

USBC SUCCESSION PLANNING TASK FORCE REPORT

USBC Delegates and interested readers,

This report briefly details a succession plan for USBC leadership and board development approved by the USBC Board of Directors in November 2016 and provides additional background for proposal B1. The plan is the result of several months of work by the Succession Planning Task Force, culminating in a November 2016 report to the USBC Board.

Following a brief review of USBC's history, the task force identified several barriers to effective succession planning, recommended adoption of changes, and offered considerations for implementation.

History

USBC was established July 1, 2005 with a National board consisting of 25 members. The bylaws established a limit of nine years of service for any board member, regardless of how they came to be on the board (appointed by Bowling Proprietors' Association of America or the Youth Committee, elected by Team USA athletes, elected by the USBC delegation, or appointed as an at-large or youth ambassador).

The work of the board is primarily accomplished through committees who prepare recommendations for board decisions. USBC staff are responsible for implementing programs and services approved by the board under the direction of the Executive Director.

USBC recently celebrated its 12th anniversary. The original board members are no longer serving on the board. A 2014 Bylaw amendment reduced the Board size to 20 members, a reduction that was fully effective August 1, 2017. With the loss of the original leadership, and as the Board size decreases, the Board needs to be mindful of:

- The need to identify/train future leaders
- The impact of committee composition to the overall workload of Board members

Previous succession planning work done by the Board was focused on officers/leaders for the Board but was not carried out over a longer term.

Barriers to effective succession planning

Board members are appointed/elected to the board with varying levels of experience. Historically, directors elected by the delegates (often from state/local associations) and/or Team USA athletes are more likely to have limited experience with a strategic board upon arrival.

When board members lack national experience at the beginning of their term of office, they receive "on-the-job" training and may be less prepared to assume leadership positions until much later in their board service, which limits the pool of potential board officers and leaders.

One-year term of office for president and vice-president may contribute to uncertainty. The USBC officers are elected annually by the board of directors. The potential for annual turnover in board leadership may cause the board and industry partners to be uncertain regarding the stability of board leadership.

Recommendations

The task force recommended multiple strategies to enhance leadership succession. Those strategies include:

- Encourage development of national experience via participation on committees and/or task forces prior to service on the national board.
- Encouraging the nominating committee to give preference to applicants with national board, industry, and/or committee experience when they are otherwise equally qualified to other applicants.
- Identifying and mentoring committee chairs and officers as part of annual committee assignments to develop leadership continuity.
- Reduce the potential for unnecessary officer transition.

Developing national experience

Including non-board members on committees or task forces enables this population to gain national experience and allows informal assessment of their skills and abilities regarding group discussion, strategic thinking, etc. Additionally, when delegates elected by the directors arrive with this experience, they are more quickly able to step into leadership roles, increasing the pool of leaders available to chair committees and serve as officers.

Identify and train committee chairs and officers

As more senior members of the board prepare for departure from board service, more explicit identification and training of potential committee chairs should occur. This also facilitates consistency in leadership for the committees.

Reducing unnecessary officer transition

The final recommendation of the task force is to increase the term of office for president and vice president to two years, ideally served in succession – two years as vice president, followed by two years as president. The longer term reduces potential officer transitions from year to year and enables the president and vice president to work together as a team and ensure continuity of leadership.

The addition of a 10th year of service is recommended so that any board member (including directors elected by the delegates and Team USA athletes) will be eligible to serve four years as an officer, if elected by the board. For example, delegate directors are elected for three-year terms. It is not ideal to start service as a board officer at the beginning of the third term, because the director would not be able to complete four years as an officer. This reduces the pool of delegate directors that can serve as board officers. The 10th year would be used only when necessary, and will not increase the board size, as an at-large position can be utilized to best meet the board needs in these situations.

Respectfully submitted by the Succession Planning Task Force

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