



# NFL Board of Directors Spring Minutes

May 12-14, 2011  
New Orleans, LA

The NFL Board of Directors held its spring meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, on May 12-14, 2011. Present were President Billy Tate, Vice President Don Crabtree, Brother Kevin Dalmasse, Pam McComas, Kandi King, Pam Cady Wycoff, Tim Sheaff, Tommie Lindsey, Jr., and Dave Huston. Alternate Jay Rye was also present.

Staff in attendance included Executive Director J. Scott Wunn, Cherian Koshy, Adam Jacobi, and Jenny Corum Billman. Guests in attendance included Howard Tempero of Spindustry.

*President Billy Tate called the meeting to order at 8:55 a.m.*

**Moved by Crabtree, seconded by McComas:** "Approve the minutes from the fall 2010 meeting."

**Passed: 9-0**

## National Office Reports

The Executive Director and members of the staff presented reports on several areas of the league, focusing on member services and financial development. The board spent substantial time discussing future strategies that the league could take to positively affect program retention.

## Programming Partnerships

Executive Director Wunn highlighted partnerships with the Open Society Foundations, the International Debate Education Association, and the Bickel and Brewer / New York University International Public Policy Forum. These programs provide additional opportunities—and often, financial incentives—to schools for engaging their students in speaking and debating. Coaches have responded favorably to the programs.

## Major Contracted Services

To better maintain its online point recording database, the NFL has worked with Joy of Tournaments, which is working with various software developers on exporting tournament results for import into the NFL's online points

database. The NFL also has contracted a company to digitize old paper points records (those existing prior to the online system's reach of the mid-1990s), as well as the web development and design firm as part of overhauling the NFL's websites.

*At 4 p.m. Thursday, Director Lindsey departed and Alternate Rye sat in his absence for the remainder of the meeting.*

## National Tournament Update

Continuing to elaborate on how the "all-inclusive" model for the 2011 national tournament is working, Executive Director Wunn provided an overview of the event and its logistics. Mr. Wunn also presented two event naming proposals to the board.

**Introduced for unanimous consent by President Tate:** "To name Extemporaneous Commentary after its founder, the late Brother Gregory 'René' Sterner, FSC."

**Introduced for unanimous consent by President Tate:** "To commemorate the historic occasion of the NFL's first honoree of the tenth diamond, Donus Roberts, the national tournament coach diamond ceremony shall be named in his honor."

## Establishment of the National Forensic League Foundation, Inc.

At the fall 2010 meeting, the Board of Directors moved to create a philanthropic supporting organization to provide charitable assistance for the advancement of the NFL mission. The founding legal documents and recommendation of inaugural members for that supporting organization were presented to the board, specifically highlighting the reserve powers maintained by the National Forensic League Board of Directors in determining leadership for the supporting organization, as well as how the supporting organization's funds are allocated.

**Moved by Wycoff, seconded by Sheaff:** "To accept the National Forensic League Foundation, Inc., articles of incorporation, and bylaws as presented."

**Passed: 9-0**

## Board of Directors Spring Minutes *(continued)*

**Moved by McComas, seconded by Huston:** “To accept the Executive Director’s recommendation of the three inaugural members of the supporting organization.”  
**Passed: 9-0**

### Online Voting by NFL Advisors

**Moved by Huston, seconded by King:** “That chapter advisors vote online for the Public Forum, Lincoln Douglas, and Policy Debate topics.”  
**Passed: 9-0**

**Moved by Crabtree, seconded by Rye:** “That chapter advisors vote online for 2012-2013 district committee elections.”  
**Passed: 9-0**

After six months of testing online voting for Public Forum Debate resolutions, as well as the 2011-2012 Policy Debate resolution, the processes used were well-received with a large volume of participation. Survey results showed that a strong majority of those participating wished for a continuation of the process.

### Interpretation Event Source Consistency

Moved by McComas, seconded by King: “In interpretive events, to require the same selection of literature entered at the on-site registration at the district or national tournament be used for the duration of that tournament.”  
**Passed: 9-0**

This action was taken to clarify what the board believed to be the original intent of the rule.

*The meeting recessed at 5:05 p.m. Thursday by President Billy Tate.*

*President Billy Tate reconvened the meeting at 8:55 a.m. Friday.*

### Expanding the Official District Committee Size

The board discussed how many district committees effectively function by including alternates in the decision-making process. In addressing how overstretched many educators are, the board decided that by empowering all committee members elected—up to five—that the responsibilities and duties of governing could be shared to a greater degree. A revision of Bylaw 11 provides for this.

**Moved by King moved, seconded by Wycoff:** “To accept the revised wording of Bylaw 11 as written.”  
**Passed: 9-0**

Bylaw No. 11 *(as revised)*

1. In each district there shall be a district committee to provide stewardship and leadership to its chapters, conduct the district tournament, and Congress; and perform such other duties as may be assigned to it.

2. The chapters in each district shall elect a chairman and up to four other voting members by preferential ballot; the ballot for each chapter to be counted for as many votes as that chapter is entitled to cast on May 1. The term of office shall begin on August 1, and continue for one year.

3. A position shall become vacant upon the death or resignation of the duly elected member or upon his/her transfer to another NFL district. If a vacancy occurs, it shall be filled by the person next in line for the position vacated.

