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## MINUTES TO THE 14<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE (MEN'S) EUROPEAN HANDBALL LEAGUE BOARD

*(Parallel to the meeting of the WEHLB)*

<b>Date:</b>	Monday, 14 October 2024	
<b>Time:</b>	14:00 – 16:30	
<b>Venue:</b>	Renaissance Wien Hotel   Strassburg	
<b>Participants:</b>	Nikolas Larsson	Chairman   SWE
	Frank Bohmann	Vice Chairman   GER
	Patrice Hitz	Member 2   SUI
	Etienne Capon	Member 5   FRA
	Siniša Ostoić	Member 6   CRO
<b>Guest:</b>	Taneli Tiilikainen	League Representative   FIN
<b>EHF Office:</b>	JJ Rowland	Director BDM   Minutes
	Tobias Scheder	Competitions Department   Clubs
<b>Resigned:</b>	Thierry Wagner	Member 3   LUX

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### 1. Welcome and Introduction

Taneli Tiilikainen (FIN) was welcomed to the meeting and upon invitation of the EHLB would represent the leagues at the level of emerging nations level; the resignation of Thierry Wagner was reiterated.

### 2. EHLB Meeting - 04/2024 | Review & Follow-up

No further comments.

### 3. EHLB recap since last meeting/Summit 2024

The formation of the new Women's European Handball League Board (WEHLB) was acknowledged with second meeting taking place in parallel. It was noted that a joint meeting would take place where areas for cooperation would be discussed i.e. contact with leagues not yet reached, common calendar issues, and league playing systems.

### 4. EHLB Summit - 01.06.2024, Cologne | Review

The success of European Handball League Board Summit was noted, and the Keynote delivered by DYN was appreciated. The importance of changing media landscape incl. digital, as well as the format with European Handball Talks and opportunity for individual leagues to feedback on their issues and progress was highlighted.

## **5. Cologne 2025 | Status Update**

The Summit format proposed is to be the same as previous years with support for participants to include a ticket to the EHT and one night in the hotel. The EHLB are informed on possible keynote speakers and also the proposals for 2/3 of the clubs to present best practice examples covering social/digital media, or e.g. Scottish federation/league or inputs from other sports such as rugby. Key topics should include how to reach the audience, digital etc. Possibilities of a joint organisation or participation with the Women's EHLB was suggested.

## **6. Future strategy EHLB**

It was noted that the board should identify its role and objectives, 4-5 bullet points to clearly identify the board's positioning and function within the overall EHF infrastructure. A discussion on whether the role of the board was also to comment on or influence the overall product e.g. rules. Bohmann stated that his position was that the role was that of product manager with the leagues offering a shop window to the world. The role of IHF discussed and it was agreed that the International Federation needs to play a more active role in the development and promotion, also through an expanded professional office. The need for growth at the grassroots level also underlined. Capon noted a main role of the board should be in supporting development and organisation of attractive competitions and championships.

Larsson highlighted the need also for a follow up with EHF regarding elections for the next four-year period in combination with the 2025 Congress and elections in September 2025.

## **7. Feedback to stakeholders**

The EHLB scheduled an online feedback session as a follow up to the common stakeholder meeting, as well as the EHLB and PHB meetings, for 7 November at 16:00 hrs.

## **8. PHB Meeting 10/2024**

The proposal for the change in national team week(s) from March to autumn – proposed in the common meeting by Markus Glaser – was discussed and the need for inputs from stakeholders at competition meeting planned for spring period 2025. Member Hitz stated that from his perspective, it would be better to change the May national team week as this was during a high point for the national leagues. The indication that any change of the national team week(s) could not take place until season 26/27 at the earliest and that any change of playing system/dates would need to be agreed by November 2025, for implementation in the season 2027/28 was acknowledged.

## **9. Outlook 2024 & 2025**

The topic of the possibility for leagues to be played beyond the EHF FINAL4 events was discussed – based on an EHF decision that all leagues in Europe must be finished within a week

of the FINAL4 events taking place. Scheder noted that there were two cases this year due to Men's EHF FINAL4 taking place one week earlier but that these were resolved.

#### **10. Finances**

The confirmation from the EHF Finance Delegation regarding assistance for the current two-year period was noted; this enabled the organisation of the 2024 Summit and will support the holding of the event in 2025.

#### **11. Cooperation with EHPU**

No special report.

#### **12. Next meetings/events**

The next General Assembly of the European Handball Leagues is to be scheduled for September 2025 to align with the EHF elections. The outlook to further events as follows:

- 7 November 2024, 14:00 hrs – feedback session with European leagues
- 3 March 2025 – next scheduled meeting of EHLB
- 13/15 June 2025 – Summit in Cologne during EHF FINAL4
- 19/20 September 2025 – EHF Congress, Andau, Austria
- 20 October 2025 – scheduled meeting EHLB

#### **13. Closing**

With the agenda complete, the EHLB meeting was closed.

## **NOTES FROM THE COMMON EHLB–WEHLB**

Using the opportunity of presence of all members, a brief joint meeting was held where the members of both groups introduced themselves. The points below reflect the topics of common interest.

- Importance of the upcoming competitions conferences for the two boards and for all stakeholders was noted
- Larsson listed the activities of the EHLB to date, including organisation of digital feedback sessions with national leagues following meetings in spring and autumn. Good relationship with FCH was noted; little contact/cooperation with EHPU to date
- Joint approach to the EHLB Summit in Cologne was proposed; WEHLB informed that their plan was to organise a meeting/summit of leagues at the next Women’s EHF FINAL4 in Budapest. Larsson provided an overview of the EHLB approach to the Summit to date and content/keynote speakers so far
- Larsson informed about financial support from the EHF to date and how this had been used to support participation of leagues in the event in Cologne
- WEHLB informed that they were planning a survey of leagues – Larsson informed about the survey already conducted in the past; proposal for a joint survey discussed but declined due to delay any coordination may cause
- The WEHLB provided an overview of their first discussions and that they had allocated responsibilities for contact with the lower, middle, and top-ranked leagues in Europe
- It was decided to jointly cooperate to expand the volume and quality of the respective boards contact list with leagues/federations. Board chairs Larsson and Wendt to cooperate on this issue.