



VSA Meeting Minutes

Date: February 9, 2026

Call to Order: 6:05PM

Attendance: Rich DeGraff-Murphy (President); Emily Milbank (Vice President); Kyle Koenig (Secretary); Matt Spitznagle (Treasurer); Keith Roberts (Risk Management); Bill Edwards (SRA); Andrew Minnis (ED); Lori Levinson (Ops Director); Jason Marika (TD)

Remote: All—Zoom Meeting | Called to order at 6 pm (Note Keith had to depart mid meeting).

Guest(s): Chris George -Way of Champions/ Vermont Clover

Approval of Minutes

- Previous meeting date: **January 5, 2026**
 - Motion: **Approve minutes as written**
 - Result: **Approved unanimously**
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Public Comment

A. "Way of Champion" Team Values Workshop

- Lead: Chris George, Ways of the Champion
- Workshop Overview
- Chris provided a team-building workshop for BOD & Staff focused on identifying and refining organizational core values.

B. Vermont Clover Project Presentation

- Lead: Chris George

Context:

- Vermont Green FC's success exposed a gap in the high-level player pathway within Vermont.
- Vermont Clover is positioned to fill this, offering competitive opportunities for Vermont's top-level male players (with future plans for female players).

Key Points:

- Initial player interest exceeded expectations (100+ vs. anticipated 30-40).
- Strong support from local clubs and community, with over 150,000 social media impressions since January 2026.
- Robust interest on the United in Green podcast (highest listenership).
- Second team likely to be added this year (Elite 11).
- The women's team planned for 2027, recognizing an even larger gap for females.
- Committed to a non-exclusive, accessible, and Vermont-centric model (retain local players, develop next-gen coaches and referees).

Collaboration Opportunities with VSA:

- Board to consider financial capacity for support, discuss at next budget review.
 - Agreement on non-financial collaboration (promotion, event integration, etc.).
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General Board Reports

President's Report – Rich DeGraff Murphy

A. United Soccer Coaches Convention & National Update

- VSA was commended at (January 2026) for effective leadership and organizational model.
- US Youth Soccer (USYS) using VSA as a positive example; exploring what drives association success for national adoption.

B. National Initiatives and Changes

- Introduction of a new competition platform, combining US Club, National Premier League, and USYS National League into a single, region-based ecosystem to decrease travel and costs. Vermont currently has two teams at this level (BFC, Peak).
- USYS and US Soccer exploring shared services contract (within 90-day due diligence), aiming for cost savings in HR, finance, IT, and communications.
- National focus on referee recruitment/retention, with Vermont singled out for strong collaboration between association and referees.

C. Partnerships and Opportunities

- Meetings with vendors including GodSport, ETrainU, Iceland Soccer Travel, Propel Pro.

D. Initiatives to Engage Membership more widely across Vermont, not just in Chittenden County.

- Committees to Be Stood Up:
 1. **Membership Advisory Committee** (meets monthly, midday; reports to board in July) - Rich DeGraff-Murphy will assume BOD position on Committee
 2. **World Cup Committee** (for planning events and school engagement around World Cup, college engagement, webinars, and fundraising/scholarships) - Matt Spitznagle & Kyle Koenig will split board liaison/advisor BOD role on Committee
 3. **Awards Gala Committee** (event planning and award recipient selections) - Emily Millbank will assume Chair of this Committee supported by Ops Manager Lori Levinson
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Vice President's Report – Emily Milbank

- Nothing to report
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Treasurer's Report – Matt Spitznagle

- Nothing to report
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Secretary's Report – Kyle Koenig

- Nothing to report
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Risk Management Report – Keith Roberts

- Nothing to report
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State Referee Report – Bill Edwards

A. Recruitment Status:

- Goal of 140 new referees; only 60 registered/certified to date. Clinics scheduled in Montpelier, Randolph, Forge; no signups yet.
- Reminder: late signups common, but concern about numbers and need clubs to promote clinics more actively.
- Email reminders and newsletter coverage ongoing; request for stronger push from association, including graphics and schedule in communications.
- Instructor coverage for clinics in progress.

Board Action:

- Lori to incorporate info into weekly email/newsletter; standing promotional spot for ref clinics.
- VSA staff to coordinate dissemination of graphics and reminders.

Additional:

Bill recovering from knee surgery; unable to attend AGM. Tim Shane to represent refs at national AGM.

Executive Director Update – Andrew Minnis

A. Pathway/Competition

- Advisory role with new eight-region USYS/US Club platform; two Vermont automatic entries.
- Discussion of potential impact on VSA financials/membership; fragmentation of US soccer ecosystem is a potential risk but considered manageable for Vermont.

B. USYS-U.S. Soccer Shared Services Exploration

- In the NDA-driven discovery period; HR, finance, IT are possible shared services to drive efficiency.

C. National Career Summit & Visibility

- Vermont to have a Member Spotlight booth at the US Soccer AGM Career Summit.
- Andrew and Rich to represent, network with job/intern candidates.

D. New Adidas Soccer Ball Distribution Opportunity

- U.S. Soccer offers pallets of FIFA Play-branded Adidas balls (mix of size 4/5): ~450-500 balls per pallet, \$200 shipping only per pallet.
- Plan to purchase and distribute to schools, clubs, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA, with strong media/promotional opportunities.
- Discussed warehouse storage options (board member to provide space), double-stacking possible.
- No further board approval required; VSA operations team to set final quantity (tentatively 10-15 pallets).
- The board agrees this is a strong opportunity for engagement and public relations.

E. Administrative & Compliance

- Secretary of State records update in progress; requires board member verification and form submission (Rich to handle by Wednesday).
 - Board member roster and AGM minutes to be submitted as supporting docs.
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Technical Director Report – Jason Marika

A. ODP

- January ID event was successful, significant college scout engagement (coaches from local colleges and Spain attended, multiple players identified).

B. Other:

- Technical staff connecting for World Cup engagement and other initiatives.
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Operations Update – Lori Levinson

- Spring League: Registrations opened Feb 2, 64 teams so far; Spring Festival: 18 teams; State Cup—backup - TF Secured; exploring possible backup location for inclement weather.
 - Mental Health Awareness Month MAY.
 - Partnership with Round Glass for weekly themes with athlete ambassadors, plan for webinars and outreach—state involvement to be solicited.
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Other Business / Good of the Game

- Nothing to report
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Executive Session

- Entered for 70mins. *Confidential*
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Adjournment

- **Motion:** Adjourn
 - **Result:** Approved unanimously
 - **Time:** 8:30 p.m.
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Next Meeting

Date: **March 9, 2026**

Time: **6:00 p.m.**

Location: **TBD**