



Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame  
501 Broadway  
Nashville, TN 37203  
(615) 242-4750

**Minutes**  
**Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame Nomination Committee Meeting**  
**October 13, 2022**

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The Nomination Committee of the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame (“TNSHOF”) met this day at 1:00 PM CT for a meeting with a physical location at 312 Rosa L Parks Ave, 13<sup>th</sup> Fl., Nashville, TN 37243 and hosted via WebEx with available call-in numbers. Notice being given seven (7) days prior on the TNSHOF website and Facebook page. The meeting was called to order at 1:03 PM CT by Massaro. Roll was called and a quorum was established, with the following members present.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Dane Bradshaw<sup>1</sup>  
Harold Graeter<sup>2</sup>  
Kenny Hawkins  
Chris Massaro  
Candice Storey Lee  
Art Sparks

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

None.

**GUESTS PRESENT**

Mark Ezell, Commissioner of the Department of Tourist Development  
Andi Grindley, Department of Tourist Development, Outreach Projects Coordinator  
Alicia C. B. Widrig, Department of Tourist Development, General Counsel & Board Attorney  
Brad Willis, TNSHoF, Executive Director

**AGENDA**

**Welcome**, Massaro

Welcome and Call to Order.

**Housekeeping**

- Widrig, asked if any guests were on the call that may wish to be recognized. Hearing none, the meeting proceeded.

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<sup>1</sup> Bradshaw notified Willis he would have a hard stop at 2:30 PM CT.

<sup>2</sup> Graeter and Lee notify Willis prior to the meeting they would be tardy. Both joined at 1:05PM CT.

- Pursuant to T.C.A. § 8-44-108(a)(d), the determination of necessity for conducting the TNSHOF meeting electronically was read into the record and rendered as essential to continue the business of the Board, in order to select Honorees for presentation to the full Board.
- Approved the April 19, 2022, Minutes of the Nomination Committee TNSHOF without a reading, as the Minutes were provided to members in advance of the meeting. Motion, by Graeter with second by Massaro. No discussion, move to a roll call vote:

Dane Bradshaw	Yes
Harold Graeter	
Kenny Hawkins	Yes
Chris Massaro	Yes
Candice Storey Lee	
Art Sparks	Yes

**New Business/Discussion Items**, Willis

1. Nomination Deadlines for 2023 Class, Willis, Have been subdud in recruiting nominees based upon last years' numbers and generally get a last-minute rush. Generally, the Hall publishes an official deadline. Last year, that deadline was November 15 but would be open to any discussion on the deadline.

- Discussion: Massaro, Requested clarification that November 15 was a weekday, being a Tuesday, Massaro motion for the November 15 deadline recommendation, second by Graeter. All in favor, none opposed. Recommendation to be presented to the full Board for their determination.

2. Nomination Criteria Process/Number of Inductees Discussion, Willis, Most in depth discussion will have today, this past Class the Board elected increase the number of inductees for the Class of 2022 to thirteen (13), while only twelve (12) accepted the honor. But the Board requested this committee to consider increasing the pool of inductees or leave it the same. Currently, the number of inductees annually is eleven (11), with the possibility that only up to two (2) of those eleven (11) could be posthumous.

- Discussion, Willis requested Chairman Massaro lead the discussion.
  - Massaro, Reminder that each region gets two (2) automatics, so that becomes six (6), then five (5) are on a state-wide ballot to achieve eleven (11). The election process can be difficult and attempting to provide relief in having more inductees. The counter argument, being an increase would dilute the class and cause a longer banquet. Is there a way to tweak the system to provide a balance?
  - Grater, Requested input from Willis as the TV Specials producer to determine what the maximum class size would be to grow?
    - Willis, This year was a good example, had a group that's larger, execution standpoint the higher the number the more difficult it was to collect the needed items, e.g. photos, videos and interviews. If gain any greater number of inductees would create issues with content for the TV Special. A banquet with more than eleven (11) speaking is challenging. Introduced a model that worked with a larger group, being no speeches. If added one (1) that could be reasonable but more than that could water down the group. Believe eleven (11) is the number despite each year there being some painful cuts.

