

TEXAS CHESS ASSOCIATION

2024 Junior Chess Meeting (South)

The Junior Chess Meeting of the Texas Chess Association was divided into two meetings. Accordingly, the membership assembled for the South meeting at the University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley and by video conference on Saturday, March 16, 2024. As the Secretary was absent, Caleb Brown was appointed Acting Secretary for the duration of the meeting and captured the following minutes.

Attendees:

- Barbara Swafford, Treasurer
- Caleb Brown
- David Ortiz
- Franc Guadalupe, President
- Jorge Trevino, Region X Director

Absent:

- Darryl West, Vice President
- Richard Garcia, Secretary

Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:49pm.

Reading of the Minutes

The Acting Secretary reported that the minutes of the 2023 annual membership meeting had been posted on the website. Without objection, the reading of the minutes was waived.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported the following fund balances: Bank of America, \$26,519.21; Certificates of Deposit, \$5,114.03; and; Paypal, \$3,999.72.

The President asked if the scholarships for last year's State Scholastic Championship had been paid. The Treasurer confirmed that all scholarships had been paid.

President's Report

The President reported that most regions had regional championships this year. He also noted that a new record had been set for memberships.

In light of the demise of Luis Salinas, it was announced that this year's State and Amateur Championship will be known as the Luis Salinas Memorial State and Amateur Championship to recognize his substantial contributions to chess throughout this state. This idea had been proposed by Rob Jones and was agreed to by Tom Crane and Chris Wood who are organizing the tournament. [Acting Secretary's Note: Choosing the State and Amateur Championship to memorize Luis Salinas is significant because he organized every State and Amateur Championship held since 2012 and the last tournament at which he directed was last year's State and Amateur Championship.]

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

As four advance motions had been submitted for the advance agenda, the membership took up the advance motions in the order in which they had been received.

A. Allow for At-Large Members of the Scholastic Committee

Caleb Brown introduced the following motion.

Moved that Article VII, Section 2 of the Bylaws be amended as follows:

Change From:

A. The Scholastic Committee shall be a standing committee consisting of ten Resident Members appointed by the President.

B. A reasonable effort should be made to find a member from each region. Having more than two members from the same region should be avoided if at all possible.

Change To:

A. The Scholastic Committee shall be a standing committee consisting of the Scholastic Chair, two at-large members and one scholastic representative from each region, all of whom shall be appointed by the President.

B. A reasonable effort shall be made to appoint scholastic representatives who reside within the regions represented. Appointing nonresidents shall be avoided if at all possible.

Rationale: Generally, only one resident of each region may be appointed to the Scholastic Committee (except for the committee chair). Although regional representation is useful, maintaining a near absolute prohibition against multiple members from the same region is unnecessarily inflexible and could lead to the exclusion of valuable perspectives that could significantly contribute to the work of the Scholastic Committee. This motion would provide the President with the flexibility to appoint up to two at-large members (in addition to the chair) while preserving the overarching principle of regional representation.

The President was concerned about being able to find people to serve as at-large members, noting that he was already having issues with appointing scholastic representatives. Caleb Brown noted that this motion would merely provide more flexibility to the President and that appointing at-large members would only be optional. The President noted that, as he is not seeking reelection, this is something that should be considered after the new President is in office. Caleb Brown agreed that this motion could wait and noted that because the new officers will be installed at the close of old business at the annual meeting postponing the motion would have the effect of revisiting the issue when the new administration begins.

Caleb Brown moved to postpone the motion until the annual meeting. The Treasurer seconded the motion to postpone. On this question, the yeas were three and the nays were zero. The motion was postponed.

B. Reunite the Junior Chess Meeting

Caleb Brown introduced the following motion.

Moved that Article VI, Section 2, Subsection A of the Bylaws be amended as follows:

Change From:

A. The annual junior chess meeting shall be held during the North/Central Texas Scholastic Championship and the South Texas Scholastic Championships, or in every third year, the Super State Scholastic. The tournament director or organizer shall plan for this meeting to take approximately ninety minutes. The agenda shall focus on issues unique to Texas junior chess. If North/Central and South Texas Scholastic meetings pass contradictory motions, the matter will be

Change To:

A. The annual junior chess meeting shall be held during the State Scholastic Championship when it is held as one event and shall alternate between the North Texas Scholastic Championship and the South Texas Scholastic Championship in all other years. Voting members may participate and vote in-person or by video conference. The tournament director or organizer shall plan for this meeting to take approximately ninety minutes. The agenda shall focus on issues unique to Texas junior chess.

Transitional Provision: The determination of whether the alternation of junior chess meetings shall begin with North Texas or South Texas shall be decided by a coin toss at the meeting at which this motion is approved. Heads shall be North, and tails shall be South. The President shall flip the coin.

