Date: 22 April 2025

To: Board of Directors; Members

 Fitness Association Patent & Trademark Office

From: Fariba Sirjani

for Liesl Baumann (Secretary; Fitness Association Patent & Trademark Office)

Subject: 22 April 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

A regular, virtual meeting of the Fitness Association of the Patent & Trademark Office (FAPTO) Board of Directors was held via MS Teams on Tuesday 22 April 2025. Board members Kevin Bechtel, Jay Patel, Georgia Epps, Pinping Sun, Candace Mundt-Bates, Omer Khan, and Fariba Sirjani were present. Liesl Baumann had an excused absence but joined at 10:34 am. Bryan Lee was absent.

A quorum being present, the FAPTO Board meeting was called to order by President Kevin Bechtel at 10:01 EST.

**HealthFitness (HFit) Issues**

Rich Mandley, Gretchen Fahn, Jill Bakner, and Mindy Green attended. Gretchen left at 10:30. Rich left at 10:49.

* **Meet new HFit Leader (Gretchen Fahn):** Gretchen introduced herself and Rich said that he was retiring, this would be his last official meeting, and we would be in good hands with Gretchen and Jill. Kevin indicated that the PTO would miss Rich.
* **2025-March Membership Information and 2025-March Operations, Sales, and Marketing Report:**
	+ Kevin shared the operations membership information and Jill provided a description. 107 new members joined in the month of March. A number of trial members are converting to actual membership this month (April). Jill hopes for 200 new members for the month of April which is not over yet. Jill indicated that next month is probably when we see the change in the $ numbers because by then the payroll deductions will start coming in. The results of payroll deductions from pay-period 7 will be in the next report. Annual payment and monthly payment are pulled from HFIT records and OHR report includes the payroll deduction numbers. The numbers shown currently are as of pay-period 5. The check-ins were substantially up in the month of March. February had 347 unique users vs. 491 unique users in the month of March utilizing the fitness center. We have lost a few of Energy Club member because our schedules did not align with theirs and they would have preferred Saturday hours and more classes. A new commercial club on Route 1, near Potomac Yards, called Club Studios is offering a wide variety and large number of classes with free parking and no security to go through. The fee is higher and the introductory rate for this club was set at $125 a month.
	+ Heartline performed their preventative maintenance for the month of March which was already approved in the budget. The two recumbent bikes were removed at no cost.
	+ Personal training also picked up. 107 new members came for the 0$down and 6-months free hydro-massage promotion. Jill hopes that because some people use the hydromassage religiously, they would add it to their actual membership. 20 participants attended the wine-down Wednesday. As a result of drawing for a gift card promotion: 8 or 9 new members have been referred by members. A mindful meditation last week and a lunch on the lawn coming up this week.
	+ Average group attendance went up in all of the group classes. Virtual classes are still lightly attended but two of the virtual classes are being pulled into the studio and streamed from inside the studio and it is expected that the average attendance will go up. Average of participants went up from 6 to 8 (pulled down by the virtual classes) and is the highest ever observed since the group classes started. Will have one virtual only and 4 hybrid classes. The virtual only class is later in the day when the attendance at the club dies down. Gretchen said the average for group classes was 5 and 8 was a great number. 27 people observed the videos in the library and 14 in March. The number fluctuates and the reason may be that the participants may have a busy month or not.
	+ Georgia said that at the end of May we may pick up more members because the probationary examiners will be required to return to the Office. Candace indicated that the Office wishes to create a sense of community for the probationary examiners that are coming back to the Office and suggested advertising on the PTO website and Georgia said that Liesl was in the PTA and could probably convey information regarding the Fitness Center to the new examiners.
* **Member Appreciation Day:** Jill explained that we used to have the community day in the month of May but we have not heard about it this year and it may be potentially moving to fall. HFit is considering a member appreciation day on May 7 and a special promotion waiving the initiation fee for anyone who joins that day, having raffles, tea and coffee and snacks, to create a good atmosphere on that day. May 7 includes 5 classes and is a day to show some appreciation to the members. Perhaps ordering hats and towels with the logo.
* **TV Repair Quote:** Technician repaired two of the TVs that were down and he was not able to repair the 3 TVs by the squat rack. His initial impression was that there were connection issues and to remedy, he needed to go through the communication closet. Kevin had an idea regarding how the TV box should be connected to avoid one long cable. Kevin indicated we would take a vote on the DirectTV quote later.
* **Martial Arts class & Insurance Requirements:**  Kevin said that another group has approached us trying to teach Karate and we have to decide whether or not to permit them to hold their classes and what we will require from them including scheduling and insurance. Regarding the currently operating Brazilian Jujitsu group, insurance has been required from them. Rich said that physical contact is against policy and the group obtained their own policy for less than $400 whereas it would have cost the club about $2000 to obtain insurance. Jill indicated that there will be pros and cons to this additional group being permitted to operate from our facility. The Brazilian Jujitsu instructor is not employed by HFit and is not being paid and it is rather a club that uses the space. Mindy said the oversight can get tricky at times but it has been worked out so far. HFit does not have as good of a communication or oversight that they have with and over their own employees. Mindy noted that because the attendees of these classes were not employees of HFit and were rather members, HFit did not have the authority to ask them to move to another studio when their numbers do not justify the use of the larger studio. Kevin wanted a consistent policy that we come up with regarding all such clubs. Jill added that no one has expressed an interest in adding martial art classes whereas there has been requests regarding other types of classes that we do not currently have. Kevin said as long as they are insured and they hold the class at a fixed time that Jill and Mindy are aware of, he would be ok. They would have to provide some record of adequate insurance. Georgia said that we are paying over $7000 in insurance and the Brazilian Jujitsu insurance would add approximately $700 and she did not find that desirable. Kevin said that any such group needs to show proof of insurance and notify the HFit of the time of use and it would be at HFit’s discretion as to whether or not to pay the insurance or the instructor to have the class. Then, HFit will obtain the right to move them as they do with any other class. Liesl was also for creating a standard for such specialty classes. There was a discussion regarding how involved HFit should or would be in the operation of specialty classes. Jill will speak with Gretchen regarding extra insurance for anything combat related. Combat-related classes have a different level of liability associated with them. A rowing or dance class do not fall in the same category.
* **Membership Reimbursement Request (Jeremy Carroll):** Sent in a cancellation form in September 2023 and recently recognized that he was still being charged for and is demanding all of the dues back. The form he signed to stop the payroll deduction obligates him to check the payroll deductions and confirm that it has indeed been stopped. Kevin read the language of the agreement that makes the member solely responsible for confirming that the payroll deduction has stopped. Kevin asked everyone’s opinion regarding the matter. Georgia informed the group that in a situation where the OHR had canceled the membership of the wrong person, the Fitness Center reimbursed the person one year’s worth of refund. Georgia and Liesl considered it the responsibility of the user and Kevin while agreeing noted that it had also been our mistake.
* **USPTO Management Discussion:** Kevin has not heard anything yet and he thinks they are waiting to see if they can do anything before the end of fiscal year and we have 6 months before the end of our contract with HFit and it would be a good idea to start negotiating a new contract. Jill said that Gretchen will probably have something for us before the end of next month and we will definitely have time to consider it. Kevin does not want the Board to commit to anything unless the management is aware. Liesl said that the PTO management had mentioned they would need a 6-month lead time and we are now past that. She did not think they would be reaching our issue any time soon or at all this year.
* Kevin told Jill and Mindy we will have a vote on the Martial Arts Class, the Sky TV Repair Quote, and possibly on the Jeremy Carroll membership issue.