### Website Development and Redesign

The board endorsed a dual functioning website design that continues to afford all current membership benefits associated with the school membership fee to member schools and students, yet allows for purchasing of additional benefits and features. The newly-structured website is set for launch in the fall of 2011.

### Internet Publications Interpretation Committee

**Moved by Wycoff, seconded by Crabtree:** “To establish an Interpretation Committee to meet initially at the 2011 nationals to create a protocol for using Internet publications for Oral Interpretation and make recommendations for the fall board meeting.”  
**Passed: 9-0**

### Trends in Lincoln Douglas Debate

**Moved by Wycoff, seconded by King:** “To establish a Lincoln Douglas Committee to meet initially at the 2011 national tournament to assess perceived trends in Lincoln Douglas Debate, and make recommendation for the fall board meeting to meet the needs presented.”  
**Passed: 9-0**

## **Honor Code / Ethics Violation Discussion**

**Moved by Sheaff, seconded by McComas:** "To create a task force to recommend guidelines and penalties for violations of ethics, NFL Honor Code, and professional standards."

**Passed: 9-0**

## **Congressional Debate Judging**

**Moved by Rye, seconded by King:** "In Congressional Debate, a judge affiliated with a particular school must not judge a student from that school."

**Passed: 9-0**

Several districts requested clarification of rules pertaining to judges in Congressional Debate. The board felt that it was unfair to expect any less for competitive integrity in Congress than in any of the other debate and speech events. American Legion, Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, local elected officials, and other civic organizations have volunteers who wish to participate in events like a district Congressional Debate. The NFL will provide concise but detailed judging instructions to make it easier for districts to arrange for unaffiliated judges.

The board also requested that individual speech/presiding scores be added to the online points database to better document Congress points earned by students.

## **District Sweepstakes Awards**

**Moved by Wycoff, seconded by Crabtree:** "To have separate sweepstakes awards for speech, debate, and Congress to be implemented for the 2011-2012 school year."

**Passed: 9-0**

This motion originated with questions about the incongruous nature of sweepstakes points in debate vs. speech, and the absence of Congress. Because there are fewer debate events and a variable number of Congress chambers for each district, it made combining Congress with debate difficult, so it was decided to honor all three divisions of the district tournament with their own sweepstakes awards. This does not eliminate the current combined sweepstakes, but instead gives additional recognition.

## **All American Award Standards and Computation**

**Moved by Huston, seconded by Wycoff:** "Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, standards for

determining the Top 25 NFL All Americans shall be based on a combination of competitive points and service points, of which no more than 25% of the point total can include service."

**Passed: 9-0**

**Moved by King, seconded by Wycoff:** "That in order to qualify as an All American (Top 25), a student must have competed once at nationals."

**Passed: 8-1**

**Aye:** Tate, Crabtree, Dalmasse, McComas, King, Wycoff, Huston, Rye

**No:** Sheaff

After the board voted in October to lift caps in point recording areas, it felt that the computation for the All American Award has been skewed by service. To return to the foundation of the award, these features were included to recognize excellence in interscholastic speaking contests and debates. There will now be a clear distinction between the National All American Award and the state-specific awards, which are based on total points in competition and service.

## **Board Strategic Planning**

**Moved by Dalmasse, seconded by King:** "To accept the Executive Director's recommendation for Board of Directors strategic planning session during the summer of 2011."

**Passed: 9-0**

To ensure vitality of the league and maximize services NFL offers its member schools, the board decided to engage in a special strategic planning session in August, to identify priorities for the next several years.

*The meeting recessed at 5:02 p.m. Friday by President Billy Tate.*

*President Billy Tate reconvened the meeting at 8:58 a.m. Saturday.*

## **Public Forum Ballot**

**Moved by Sheaff, seconded by McComas:** "To accept the revised Public Forum ballot as presented."

**Passed: 9-0**

After testing a pilot ballot with new wording proposed by the Public Forum Advisory Committee (2009), the board offered some changes for clarification and ease of use and adopted the new ballot form.

## Board of Directors Spring Minutes *(continued)*

### Auto-Qualification Process

**Moved by Crabtree, seconded by Dalmasse:** "To add as auto-qualifiers to the national tournament entries who place 7-14 at the previous year's national tournament."

**Passed: 9-0**

### Service Point Committee

**Moved by Wycoff, seconded by King:** "To establish a Service Point Committee to assess the current system and protocols, and make recommendations for a revised system for the fall board meeting to meet the needs presented."

**Passed: 9-0**

### California Plan Round Requirements

**Moved by Huston, seconded by King:** "When there are fewer than 15 entries with the California Plan, to allow a district to hold three prelims and a final."

**Failed: 2-4-2**

**Aye:** King, Huston

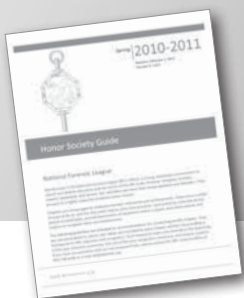
**No:** Tate, Crabtree, Wycoff, Sheaff

**Abstain:** McComas, Rye

*The meeting was adjourned at 12:01 p.m. Saturday by President Billy Tate.*

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