

TO: Members: FITNESS ASSOCIATION OF THE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

FROM: Board of Directors: FITNESS ASSOCIATION OF THE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

SUBJECT: Elections--Board of Directors

DATE: August 11, 2024

This is to advise you that the election for the Board of Directors is approaching and will take place from Monday, September 23, 2024 to Friday, September 27, 2024, with election committee nomination requests due September 1, 2024. The purpose of this memorandum is to outline how the elections will take place and to entice all the interested members who wish to run for the Board of Directors to do so.

Currently, there are four (4) Board positions available: three (3) Board positions for a term of three (3) years, and one (1) Board positions for a term of one (1) year.

General Information about the Board:

The Board of Directors of the Association consists of a total of nine (9) directors elected by the regular members of the Association.¹ Members of the Board must be USPTO employees and regular members of the Association in good standing at the time of their election and while so serving on the Board.

Powers and Duties of the Board:

The power and duties of the Board include those necessary to carry out the purpose for which the Association exists and to protect and preserve the interests of the Association including, but not limited to the following:²

- Contracting for the management and operation of Association programs and activities.
- Contracting for insurance covering any potential liability to the Association, its managing agents, the Board, or members.

¹ *The Board also consists of a non-elected PTO liaison appointed by the PTO. The liaison works with the elected Board members in carrying out the duties of the Board.*

²*Please note: Members of the Board do not receive any compensation for their service on the Board. Board members do not receive non-production time.*

- Contracting for any other services, equipment or supplies it determines are needed by the Association.
- Setting terms and conditions of membership, including dues and fee schedules.
- Establishing and enforcing rules and regulations for the use of Association facilities and for participation in Association programs and activities.
- Complying with the fiduciary duties of care, loyalty, and obedience. Complying with the fiduciary duty of loyalty requires, *inter alia*, agreement with FAPTO’s Conflict of Interest Policy (attached). Failure to comply with the fiduciary duties is grounds for immediate dismissal from the Board of Directors.

General Overview on How the Election will work

Any eligible member³ of the Association willing to run for the Board **must** email, to the Board, a personal statement detailing the qualifications and relevant experience for the director position. The complete personal statement must be submitted via email, no later than Sunday, September 1, 2024, to Pinping.Sun@uspto.gov, Jay.Patel2@uspto.gov, and FAPTO@uspto.gov.

The **personal statement** must be no more than 100 words and inform the membership why the nominee should be elected to the Board and identify any experience the nominee may have. The personal statement **must be** in a Word™ (.doc or .docx) file that is double-spaced and in Times New Roman 14 pt. Font. **All words after the 100-word limit will be deleted from the personal statement.** Optionally, the candidate may also wish to submit a 150 x 212-pixel photograph of their self. The photo must be less than 200 kB and be in a PNG or JPEG format. Non-compliant photographs are subject to being cropped, compressed, or rejected. Any submission received after 2024-September-01 22:00 ET will not be considered.

Prior to each annual meeting of the membership, the Board of Directors shall designate an election committee, which shall recruit at least one candidate for each vacancy on the Board of Directors who are regular members and willing to serve on the Board of Directors. If an interested member is not nominated by the election committee, nominations may also be made by petition signed by at least ten (10) members in good standing, and submitted to the Board of Directors by such date prior to the annual meeting as the Board of Directors shall set.

At the time of voting, voting ballot forms will be e-mailed to all members at the Fitness Center. Voting will be held as described in the timeline below.

The membership will then vote for up to four (4) Directors from the candidates running.

³ Eligible members of the Association are those with a “Regular Membership”, *i.e.* FAPTO members who are an employee of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (PTO), including full-time, part-time, temporary, or contract employees. Members of the Association with an “Associate Membership”, *e.g.* non-PTO family members or retired PTO employees, are not permitted to vote or run for a position on the Board.

The results of the election will be announced by Monday October 7, 2024 and the new Board will meet on or about Tuesday, October 15, 2024.

Timeline for Elections

September 01, 2024:	Deadline for submitting Personal Statements (100 word maximum) indicating why you wish to serve on the board. An optional 150x212 pixel, PNG or JPEG format, photograph may also be submitted. At a minimum, candidates wished to be considered by the election committee must email intent to serve on the board to Pinping.Sun@uspto.gov , Jay.Patel2@uspto.gov , and FAPTO@uspto.gov .
September 04, 2024:	Announcement by election committee of nominated candidates.
September 10, 2024:	Deadline for submitting self-nominating petition with 10 signatures, if not nominated by election committee.
September 17, 2024:	All candidates nominated by either the election committee or petition must attend the Annual Meeting.
September 23, 2024:	Voting will commence. Ballots containing the personal statements and photographs will be e-mailed to eligible members.
September 27, 2024:	Completed election ballots due.
October 7, 2024:	Results announced.

