

Finance Council Meeting 12 April 2014

ECU General Assembly

The European Chess Union (ECU) General Assembly is scheduled to meet on 13 August 2014, in Tromsø, one day after the FIDE General Assembly on 12 August. The main business of these meetings is for them to conduct their respective officers' elections for four-year terms. Nigel Short, the ECF's elected FIDE Delegate, has the responsibility to represent and cast the ECF votes.

The Board resolved *nem con* on 7 March 2014 amicably to resolve with Andrew Paulson a conflict that came to a head during the Emergency Board Meeting of 8 February 2014. On 8 March, Andrew Paulson submitted his resignation as ECF President to the Company Secretary. The Board published a statement:

"The Board gratefully recognises Andrew Paulson's contributions to English chess, from his organising of the FIDE Grand Prix and Candidates Tournaments in London to his untiring service since his election as President. Further, the Board nominates Andrew Paulson for the position of Deputy President of the European Chess Union and looks forward to a close and constructive collaboration between the ECU and the ECF. The Board recommends that the ECF Council at its April meeting approves a Motion to give Andrew Paulson standing during the ECU General Assembly election meeting in Tromsø in August by designating him as the official ECF Delegate at that meeting."

The Board's agreement with Andrew Paulson stipulated:

"The Members of the Board agree to both the letter and the spirit of this Motion. They will support the passage of the Motion by ECF Council: although in no way obliged to lobby for this Motion, they will not in any way lobby against this Motion.

The eight Members of the Board who voted for this Motion will publicly declare without reservation that they will support this Motion with their own votes, which do not necessarily include votes where they are duty bound to represent the expressed wishes of others at Council.

Andrew Paulson (a) agrees to respect Board Confidentiality and will refrain from public debate until the Council Meeting on April 12th, (b) retains the right to discuss ECF Board issues with Members of ECF Council in private in advance of the Council Meeting on April 12th so as to garner their support, and (c) retains the right to discuss ECF Board issues in private with representatives of other chess federations within the ECU so as to clarify his situation.

Andrew Paulson retains the right publicly to answer any campaigning statements initiated by Garry Kasparov, Silvio Danailov, Nigel Short or their agents if such appears publicly before

the Council Meeting on April 12th. Andrew Paulson will cede this right and refrain from comment on a case-by-case basis if the Board denounces them in an acceptable and timely manner.”

Subsequently, a number of ECF members have raised arguments against the Board’s recommendation, all of which were considered by the Board on 7 March but rejected as less important than achieving an amicable settlement.

1. Transferring the ECU proxy undermines the FIDE Delegate’s authority. This has merit; however, the Board regarded this amicable compromise as better for the Federation.
2. The ECF abrogates its responsibility to choose which ticket of ECU leaders will best serve ECF interests. To the contrary, Andrew Paulson’s nomination on either of the two ECU tickets was seen as elevating ECF influence within the ECU.
3. In view of the Board’s lack of confidence expressed on 8 February, it is inappropriate for the ECF Board to nominate Andrew Paulson to serve on the ECU Board. The ECU’s work and people are different from the ECF’s. The analogy of a marriage annulment resonated with the Board. The Board recognised Andrew Paulson’s contributions and untiring service to English chess during his tenure as ECF President.

Minutes from 8 February demonstrate the Board’s ability to act decisively, but also raised questions about ECF governance. The Council agenda provides for a discussion of the ECF’s structure and future governance in the previous Item 16, the Chief Executive’s Transformation White Paper.

Council’s approval of this motion regarding the ECU General Assembly proxy would support the Board’s collective judgment, as well as the respective individual judgements of Sean Hewitt, Julian Clissold, David Eustace, David Thomas, Alex Holowczak, Lawrence Cooper, Phil Ehr and Andrew Paulson. Council’s approval would also demonstrate Council’s appreciation for the past president’s voluntary service and pave the way to an ongoing constructive relationship with an individual who intends to play an important role in chess.

Phil Ehr, 30 March 2014