- Sparks, The group should not be expanded, as some years there will not be as strong of a candidate group and do not want to expose the Board to a situation where they feel like need to induct those whom in other years would not get in.
  - Bradshaw, Believe the reasons Fulmer presented because of the number of NFL/Pro Athletes that are not in but do not want to load athletes in there. There have been numerous occasions when a candidate has been “put off until next year” because there is not enough room in the class.
  - Hawkins, As far as increasing, should not increase the class by much and would be okay if did not increase the class at all.
  - Graeter, Agree with Willis that induction should feel special and not watered down. This year the reception at the Hall and inductees seeing friends and family was a highlight. At the dinner, those inducted not being required to speak seemed to provide relief. Choices and decisions should be hard and rightly so, if there is some momentum to change dynamics, think eleven (11) is the best number but consider only one (1) posthumous.
    - Willis, Clarified, that rules allow for up to two (2) posthumous, so Board could elect only to have one (1) or none.
  - Ezell, wishing to present before the Committee. Leans toward increasing, as there are more sports teams, such as Nashville Soccer Club. The quality of candidates will only increase as have so many major sports teams in the state. Would propose the idea of eleven (11) plus two (2). Good luck and thank you.
  - Lee, Swayed with what Ezell said, but there will be more and it will be not get easier.
  - Hawkins, Each year it will not matter how much the class increases, believes there will never be enough spots.
  - Massaro, Like Lee, see the different points. Thinks the current program is running well, opposed to growth in number but willing to consider Will’s alternative to tweak the posthumous candidates.
- Motion, Massaro, to cap the induction class at twelve (12) members and table discussion on number of posthumous inductees, with second by Hawkins. Directors voting on remaining at eleven (11) or moving up to twelve (12). No further discussion, move to a roll call vote:

Dane Bradshaw	12
Harold Graeter	11
Kenny Hawkins	12
Chris Massaro	11
Candice Storey Lee	12
Art Sparks	12

Motion carries, Committee recommends Board increase the annual induction class to twelve (12) inductees.

- Discussion, Cont. from tabled motion on consideration of posthumous candidates and number included within the increase twelve (12).
  - Massaro, Posthumous is a cap not a requirement, no more than two (2) unless address it now. Would advocate to leave the cap as written as there could be a year the group wants two (2) posthumous.
  - Graeter, Is there guidance on automatic versus posthumous. What if one region put two (2) posthumous as their automatics, then other regions could not get a posthumous candidate in.

- Sparks, Consider if a posthumous candidate then would have to come from the regions five (5) at large and would need to have enough recognition to get in.
- Massaro, Like Sparks idea, however if a region has a candidate from for example C&N that they want to see in the Hall it would make it difficult.
- Willis, Would caution the Committee, that this situation has never come up in the years he has been Executive Director.
- Motion, Massaro, would entertain a motion to make a recommendation to increase the class to twelve (12) with a cap of two (2) posthumous inductees. Motion by Sparks, second by Graeter. Massaro, Is a motion needed.
- Widrig, A motion is not necessarily needed since currently the Criteria allows for the cap of two (2) posthumous. But it does ensure clarity of the information coming to the Board. No further discussion, move to a roll call vote:

Dane Bradshaw	Yes
Harold Graeter	Yes
Kenny Hawkins	Yes
Chris Massaro	Yes
Candice Storey Lee	Yes
Art Sparks	Yes

- Motion carries for presentation to the Board for final approval.

3. Discussion of Process of Honorees, Willis, Over the last three (3) classes, found the window of time between choosing the honorees and the TV Special to be a challenge. For example, with John Ingram being named Tennessean of the Year in April, approved in early May and the TV Special in late June, it was a challenge to include him in the special. Historically, the banquet has fallen in June and we may return to that, creating another challenge as we look to sell ads and tables in association with that award. This committee honors individuals from teams from an April – April window as to include potential NCAA Tournament teams as honorees, however, this model also presents an incredibly tight turn around for printed programs. Willis requests a shift in the model to a calendar year for honors.

- Discussion, Massaro, In full disclosure he discussed this concept with Willis and has concerns about operating honorees on a calendar year, as if someone is being honored based upon actions in February then that's a full fifteen (15) months before would honor making it stale. Thoughts on the group of pulling individual honorees out, such as TN of the Year and Lifetime Achievement and putting those on the same calendar as inductee discussion. Then leaving amateur athlete award discussions closure to April.
- Willis, In looking at the 2023 event, historically April 2022 – April 2023 would be the window. Meaning instead of one (1) meeting where committee discusses individual honorees and amateur athletes which usually is a marathon it would be broken into two (2) shorter meetings, perhaps individual honorees in February and then amateur athletes on tax day.
- Graeter, Can building flexibility as needed. Dispensation, guidelines or after selection day if after selection day then if individuals wins a national championship prior to the banquet will honor in a reasonable window of time.

4. Recognition of Teams Winning National Championship After Voting Window, Willis, Based upon Graeter's last comment, it is appropriate to tie in #4 of the Agenda as well.

