



Oklahoma Chess Association general meeting

October 16, 2021

(Meeting held on Zoom)

The meeting convened at 10:30 a.m.

In attendance:

Chris Amburgy *president*

Harold Brown *vice president*

Chuck Unruh *past president*

Rebecca Rutledge *secretary*

Joe Veal *2020-21 vice president*

Paul Covington

Stephen Gehly *at-large*

not present:

Jerry Casteel *treasurer*

Past minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting (6/27/2021) were approved via email vote on July 6, 2021.

New business

🏰 **Harold Brown** updated the board on the federal and state requirements for obtaining 501(c)(3) status.

- Motion from **Harold Brown** to amend our certificate of incorporation with language appropriate to a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.
 - The motion passed unanimously.
- Motion from **Harold Brown** to continue taking the necessary steps toward OCA's 501(c)(3) status, both federally and in Oklahoma, including approval to raise funds.
 - The motion passed unanimously.
 - Harold will ask treasurer **Jerry Casteel** (not present) to assist in this process.

🏰 **Chris Amburgy** reported that no progress has been made toward getting OCA's BancFirst account transferred from the previous treasurer, Jim Gray. He said that if this remains true by the end of the current month, he and **Chuck Unruh** will open a new account for the organization.

🏰 The board discussed **Tom Braunlich's** suggestion that the OCA and OCF websites be merged, with OCA taking responsibility for maintaining accessible online archives of *The Okie Database* and the *Oklahoma Chess Monthly*. **Tom Braunlich** would continue as editor and publisher. OCA would take over promoting each new issue via email.

- **Chuck Unruh** expressed concern that the online archive might include political content from the *Oklahoma Chess Quarterly*.
 - **Chris Amburgy** pointed out that *Oklahoma Chess Monthly* archives date to its inception in 2016 after the death of *Quarterly* publisher Frank K. Berry. There is no online archive of *Oklahoma Chess Quarterly*.
 - **Paul Covington** told us that **Tom Braunlich** asks that OCA assist in distribution of the monthly publication, and that he had conditions including, but not limited to, retaining editorial freedom.
 - **Harold Brown** objected that this point was inappropriate in a discussion about the archive.
 - **Joe Veal** stressed the *Okie Database's* importance to Oklahoma chess players. He said that as a regular reader of *Oklahoma Chess Monthly*, he felt there was no content in archived issues that the board would find objectionable.
 - **Chuck Unruh** disagreed; he said editorial oversight would be necessary to ensure nothing remained in the posted archives that might discourage support of OCA.
 - **Chris Amburgy** said that archived articles could be reviewed for objectionable content prior to publication at www.ochess.org.
- **Harold Brown** moved that OCA assume responsibility for maintaining archives of both the *Okie Database* and the *Oklahoma Chess Monthly*.
 - The motion passed unanimously.
- **Tom Braunlich joined the meeting.** He talked about the work Frank Berry did to compile, publish, and preserve Oklahoma chess history, and his own work to continue that mission via *Oklahoma Chess Monthly*. He said he had even considered producing printed versions, but that this could be prohibitively expensive.
 - Chuck Unruh said despite the expense, printing was still worthy of consideration. He said a significant number of U.S. Chess members were willing to pay for printed magazines and that this could also be true in Oklahoma.
- **Chuck Unruh** brought up the issue of dual (OCA & OCF) state champion lists. He suggested that OCF champions could be listed separately, but not as state champions.
 - **Chris Amburgy** pointed out that the list maintained by the U.S. Chess-recognized affiliate (OCA) should be maintained as official.
 - **Joe Veal** agreed.
 - **Tom Braunlich** agreed. He said the issue could be addressed in an article, and that the OCF list could be made available for those who wish to see it.
- **Paul Covington** moved that *Oklahoma Chess Monthly* be adopted as the official OCA publication.
 - The motion passed unanimously.

🏠 **Tom Braunlich** said he would like to reduce the number of events he does each year, perhaps to one or two large events annually. He said he has been working to develop new TDs in Oklahoma and suggested that OCA begin actively working to recruit and support new TDs.