Rationale: Originally, the junior chess meeting was held as only one meeting every year in conjunction with the State Scholastic Championship. However, at the 2017 annual membership meeting, the junior chess meeting was divided into two meetings (for non-superstate years), matching the split of the State Scholastic Championship into North and South championships. That was a mistake.

Requiring that motions be approved at two separate meetings in the same exact form is unnecessarily time-consuming and burdensome. There is no reason to hold two meetings weeks from one another when everything that needs to be done can be done in one meeting. By unnecessarily spending more time in meetings, our volunteers have less time to spend promoting chess across our state.

I should also point out that this arrangement is especially inconvenient for those who are expected to attend in-person (like officers and chairs of committees with reports) as they may have to incur unnecessary, unreimbursed lodging and transportation expenses to attend both meetings, even though their duty could be just as ably discharged if there was only one meeting. Lastly, if members are allowed to participate by Zoom call (as will be the case at this year's junior chess meeting), the geographic barrier that would otherwise prevent many members from participating withers away, thereby rendering the divide between North and South meetings redundant.

On this question, the yeas were three and the nays were zero. The motion passed.

Immediately after the approval of the motion, the President flipped a coin to determine whether rotation of the junior chess meeting would begin with North Texas or South Texas as required by the transitional provision of the motion. Jorge Trevino, who was attending the meeting in-person, witnessed the coin flip. The result of the coin flip was heads. Accordingly, the 2025 junior chess meeting will be held in conjunction with the North Texas Scholastic Championship.

C. Add Awards for Top Girls at TCA Events to Promote Girls' Chess

David Ortiz introduced the following motion.

Awards for Top Girls in Sections at Tournaments

- All participants in scholastic, junior and collegiate events who are listed as female in US Chess records shall be eligible for these awards. In all other events, participants who are under sixteen years of age and are listed as female in US Chess records shall be eligible.
- The criteria for determining the top girls in each section shall be based on performance within their respective sections, considering factors such as number of wins, tiebreaks, and overall performance against their peers.
- The awards may include but are not limited to trophies, certificates, or other forms of recognition deemed appropriate by the tournament organizers.
- These awards shall be incorporated into the TCA bidding guidelines for future events, specifically applying to TCA events that have not been bid out.

Rationale: The motion to add awards for top girls in sections at TCA tournaments directly aligns with the educational and instructional purposes outlined in Article II of the TCA Bylaws. By recognizing and celebrating the achievements of girl players, it promotes inclusivity, encourages participation, and fosters the growth of chess among girls in Texas, contributing to the diversity of the sport.

Caleb Brown moved to refer the motion to the Scholastic Committee. On this question, the yeas were four and the nays were zero. The motion was referred.

D. Create Texas Scholastic Chess League

David Ortiz introduced the following motion.

Texas Scholastic Chess League

- A Texas Scholastic Chess League shall be established, open exclusively to students who reside in Texas or are enrolled in primary and secondary schools.
- Participants are required to register for the league and adhere to all rules and regulations set forth by the league administrator. A registration fee shall be determined by the league administrator.
- Matches within the league shall be organized and scheduled through an online platform chosen by the league administrator, ensuring flexibility and accessibility for all participants.
- The league shall comprise divisions based on age groups or skill levels to ensure fair competition and suitable challenges for participants.
- At the conclusion of the season, a playoff knockout bracket shall be conducted to determine a champion in each division.

- Trophies shall be awarded to the most valuable player and the winning team in each division at the conclusion of the league season.
- Fair play is paramount in the Texas Scholastic Chess League. Any instances of cheating or unfair play will result in immediate disqualification from the league.

Rationale: The establishment of a Texas Scholastic Chess League utilizing online platforms, along with a football-style season and playoff knockout bracket, provides an engaging and competitive format for students across Texas to participate in organized chess matches. This league promotes the educational and instructional purposes of the Texas Chess Association by fostering interest in chess among students, providing opportunities for skill development and friendly competition, and promoting the growth of chess in the scholastic community. The football-style season and playoff bracket add excitement and structure to the league, enhancing the overall experience for participants.

The President noted that there had been a good discussion on this motion at the North meeting and that he was opposed to it. Caleb Brown suggested that it may be advisable to refer this motion to the Scholastic Committee and see what they might make of it. There was no interest among the other members in referral.

On this question, the yeas were two and the nays were three. The motion failed.

General Discussion

The President asked about corrections to the minutes of the North meeting proposed by the Treasurer. The Treasurer clarified that she had originally thought corrections were required but after further review found that that was not the case. Caleb Brown expressed his appreciation that this year's State and Amateur Championship would be a memorial for Luis Salinas. Other members concurred.

Adjournment

The President moved to adjourn. On this question, the yeas were four and the nays were zero. Accordingly, the meeting adjourned at 7:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caleb S. Brown