What you do now

Think about running! The membership needs dynamic people who care about the Fitness Center to run for the Board. If you are interested in being nominated as a candidate, make sure to email intent no later than September 1, 2024.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to call or email the election committee, listed below:

- Pinping Sun, x0-1284, Pinping.Sun@uspto.gov
- Jay M. Patel, x2-6793, Jay.Patel2@uspto.gov

FAPTO Conflict of Interest Policy

And

Annual Statement

For Directors and Officers and
Members of a Committee with Board Delegated Powers

Article I -- Purpose

1. The purpose of this Board conflict of interest policy is to protect the Fitness Association of the Patent and Trademark Office (FAPTO) interests when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit any interests of an officer or director of FAPTO or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction.
2. This policy is intended to supplement, but not replace, any applicable state and federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Article II -- Definitions

1. **Interested person** -- Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.
2. **Financial interest** -- A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, outside organization, or family:
 - a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which FAPTO has a transaction, arrangement, or contract,
 - b. A compensation arrangement with FAPTO or with any entity or individual with which FAPTO has a transaction, arrangement, or contract, or
 - c. A potential ownership in, a potential investment interest in, or a potential compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which FAPTO is negotiating a transaction, negotiating an arrangement, or negotiating a contract.

Compensation means any goods or services in excess of \$20.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. A person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the Board or Executive Committee decides that a conflict of interest exists, in accordance with this policy.

Article III -- Procedures

1. **Duty to Disclose** -- In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Board or Executive Committee.
2. **Recusal of Self** – Any director may recuse himself or herself at any time from involvement in any decision or discussion in which the director believes he or she has or may have a conflict of interest, without going through the process for determining whether a conflict of interest exists.
3. **Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists** -- After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, the Board will make a determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining Board or Executive Committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.
4. **Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest**
 - a. An interested person may make a presentation at the Board meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
 - b. The Board shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
 - c. After exercising due diligence, the Board shall determine whether FAPTO can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
 - d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the Board shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in FAPTO's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.
5. **Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy**
 - a. If the Board or Executive Committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
 - b. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Board or Executive Committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Article IV – Records of Proceedings

The minutes of the Board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

- a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the Board's or Executive Committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

Article V – Compensation

A voting member of the Board who receives monetary compensation, directly or indirectly, from FAPTO for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

Article VI – Annual Statements

1. Each director, principal officer, and member of a committee with Board delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:
 - a. Has received a copy of the conflict of interest policy,
 - b. Has read and understands the policy,
 - c. Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
 - d. Understands FAPTO is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.
2. Each voting member of the Board shall annually sign a statement which declares whether such person is an independent director.
3. If at any time during the year, the information in the annual statement changes materially, the director shall disclose such changes and revise the annual disclosure form.
4. The Executive Committee shall regularly and consistently monitor and enforce compliance with this policy by reviewing annual statements and taking such other actions as are necessary for effective oversight.

Article VII – Periodic Reviews

To ensure FAPTO operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- a. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information (if reasonably available), and the result of arm's length bargaining.
- b. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations, if any, conform to FAPTO's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement or impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

Article VIII – Use of Outside Experts

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Article VII, FAPTO may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the Board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

Revision History by the FAPTO Board
Initial Conflict of Interest policy adopted 1995-10-11.

FAPTO Director and Officer
Annual Conflict of Interest Statement

1. Name: _____ Date: _____

2. Position:

Are you a voting Director? Yes No

Are you an Officer? Yes No

If you are an Officer, which Officer position do you hold: _____.

3. I affirm the following:

I have received a copy of the FAPTO Conflict of Interest Policy. _____ (initial)

I have read and understand the policy. _____ (initial)

I agree to comply with the policy. _____ (initial)

I understand that FAPTO is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of tax-exempt purposes. _____ (initial)

4. Disclosures:

a. Do you have a financial interest (current or potential), including a compensation arrangement, as defined in the Conflict of Interest policy with FAPTO? Yes No

i. If yes, please describe it: _____.

ii. If yes, has the financial interest been disclosed, as provided in the Conflict of Interest policy? Yes No

b. In the past, have you had a financial interest, including a compensation arrangement, as defined in the Conflict of Interest policy with FAPTO? Yes No

i. If yes, please describe it, including when (approximately):

_____.

ii. If yes, has the financial interest been disclosed, as provided in the Conflict of Interest policy? Yes No

Signature of director

Date: _____

Date of Review by Executive Committee: _____