- **Chris Amburgy** said OCA could take the lead on organizing more tournaments, reducing the workload for TDs.

🏠 **Paul Covington** introduced the idea of developing an annual closed state championship tournament (in addition to and separate from our annual championship event). This would be an invitational for the top six players in Oklahoma. He pointed out that our strongest players would appreciate the opportunity to play one another. He suggested a format of 5-RR, G/90;+30. Games could be published in *OCM* and possibly broadcast online via DGT boards.

- **Harold Brown** voiced his support and volunteered to help organize such an event, possibly aiming for October 2022.
- **Chuck Unruh** pointed out that a closed state championship would diminish the value of the Oklahoma Open championship title.
- **Joe Veal** said this could be solved by inviting the top five, not six, Oklahoma players plus the winner of the Oklahoma Open.

🏠 **Chuck Unruh** reminded the board that we have not yet had a 2021 Oklahoma Blitz Championship.

- **Rebecca Rutledge** said the usual venue for the Blitz, the Chandler Baseball Park, might not be ideal due to cold weather.
- **Tom Braunlich** said the venue in Stroud was inexpensive and might work.
- **Chris Amburgy** suggested the board look at dates between now and the end of the year.

🏠 **Harold Brown** told us about his draft plan for a new annual event to select Oklahoma's senior (age 50+) state champions, with a stipend from OCA for expenses to the U.S. Open invitationals. Saturday, April 2 was discussed as a possible date.

- **Joe Veal** volunteered to help with this event.

🏠 **Chris Amburgy** introduced a proposal to change the name of our state championship from The Oklahoma Open to The Jerry Spann Memorial State Championship.

- **Chuck Unruh** opposed the proposal. He said that while Jerry Spann was a great leader, "there will be other great leaders," and that "we have too much history" now. He said the name Oklahoma Open should remain, and that Jerry Spann and others could be honored with a separate memorial tournament.

- He said it would be more appropriate to honor Jerry Spann along with others at a memorial tournament on Labor Day.
- **Tom Braunlich** expressed support of the proposal. He said that upon Jerry Spann's death in 1968, other states and U.S. Chess were considering naming tournaments to memorialize Jerry Spann—such was his importance to chess in the United States—when Oklahoma renamed its state championship after him. Tom reminded the board that it was the OCA who voted in 1968 to rename the annual tournament after Jerry Spann, who had been a founding member of the organization, and that it was so named until the (2003–present) rift in Oklahoma chess leadership.
- **Joe Veal** agreed. He said it had always been an “ironclad promise” that Oklahoma's state championship would be named for Jerry Spann, and that restoring the name was an important step toward healing the political rift that for many years divided chess leadership in Oklahoma.
- **Paul Covington** said that if the OCA in fact voted in 1968 to name the annual championship after Jerry Spann, another vote should be necessary before deciding upon any other name.
- **Chris Amburgy** suggested the discussion be tabled while the board reviews past OCA minutes in order to document any official resolutions regarding the name of Oklahoma's annual state championship event.

Summary

- The OCA will amend its certificate of incorporation with language appropriate to a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Harold Brown will continue taking the necessary steps toward OCA's 501(c)(3) status. He will ask Jerry Casteel to be involved in this process.
- The OCA voted to assume responsibility for maintaining archives of the *Okie Database* and the *Oklahoma Chess Monthly*. The latter was adopted as the official OCA publication. Rebecca Rutledge will work with OCF webmaster Jim Hollingsworth on the transfer of files.
- Paul Covington and Harold Brown will collaborate in the planning of a closed/invitational event for the state's top players.
- The board will immediately begin looking for a date and venue for the 2021 Oklahoma Blitz Championship.
- Harold Brown will organize a championship event for Oklahoma seniors with April 2 as a possible date. Joe Veal will assist.
- Rebecca Rutledge and Chris Amburgy will contact members of past OCA boards in an effort to locate documentation of any official resolution(s) re: the name of Oklahoma's annual state championship tournament.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.