- Discussion on Agenda Items 3 and 4, cont. Willis, For example, if make a selection and get more national championships then would want to honor as part

of the banquet. Hesitation because had so many honorees, if a team were to win a national championship between vote and the banquet would need to have the Board's authority to extend honor.

- Massaro, Would want it to be a team and not an individual. Would consider discretion of Executive Director rather than a deadline since the banquet is a moving date. National title only, supplemental category. Taking advantage of time, special recognition not a naming of team o the year. Invitation to the banquet for in-person recognition. For example, if Vandy men's team won then would extend an invitation and it would be up to their coach if they could attend. Would receive in-person recognition only.
- Clarification, Widrig, is the Committee suggesting adding an additional category to recognize national championships or ceding ability to the Executive Director to extend the honor to said team with presence at the banquet. Motion, by Massaro, second by Graeter.

Dane Bradshaw	Yes
Harold Graeter	Yes
Kenny Hawkins	Yes
Chris Massaro	Yes
Candice Storey Lee	Yes
Art Sparks	Yes

- Motion carries for presentation to the Board for final approval.

5. Historic Team of the Year/Reunion Discussion, Willis, Spoke with Bradshaw about this idea about a month ago concerning honoring a historic championship team with an award/honor, thereby creating a reason for that team to reunite, and essentially use the banquet as a reunion. Bradshaw requested to speak on the concept.

- Presentation of Suggestion, Bradshaw, Based upon own life experience playing high school football and now being twenty (20) years out considered this an opportunity for successful teams to have a reunion. Could call it the Dynasty Award, and it would be an award for the highlight of a prep career and could be an annual award if the team was worthy. Considered if the team being honored then would need to have a certain number of table sales.
- Discussion,
  - Graeter, Like the thought if high school focus and it's a segment missing that has bothered him since have been unable to fit into the programming.
  - Bradshaw, Would need to work out the minutia, what's the first milestone year, think need to me more than ten (10) years out, most likely twenty (20) years then honorees could enjoy brining their families to meet their old teammates and include them in their celebration.
  - Massaro, Does TSSAA have a hall of fame? Willis, It has a hall of fame but it is only for coaches and officials and does not induct players.
  - Bradshaw, Consider limiting teams from forty (40) plus years ago who may be unable to attend, to add a financial component.
  - Hawkins, Like the idea but don't like the idea of strong arm into putting monetary component.
- Motion, Willis, Would entertain a motion to table the discussion to fully form the idea, by Bradshaw with second by Graeter, all in favor with none opposed.

6. Coach of the Year Honor Discussion, Willis, This would create a change in the Nomination Criteria adding a category. This suggestion was brought forward at the last full Board meeting concerning honoring a coach of the year award, in addition to the team and athlete of the year awards. This would give the Board the opportunity to honor an exception coaching effort, while leaving the team of the year to another honoree.

- Discussion,
  - Lee, That would be potentially awkward. First, so many would be deserving and then second, think about the team awards that include the coach and then could have a coach that was honored and then a team that was not.
  - Graeter, Can't separate the coach from the team and if it's team of the year it is usually the coach that has the moment of recognition by accepting the award.
  - Massaro, Is there anyone that is in favor of this idea? Hearing none, there was no further discussion and the Committee moved forward on the agenda.

7. Recognition of Olympians During Annual Banquet, Willis, Action item included by Willis, but will not be an issue for another couple of years. At the 2022 banquet, the Board honored Tennessee Olympians with a slide show during the dinner. There are opportunities in the future to honor them with an award, for example, they have been presented with the Tennessean of the Year award in the past but do not provide a specific award. Would there be any thoughts among this committee of a fitting way to honor them at the annual induction banquet in an Olympic year?

- Discussion,
  - Graeter, Thought the slide show was great, if it happens after the award deadline, then goes to Executive Director discretion. But, if have an Olympics ask them to come to dinner.
  - Sparks, Agree, like the slide show.
  - Massaro, Thinking about international students, if Tennessee represented Germany do we still honor them in the same way? Think slide show is appropriate.
  - Willis, thank you will take this into consideration moving forward.

## Closing Remarks

As was nothing further, Massaro motioned for adjournment with second by Graeter. No further discussion, all in favor with none opposed. Meeting adjourned at 2:38 PM CT.

Approved:

March 1, 2023  
Date

*Alicia C. B. Widrig*

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Alicia C. B. Widrig  
Attorney for the TNSHOF, acting Secretary  
Department of Tourist Development