

To the Washington State Chess Community:

Following the approval of the bid as presented by the Mountlake Terrace Community Chess Club at the annual coaches meeting held April 25, 2009 in accordance with the Washington State Elementary Chess Championship Tournament Policies (Version 2008), several issues have been raised regarding various aspects of the bid process and its compliance with the Policy as well as other issues regarding key bid personnel, the bid team and conduct prior to and during the meeting and approval process. The WSECC Policy Board has taken all of these issues seriously and made its best efforts to investigate all of the issues and determine their impact on the bid process, the bid approval and the possible actions to be taken by the Policy Board. This letter presents the results of those efforts.

Key among the issues raised during the Coaches discussion meeting and bid presentation was the fact that the bid was not available to voting members until approximately two days before the vote. At issue was did the bid in fact meet the requirements of section 3.1.4 of the Policy? This section states:

The winning bid shall be selected from the bids presented at the annual coaches' meeting two years in advance of the tournament. **Individuals or groups wishing to present a bid will inform the Policy Board no later than two weeks prior to the annual coaches' meeting.**¹

From the review conducted by the board it was concluded that the group presenting the bid did inform the Policy Board two weeks prior to the annual coaches meeting. The Policy Board did not put the bid information on the website until approximately two days before the annual meeting. The Policy Board has determined that this requires corrective action and proposed enhanced requirements for the bid timing and content at the 2009 coaches meeting. These proposals require the bid to be sent to the Policy Board two weeks before the annual coaches meeting and that the bid be put on the website no less than one week before the annual coaches meeting. The proposal was unanimously accepted.

Since the approval of the bid at the coaches meeting there have been a number of concerns raised regarding behavior by coaches and personnel involved in the bid and voting process. Specifically issues were raised regarding inappropriate or confrontational behavior by the primary bidder including potentially coercive statements to parents during the state tournament aimed to preclude students from schools that did not support the bid from participating in other tournaments sponsored by individual.

These issues were investigated by the Policy Board. The conclusion of the Policy Board is that the with the exception of the comment about excluding students from schools that did not support the bid, the conduct and information presented was consistent with similar concerns and issues presented in the discussion meeting. Specifically at the discussion meeting there were issues raised regarding conflicts with parents at previous tournaments and issues with execution of tournaments under the leadership of the bid lead.

The individual to whom the comment was made regarding exclusion of students from non-supportive schools did not vote in the voting meeting and the school was already committed to vote against the bid and to the best knowledge of the Policy Board did vote against the bid. As a result, the Policy Board does not believe that there is sufficient information or evidence of misconduct by any parties involved in the bid process or the voting process to support invalidation of the bid as approved by the coaches (61 for to 30 against). The Policy Board believes that its fiduciary duties are to the chess community as a

¹ Highlighting provided for clarity in this letter.

whole and that actions to overturn a legally approved bid would be in violation of its trust to the overall state chess community. The Policy Board does not believe that there is sufficient evidence of serious misconduct that affected the final vote to invalidate a bid and it is the determination of the Policy Board that the bid as presented and approved is valid and will be upheld.

Finally there were concerns expressed at the discussion meeting and since, regarding the involvement of the WCF in support of the bid as presented. The Policy Board has communicated directly with the WCF board personnel regarding this issue. The conclusion of the Policy Board is that the WCF did in fact have a meeting to discuss supporting the bid being presented and that the conclusion was to support the bid. The evidence uncovered by the Policy Board during the review process determined that the information presented during the discussion and voting meetings was accurate and representative of what the WCF had done in reaching its decision to support the bid.

In summary, the Policy Board has made every effort to review all of the facts regarding all of the issues raised both during the meetings and since. The conclusion of the Policy Board is that the bid was appropriately presented and approved by a majority of the coaches in accordance with the approved Policies. The Policy Board regrets the fact that the bid was not available for a more detailed review earlier and has taken action to rectify that situation for future bids.

We appreciate the trust placed in the Policy Board and the willingness of those in the community to raise issues as they see fit. We have made every effort to be fair and balanced in the evaluation and resolution of this unfortunate situation. Should any member of the chess community wish to further discuss these or any other issues with the Policy Board regarding the bid or any other issues you are encouraged to do so by email through the WSECC web site.