**Board Actions**

* **Discussion and Vote on the Martial Arts Class, the Sky TV Repair Quote, and the Jeremy Carroll membership issue.**
	+ **Sky TV Repair Quote: $1045:** decided to table for consideration at a future date.
	+ **The Martial Art Class:** Kevin motioned that members be permitted to have group classes in the studios as long as: they have adequate insurance, HFit and FAPTO are listed as interested parties on the insurance, they keep HFit apprised of the schedule, and they sign a written contract that makes them subject to HFit and FAPTO instructions. Liesl seconded. Vote (Yes: 4. No: 2. Abstain: 0)
	+ **The Jeremy Carroll Reimbursement:** decided to table until we checked the records regarding what we did in the past. Kevin will go through relevant minutes. He may put the matter up for electronic vote as long as there are not any substantial differences in the fact patterns. If the fact patterns do not fit nicely, Kevin will table the issue until next meeting.

**Treasurer’s Report 2025-March**: Kevin made a motion to approve the 2025-March Treasurer’s Report; Jay seconded. Vote 6-0-0 (yes/no/abstain). Motion passes. Georgia said that our two tax documents have been filed. We do not pay any federal taxes but we do have to file a federal tax return and we do pay and have filed a business personal property return with the city of Alexandria.

**March Meeting Minutes:** Kevin made a motion to approve the February 2025 Meeting Minutes; Georgia seconded. Vote 6-0-0 (yes/no/abstain). Motion passes.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 EST. The next meeting is a regular meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 27 at 10:00 EST.