

**Yvonne C. Bennett, CAE
10518 W Arch Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53224**

May 26, 2023

USBC Board of Directors
621 Six Flags Drive
Arlington, TX 76011

BY EMAIL

RE: 2023 USBC Queens Tournament

As a someone who has been involved in bowling for my entire life, and at all levels . . . an accomplished youth bowler, hall of fame competitive athlete and most recently executive level administrator . . . I am writing you today to implore each of you to step up and fulfill your legal and fiduciary responsibilities as volunteers entrusted to do the moral and ethical thing as you perform the duties expected from individuals serving on a non/not-for-profit board of directors.

Many if not most of you may know of me, as in 2022 I retired from a successful career as the executive director of the Bowling Centers Association of Wisconsin (BCAW). Prior to that, I proudly served the bowling industry from Greendale for six years. I was employed by the Young American Bowling Alliance (YABA) and was one of the first executives of Bowling Inc. when it was formed in 1996 in preparation for the creation of USBC roughly a decade later.

Perhaps more importantly to you, and why I am compelled to write you today, is the fact that for nearly 30 years I have served many associations in executive level positions, including more than 15 as the chief executive officer/executive director. In 2000 I achieved the prestigious credential as Certified Association Executive (CAE), a certification I have maintained through continuous education and involvement with the American Society of Association Executives.

Perhaps as importantly, however, as part of my association leadership career path, I have also been involved at all levels (local, state and national) in another sport . . . soccer. I have worked with volunteers and boards of directors at the club/facility level, the state association level and the national level with a member of the US Soccer Federation, that sport's National Governing Body (NGB).

In all of these roles, and throughout my career, I have worked with controversial issues including those involving potential legal ramifications to the organizations who employed me or on boards/committees I served on as a volunteer. I know what it takes to take the moral high road, when seemingly at all turns, there are those who want to undermine the fiduciary responsibilities we all hold whether we are paid staff or volunteers.

The most recent and public incident of failure on the part of the United States Bowling Congress (USBC) at this past week's USBC Queens Tournament is yet another

embarrassing chapter in the current administration's operation and performance expected from an NGB. The expectations come not only from the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) but also the members and athletes you represent. As a lifetime member of USBC (dating back to my ABC Lifetime Membership in the 1990's), I find the recent events to be a grand disappointment and colossal failure of the administration led and managed by your executive director Chad Murphy.

He has historically and continually managed to the detriment of the organization and our sport. He has effectively created a culture through control and command, that has people fearful of him and retaliation from the organization. When open and honest, transparent communication is effectively squashed, nothing good can come to the organization. What has occurred with the controversy at the Queens event at Sam's Town last week was a public demonstration of just how bad the situation has become. When an organization heavy-handedly levies fines against its members and athletes for commenting on what was obvious with the lane play on Thursday 5/18/23, and in particular on lanes 37&38 and 41&42, the organization's credibility will suffer in a way that it may not recover.

As someone trained and considered a qualified and competent professional in the field of non/not-for-profit management, I understand the concern that a board of directors must represent the organization and stand in unison. I also fully understand the nature of conflict of interest and non-disclosure documents. I have administered and personally performed my duties over 20 years under such legal documents. What I can tell you is this . . . your legal and fiduciary responsibility first and foremost is to the organization you serve. If there is egregious behavior or situations that are unethical, untrue or outright illegal, you have an obligation to speak up!

And should the situation result in an individual's need to take action through speaking up, the fear of retaliation should be remedied under whistle blower protection afforded all of us. Further, in the event that legal action is pursued by others, when subpoenaed in such action to provide deposition or testimony under oath, any previously signed conflict of interest or non-disclosure agreements become unenforceable. This is a very important protection for each of you to fully understand, if there is concern about documents you have previously signed as a board member/volunteer.

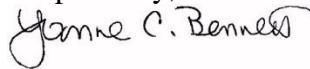
To those of you who serve on the USBC Board of Directors in a position as athlete representative, there is a reason why with the formation of USBC the USO(P)C required the board governance to be structured in such a way. Your responsibility is to advocate the interests and concerns of those you represent, which at times may require bringing up issues that may not be consistent with operational policy, philosophy or actions of the organization. You should be able to have such dialogue in an open and honest manner, without fear of retaliation or verbal abuse. If the culture has become so entrenched that people are unwilling or unable to speak up, then the board has a responsibility to take swift and immediate action to restore the proper decorum expected. Sadly, it appears that under the current leadership at USBC, this does not exist.

I ask each of you to deeply assess your time involved in bowling . . . your time serving on this board of directors . . . and the way in which the organization has evolved over the past nine years under Chad Murphy. Admittedly I do not sit in the room where discussions have taken place in recent times. But I am confident in my view that the culture there has been dysfunctional for at least the past five or six years. I have been on the receiving end myself, of rude and obnoxious behavior by your executive director. I have seen him arrogantly berate opinions expressed by others at events such as Bowl Expo. I have been treated disrespectful on more than one occasion and know of others who have provided me with first hand accounts of how they and USBC staff have been handled.

I know that it is difficult to step up and speak out against one who seemingly has a lot of control and power in our industry. But that said, this man works for you . . . the board of directors and not the other way around. If he has engaged in inappropriate behaviors with you, or been present when others have acted in such a way and were not immediately stopped, you owe it to yourself and those you represent to stand up and be heard. Please take action to end this reign of fear and acquiescence so that open, honest and transparent communication may once again be restored in bowling.

Thank you each and every one for saying “yes” to volunteer service for the game and sport we all love and are so very passionate about. I know the challenges and issues are real, and pray for each of you as you consider how best to move forward for truly A Future For The Sport.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Yvonne C. Bennett".

Yvonne C. Bennett, CAE

USBC Member #1-548 (since 3/25/96)