

ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETINGS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Public health directives related to the COVID-19 pandemic continue to evolve. USBC is sharing rules and governing topics in this document as a resource to members.

ASSOCIATION OPERATIONS

USBC state and local associations should follow state and local guidelines when considering how to handle events, meetings, and tournaments. The guidelines and requirements are evolving, but associations should be proactive in considering the well-being of their members and follow state mandates.

Also, in accordance with Article IV, Section E, Item 14 of the National Bylaws, the USBC Board adopted the following resolution effective April 13, 2020. This change will be presented to the 2021 USBC Delegation for their approval.

“Temporarily amend or suspend these bylaws, state, local and affiliate bylaws and the league rules and tournament rules in cases of government-declared emergencies or disaster, pandemic, attack on the United States, or any nuclear or atomic disaster.”

1. **We have not been able to hold our 2019/20 Annual Meeting. At this point, what are our options?**

As we're now well into the 2020-2021 bowling season, your board should determine whether it makes more sense to try and hold the 2019-2020 annual meeting, and then hold another meeting at a later date for the 2020-2021 season, or just wait and hold one meeting to cover the requirement for the 2020-2021 meeting and include any carryover business left from last season.

Remember, you still need to follow your state and local public health guidelines to determine if you can hold your local or state association annual meeting in person or if it must be done in a virtual session.

a. **If you did not hold your 2019-2020 annual meeting:**

Your board continues to operate, and the expiring board member(s) remain in office or declare vacancies and appoint the positions (board decision, majority vote).

1) **If board does not have term limits**

Board members remain in their current position until an election is held for those positions. At the 2021 annual meeting, these positions would be up for election for the remainder of the term. You also would hold the 2021 elections, separately.

2) **If board has term limits**

For terms that have expired due to term limits, a vacancy is declared. The president, with board approval, can fill the vacancies.

3) **State delegates**

If a local association has not elected its 2021 delegates, the 2020 delegates would attend the 2021 state annual meeting and handle the business. The state should request the credentials, as usual, for 2021 and accept those names submitted.

4) **Proposed amendments**

Any amendment that was to be voted on at the 2020 meeting automatically would go to the 2021 meeting unless the proposer withdraws the amendment. These proposals will be effective Aug. 1, 2021, unless otherwise stated on the amendment.

2. **If we canceled our 2020 annual meeting, how should we handle business at the 2021 meeting?**

When the 2021 annual meeting is conducted, the 2020 annual meeting approvals should be the first piece of business. The delegates/members would act to approve the actions taken by the board. If the board members who were appointed in 2020 are running unopposed, the

slate would be presented to approve. If the elections are contested, an election would be held for those appointed positions to fulfill the remainder of the term. Then, the traditional 2021 annual meeting business would take place, including any bylaws proposals and elections.

3. **(STATES) If we handle both 2020 and 2021 business at the 2021 annual meeting, do the 2020 delegates handle their business and 2021 handle theirs?**

No, everything would be handled by the same delegation. Some local associations will have a new delegate election; others will not. If a local association has not elected their 2021 delegates, then the 2020 delegates would attend the 2021 state annual meeting. The state should request the credentials, as usual, for 2021 and accept those names submitted.

2020-2021 ANNUAL MEETINGS – VIRTUAL VS. IN-PERSON

A resolution has been passed by the USBC Board of Directors to allow state and local USBC associations to hold their annual meetings virtually in 2021.

1. **Who decides if the annual meeting will be held in-person or virtually?**

The association board of directors decides the format in which the meeting will be held. They should take into consideration the current CDC/governmental guidelines in their area.

2. **Can we hold a “hybrid” meeting with some people in attendance and some virtually attending?**

No, due to the difficulty of holding open discussion and being sure all votes are properly calculated, these meetings must be either in-person or held virtually.

3. **What do we do if the association decides to hold its annual meeting virtually, and I do not have internet access or a cell phone?**

In today’s world, it is easy to find someone/someplace where the internet can be accessed to attend the meeting. Work with family/friends to allow you to be able to attend the virtual board meeting.

4. **If we hold a virtual meeting, how would it differ from an in-person meeting?**

The virtual meeting still would need to meet the requirements as stated in Article VII, Section A of the bylaws. Proper meeting notice is required, and a quorum must be met (and held for the duration of the meeting).

Minutes from the last annual meeting would need to be approved, and committee reports would need to be made (whether verbally or as an attachment to be read). Financial reports are required to be presented to the membership/delegates, voting on any proposed amendments and elections for board of directors needs to be held.

