voting year.

PRC#1 Failed – Cadet age will remain at 12 years old for the entire calendar year.

PRC#2 Passed – Elder women division was created, so that women age 65 and older may pitch from any place on either of the pitching platforms observing the twenty-foot foul line.

*In lieu of officer reports, Austin Bailey opened the floor for question to the council.

Delegates suggested leaving the year off of tournament patches to save money. It was reported that this practice had already been implemented as reported in the latest Newslite.

*NHPF report – there was no one in attendance to deliver this report.

With no further questions, the meeting turned to officer elections.

*Josh Olson, running unopposed was declared NHPA 5th Vice President for another term.

*Candidates for the presidential position delivered speeches outlining their platforms, beginning with Clarence Lassiter, SC. Brian Fisher, OH, delivered a speech on behalf of candidate, Stuart Sipma, who was unable to attend the meeting due to a previous commitment.

Lastly, candidate, Ben Webb (currently serving as 3rd VP) shared his background and vision for the future of the association.

After a moment of deliberation amongst charter delegations, ballots were marked and collected.

*The floor was opened for discussion on the good and betterment of the NHPA.

- A suggestion was made to allow anyone who is not able to pitch their distance to throw from wherever they can on the local level.
- A bracket system was suggested for championship play.
- Buddy Lampkin, KY, suggested to hold a “shift director” clinic, so more members could help out with those duties.
- Stan Griggs reminded everyone that NHPA trading cards are still available for purchase.

- Ron Highley, MO, commended the delegation for conducting business in a professional manner.
- Seth Ohms, UT, pointed out that people can't PLAY horseshoes if they don't HAVE horseshoes and gave ways to get horseshoes into more peoples hands.
- Austin Bailey voiced appreciation for Amy Archibald's NHPA merchandise booth and encouraged people to buy shirts.
- Discussion arose about a world doubles tournament.
- David Spears said he has wooden art pieces available for purchase.
- A raise was suggested for scorekeepers, with others indicating they feel the current pay is sufficient.
- Thanks was given to Kevin Lewis and the Visit Tri-Cities organization for providing facilities and being wonderful hosts of our world tournament.
- The world tournament setup crew was recognized and thanked.
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*Having tallied in-person and absentee votes, the results for presidential voting was announced as follows:

- Clarence Lassiter – 1 vote
- Stuart Sipma – 14 votes
- Ben Webb – 74 votes

Ben Webb gave acceptance speech, then Seth Ohms made a motion that Ben be installed as president at the conclusion of the meeting, rather than waiting for the current term to expire. Acting President, Austin Bailey, seconded that motion and through a show of hands, Ben Webb will be NHPA president at the conclusion of this meeting.

*Motion was made and seconded to destroy the ballots and approved by show of hands.

*The meeting was adjourned.