

*US Gaelic Athletic Association*



**Minutes of 2020 USGAA Annual Convention**

January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021

[www.usgaa.org](http://www.usgaa.org)

**Saturday January 30<sup>th</sup>, 10:15am:** *(Note: all times Central)*

Meeting was convened at 10:15am by Bernie Connaughton.

Opening addresses were made by Bernie Connaughton (*on behalf of USGAA*), Liam Lenihan (*Munster GAA*) and Niall Erskine (*World GAA*) who all welcomed the delegates and wished them a successful convention.

Standing Orders were adopted by acclamation.

Minutes of 2018 USGAA Convention (*Held in San Diego*) were adopted -- proposed by Tom Regan and seconded by Brittany Walsh.

**Youth Officers Report – presented by Paul Mulcaire**

Report was adopted as presented.

**PRO Report – presented by Caoimhe Butler**

Report was adopted as presented.

**Address of GAA President-elect**

Larry McCarthy (*GAA President-elect*) addressed Convention delegates, touching on a number of topics, and wished all a healthy and safe 2021 season.

**Registration Report – presented by Tom Lagan**

Report was adopted as presented.

**Games Development Report – presented by Rob Tierney**

Report was adopted as presented.

**Treasurers Report – presented by Tom Walsh**

A typo in the report was clarified by Tom Walsh – at the top of Page 100, “*Fall River Wisconsin*” should read “*Fox River Wisconsin*”.

Note: *Draft pending adoption at 2021 USGAA Convention*

In response to a question from Peter Murray (*Northeast*), Tom Walsh confirmed that the number of Northeast Clubs registered in 2020 was 23, as per the Registration Report.

Report was adopted as presented with stated updates.

**Referee Development Report – presented by Hugh Duggan**

Report was adopted as presented.

**Secretary’s Report – presented by Paul Keane**

Report was adopted as presented.

**Central Council Delegates Report – presented by Paddy McDevitt**

Report was adopted as presented.

**Vice-Chairpersons Report – presented by John Young**

Report was adopted as presented.

**Chairperson’s Address**

Bernie Connaughton addressed Convention, with comments on USGAA affairs in 2020, and plans for 2021.

**Bereaved**

A moments silence was offered for those that passed during the year, including:

Pat Aherne

Mary Flanagan

Patrick Conneely

Peter Howard

Steve Crowe

Kieran Hughes

James Droney

John Laffey

Ken Fagan

Vera Kelly

Note: *Draft pending adoption at 2021 USGAA Convention*

Jim Manley

Tom Purvis

Frank Masterson

Joe Quinn

Eamonn McGarry

Tom Staunton

Liam O'Brien

Andrew Stuerzel

Mike Penny

### **Other Business**

Phelim Smith (*Masita*) presented details on various plans and offers, that Masita will make to USGAA clubs as part of their 2021 Sponsorship program.

No other business was presented for discussion.

2020 Business was deemed concluded.

### **Election of Convention Chair and Secretary:**

Bernie Connaughton was proposed and elected as Convention Chair;

Rob Tierney was proposed and elected as Convention Secretary.

Ger Dillon, Olivia Rabitte and Martin Redmond were selected as Tellers.

Count of Ballots deemed that there were 301 ballots returned.

### **Election of Officers 2021:**

#### **Chairperson:**

Bernie Connaughton was the only nomination and accepted the nomination.

Bernie Connaughton was duly elected as Chairperson.

#### **Vice-Chairperson:**

John Young and Paul Keane were nominated.

Paul Keane declined the nomination. John Young accepted the nomination and was duly elected Vice Chairperson.

#### **Secretary:**

Tim Flanagan, Tracey Rivera, and Tom Lagan were nominated.

Note: *Draft pending adoption at 2021 USGAA Convention*

Tim Flanagan accepted the nomination, Tracey Rivera accepted the nomination, Tom Lagan accepted the nomination.

A count was taken from mailed in paper ballots.

Vote count:

Total 296 votes\* were counted as follows:

Tim Flanagan: 20 Votes

Tracey Rivera: 178 Votes

Tom Lagan: 98 Votes

Tracey Rivera was duly elected Secretary.

**Treasurer:**

Tom Walsh was only nomination and accepted the nomination.

Tom Walsh was duly elected Treasurer.

**Registrar:**

Tom Lagan and Paul Keane were nominated.

Tom Lagan accepted his nomination, Paul Keane declined his nomination.

Tom Lagan was duly elected Registrar.

**Public Relations Officer:**

Mary Ruane, Rory O'Donnell and Caoimhe Bulter were nominated.

Mary Ruane declined the nomination. Rory O'Donnell and Caoimhe Butler both accepted their nominations.

A count was taken from mailed in paper ballots.

Vote count:

Total 260 votes\* were counted as follows:

Rory O'Donnell: 91 Votes

*Note: Draft pending adoption at 2021 USGAA Convention*

Caoimhe Butler: 169 Votes

Caoimhe Butler was duly elected Public Relations Officer.