5. **Normally, we have added events at our annual meeting, such as drawings for door prizes and our hall of fame inductions. Can we still do these things?**

Any events other than those required in the bylaws would be at the discretion of the board. We still believe you should make your annual meeting an enjoyable event for the attendees, so things like virtual door prizes would be a great addition. However, doing something like your hall of fame induction might better be done at another time or place to keep the prestige of the event in place.

6. **What kinds of things can our association do to make a virtual meeting more enjoyable for our attendees?**

Associations should try and make every meeting as enjoyable for the attendees as possible.

Some of the options would include door prizes or other drawings. Just put all the attendees’ names in a hat and draw at certain times during the presentation. Some of the options for prizes could include paid membership for the following season or entries into tournaments, as well as other traditional prizes.

Other options to make the meeting more enjoyable are to have a PowerPoint presentation to add more visual appeal, rather than just looking at the presenter's face. The information being provided can be on the screen as a supplement to what is being presented verbally. Also, listing proposed bylaw amendments and people up for election on the screen can make it much easier for the attendees to vote.

7. **How long should our virtual annual meeting last?**

Most experts agree that virtual meetings should last for no more than an hour. You may want to break your meeting into 15-minute segments and take breaks to keep attendees energized. Be prepared to use your judgment. If you sense engagement has plummeted, it might be more productive in the long run to finish your required business and end the meeting quickly.

VIRTUAL MEETING HOW-TOLIST

Holding a virtual meeting is no different than holding an in-person meeting from the standpoint of the rules. All rules for annual meetings must be followed, as explained in Article VII, Section A of the association bylaws and in Chapter Ten of the *USBC Association Policy Manual*.

- **LOCALS** - Meeting notice should still be sent out to (at a minimum) all board members and league secretaries at least 15 days prior to the meeting.
- **STATES** - State associations should still request the credentials for the delegates from the local associations as they have in the past, and according to their policies. Then, the formal meeting notice should still be sent out at least 15 days prior to the meeting.
- All information required to be presented at the annual meeting (financial information, previous annual meeting minutes, etc.), should be sent out with the meeting notice, as an attachment, and should be made available on the association website, so attendees can read them prior to the meeting.

Virtual meetings should be set up ahead of time, and the members/delegates will need to register prior to the meeting to gain access to the link to the meeting. This gives the association a list of attendees, as all membership still must be verified prior to the meeting, for an attendee to be eligible to vote.

Once they have registered, the link to the virtual meeting and all documents for the meeting (agenda, meeting minutes, financials, committee reports, proposed amendments (if any) and slate of nominees for election and their bios) should be attached.

- Associations should consider hosting "test meetings" in advance of the actual annual meeting in order to give the members/delegates time to download the necessary software and test it to be sure they understand how to use it. This will help alleviate many IT-related issues, such as video or sound problems, and an understanding of how to use the chat and voting functions.
- It is recommended that the association prepare a PowerPoint presentation ahead of time, and it should follow the agenda and cover all business. This would be shown during the meeting, so all the attendees can follow along.

1. **Should we send out instructions for our members/delegates to show them how to use the virtual meeting software?**

Yes, detailed instructions on how to use the virtual meeting software should be sent out. Many of these systems require an initial download of software, which should be done prior to the meeting date.

2. **We have some members who are somewhat "tech-challenged" and may need help with the virtual meeting software. What do you suggest?**

The association should have a board member, or interested member, available during the meeting to act as a "virtual meeting troubleshooter," where they can answer questions and/or assist those having trouble with the software. They also could ask a family member/friend who is familiar with virtual meeting platforms to be with them in case they need assistance.

3. **If we hold our meeting virtually, what are some of the things we need to remember?**

You must verify if the voters are current members/delegates and must be able to show you have met the required quorum number as set in Chapter VII, Section A of your local/state

bylaws. You also must be able to hear all comments from members/delegates and be able to respond (if necessary).

4. **What do we need to do for voting purposes?**

The software you choose must be able to provide voting/polling options, so each member/delegate can vote through the system, and votes can be tabulated and recorded by the system. Systems such as Zoom, and Microsoft Teams do have voting/polling options. There also is a third-party software that could be used in conjunction with virtual meeting software if needed, such as DirectPoll, Easy Polls, Vevox and many others. See the Virtual Meeting Resource document for further details.

5. **Should we hold “practice meetings” for our members prior to the annual meeting?**

Yes, as many of your members/delegates may not ever have used this software before, holding “practice meetings” during the week prior to the actual annual meeting makes good sense. This will give the attendees the chance to download any required software, learn how to log in (if required), work out any IT issues, such as video or sound problems, and have an opportunity to use the chat function and practice on the voting software prior to the meeting. This will help make the actual meeting go much more smoothly.