**Youth Officer:**

Paul Mulcaire was only nomination and he accepted the nomination.

Paul Mulcaire was duly elected Youth Officer.

**Central Council Delegate:**

Paddy McDevitt was only nomination and he accepted the nomination.

Paddy McDevitt was duly elected Central Council Delegate.

**Honorary Chairperson:**

Mike O'Connor was re-elected as Honorary Chairperson due to COVID-19

\*Difference in vote totals reflect that some clubs did not vote for all positions.

**2021 Officers Installed:**

The 2021 Board officers took their positions.

**Munster Development Officer Presentation:**

Pat O'Shea, Munster Development Officer addressed the convention for 30 minutes.

Pat O'Shea thanked everyone, the 2020 County Board officers and welcomed the new officers. Pat addressed the Convention reviewing the unprecedented past year. He discussed the importance of communication and planning for the upcoming year. Pat urged the new board to consider the County Board role is to further develop the association and games all over North America. To grow in quality, service, support, and leadership.

Pat O'Shea suggested the boards improve quality assurance, to conduct business in the highest quality standards in best possible way. He challenged the board to do better. To become the leaders and influencers of the association. To ensure the county never loses their identity.

Pat O'Shea suggested to the convention all the boards reflect on where they are now, where they want to go, and what to do to get there. The clubs are the bedrock of the association. Pat stated the biggest role of the County Board is to ensure regular meaningful activity for everyone.

Pat O'Shea urged the County and Divisional Boards to do self-checks with the clubs to see what support they need, where are they finding difficulty. To engage early with every club.

Pat O'Shea went on to say the Divisional Boards are the key clogs and for the County Board to engage with them and encouraged us to help each other. Pat suggested due to term limits that good people may have drifted away from the association and suggested an attempt be made to reengage them. Their expertise is invaluable and if they were able to remain involved it would make the units stronger. Pat felt it is important to recruit and retain good volunteers.

Pat O'Shea praised Hugh Duggan, USGAA Referees Administrator, for tremendous works he was doing in the county with the referees. Pat felt it was important for the county to become self-sufficient, to continue training and to trust and respect the referees.

Pat O'Shea thanked outgoing Secretary Paul Keane for the tremendous work over the past 5 years, for always putting county board first and that he leaves the role in a healthy place. He went on to thank the Chairperson,

Bernie Connaughton and congratulated the new board and offered all the support Munster could give to the County. With final thoughts he reiterated the importance to communicate as much as possible, keeping everyone informed regularly and provide a helping hand to everyone.

### **New Business:**

Peter Murray, Northeast Chairperson, asked the board if a date has been set for the National Finals for 2021 and suggested the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in August.

USGAA Chairperson, Bernie Connaughton advised the date will be set after the Chairperson's call as soon as possible.

Peter Murray asked the County Board to consider a possible 2<sup>nd</sup> date, as an option later in the year.

Brian Christ from Milwaukee, Secretary of Heartland, wanted a chance to speak with divisional clubs before committing to dates for National Finals.

Stephen Feeney, Pádraig Pearse from Chicago, congratulated the board on a job well done and suggested the possibility of setting 3 dates for National Finals.

USGAA Chairperson stated the most important thing is to get tournaments going and players a chance for playing time, not to worry about J1's or grading.

Hugh Duggan, the County Referees Administrator suggested the need to select one date versus multiple dates as the best way to go.

Peter Murray, Northeast Chairperson, reiterated the urgency to confirm a date so they can book with the Cultural Center quickly as weddings and other events have begun to book.

USGAA Chairperson confirmed the County Board will set a date after the Chairpersons call within the upcoming weeks.

USGAA Chairperson stated there will be funds (180K) repurposed back to clubs around the world from the Global Games Development funds due to the cancelling of planned projects in 2020 and thanked Niall Erskine, World GAA Chairperson for their support.

Ger Dillon, Philadelphia Chairperson, stated the division submitted to Department of Foreign Affairs for a portion of the grant funds left over.

USGAA Chairperson stated the matter is out of the hands of the USGAA and we were awaiting further instructions from the World GAA on the amounts being repurposed to which clubs via the County Boards.

### **Convention 2021:**

USGAA Chairperson stated since 2020 convention was held virtually due to the Pandemic, questioned if Charlotte was still willing to host the 2021 Convention.

The outgoing Secretary, Paul Keane, stated he received an email from Sean Murray, Southeast Chairperson, confirming their interest to host the 2021 Convention.

USGAA Chairperson proposed the 2021 Convention be held in Charlotte North Carolina. Paul Keane, San Francisco, 2<sup>nd</sup> the proposal, no objections, motion passed.

### **Conclusion:**

USGAA Chairperson thanked everyone who travelled in and attended the convention virtually, especially those overseas. He wished Larry McCarthy, GAA President Elect, the very best of luck on his upcoming virtual Congress. He thanked the divisions and wished them best of luck on their upcoming AGMs and season ahead. He thanked Paul Keane and Tom Lagan for setting up the first ever virtual convention meeting.

### **Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn was accepted at 4:13PM Central Time.