



**AMTA Board of Directors
December 2024 Mid-Year Minutes**



American Mock Trial Association

Mid-Year Meeting of Board of Directors

Via Zoom

December 14, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. EST.

Minutes

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Members Present: Ben-Merre, D'Ippolito, Detsky, Garson, Gelfand, Halva-Neubauer, Harper, Haughey, Heytens, Hogan, Holstad, Jahangir, Langford, Leapheart, Leckrone, Michalak, Minor, Olson, Parker, Pickerill, Randels Schuette, Schuett, Smiley, Sohi, Thomason, Walsh, Warihay, Watt, Wilson, Woodward, Zarzycki (31)

Members Not Present: Bernstein, Henry (2)

Candidate Members Present: Cannon, Hauser, Kerwin, LaPrade, Ouambo, Selcov, Yeomelakis (7)

II. Welcome and Remarks (Sohi)

III. Approval of Agenda

See [Appendix A](#) for an explanation of the agenda.

Motion by D'Ippolito to approve the agenda. Seconded. **Agenda approved.**

IV. Committee Reports

Most committees will deliver their reports to the Board via email prior to the meeting.

- A. Academics Committee (Leapheart): Written report.
- B. Accommodations Committee (Olson): Written report.
- C. Analysis Committee (Jahangir): Oral report.
- D. Alumni Engagement Committee: No report.
- E. Audit Committee (Halva-Neubauer): Report during Executive Session.
- F. Budget Committee (Warihay): Oral report.
- G. Civil Case Committee (Jahangir): Oral report.
- H. Competition Integrity Committee (Randels Schuette): Written report.
- I. Content and Campaigns Committee (Selcov): Written report.
- J. Creative and Design Committee: No report.
- K. Development Committee (Bernstein): Written report.
- L. Disciplinary Committee: No report.
- M. Diversity and Inclusion Committee (Harper/Watt): Written report.
- N. Human Resources Committee (D'Ippolito): Written report.
- O. NCT Case Committee (Haughey): Written report.
- P. New School Success Committee (Olson): Written report.
- Q. Onboarding and Mentorship Committee (Wilson): Written report.
- R. Operational Excellence Committee (Kerwin): Written report.

- S. Rookie Rumble Tournament Committee: No report.
- T. Rules, IP, and Ethics Committee (Smiley): Oral report.
- U. Strategic Planning Committee: No report.
- V. Student Advisory Board Committee (Wilson): Written and oral report.
- W. Tabulation Advisory Committee (Michalak): Written report.
- X. Tournament Administration Committee (Yeomelakis): Written report.
- Y. Web Committee: No report.

V. Tabled Motions

See [Appendix A](#) for an explanation of tabled motions.
See [Appendix D](#) for a list of motions tabled by committee.

VI. Approval of Consent Calendar

See [Appendix C](#) for the motions on the consent calendar.
Motion by Woodward to approve Consent calendar. Seconded.
Consent Calendar approved.

VII. Motions

The full text of motions advanced for debate appears in [Appendix B](#). The shortened titles here are for reference only. Designations in **green** were advanced by the committee with a positive recommendation.

Overview of Motions

Motion	Description	Outcome
CIC-01	Introduces rule addressing stipulations, contradictions to stipulations, and procedure for adjudicating contradictions.	Referred to CIC
CIC-02	Redefines scope of NCT in-tournament investigation to encompass allegations solely brought under Rule 6.11 (recantation and guilty portrayal).	Passed as amended
EC-02	Modifies AMTA external communications rule.	Passed
RULES-02	Introduces rule concerning AMTA Special Instructions and enforcement of the same.	Passed

CIC-01: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Randels Schuette (as amended by committee) to introduce Rule 7.23 of the AMTA Rulebook:

Rule 7.23 Stipulations.

(a) **DEFINITION.** Stipulations may be included in any case packet by the Case Committee. Stipulations are pre-trial agreements among the parties that certain matters cannot be disputed at trial. Stipulations may be procedural (e.g., pre-numbering of exhibits) or substantive (e.g., agreement to a particular fact in the case). For example, if a stipulation states that the light was red, neither party may argue or proffer witness testimony asserting that the light was green.

(b) CONTRADICTIONS.

(i) if a stipulation is contradicted, the opposing team may raise an objection to that effect (except that any objections to opening statements and/or closing statements based on contradiction of a stipulation cannot be made until after the statement is completed). Almost all contradictions of stipulations should be adjudicated in the round by the presiding judge.

(ii) **PROCEDURE FOR ADJUDICATING CONTRADICTIONS.** If a team believes that a stipulation has been contradicted, and the presiding judge has failed to provide appropriate relief, the contradiction should be adjudicated based upon the nature of the stipulation.

(A) The Case Committee may include a Special Instruction for certain Stipulations stating: “Contradiction of Stipulations [insert numbers] may constitute an improper invention of material fact and is subject to review by the Competition Integrity Committee.” For any Stipulation listed in such Special Instruction, contradiction of that Stipulation can only be adjudicated by the Competition Integrity Committee following the procedures set forth under Rule 7.21. Any Stipulation listed in such Special Instruction cannot be decided by the AMTA Representatives in their capacity as such.

(B) Contradictions of all other Stipulations during a tournament are investigated and resolved by the AMTA Representatives under the procedures set forth in Chapter 9, unless the contradiction creates an improper invention.

(iii) **Prerequisite to complaint.** In order to bring a complaint under section (b)(ii), a team must show it raised the Stipulation contradiction in round and that the presiding judge failed to provide appropriate relief.

Motion by D'Ippolito to amend as follows:

Rule 7.23 Stipulations.

....

(b) CONTRADICTIONS.

(i) if a stipulation is contradicted, the opposing team may raise an objection to that effect ~~(except that any objections to opening statements and/or closing statements based on contradiction of a stipulation cannot be made until after the statement is completed)~~. Almost all contradictions of stipulations should be adjudicated in the round by the presiding judge.

....

(iii) Prerequisite to complaint. In order to bring a complaint under section (b)(ii), a team must show it raised the Stipulation contradiction in round, **unless the contradiction occurred during an opening statement or closing argument when objections are not permitted**, and that the presiding judge failed to provide appropriate relief.

Seconded.

Motion by Zarzycki to refer CIC-01 back to Committee. Seconded. **Motion to refer passes.**

CIC-01 referred back to Committee.

CIC-02: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Rules Committee and Competition Integrity Committee to amend Rule 9.11 of the AMTA Rulebook as follows:

Rule 9.11 In-Tournament Investigation.

For the 2023–2024–~~2025~~ season, the Competition Integrity Committee may in its discretion investigate allegations of **violations of Rule 6.11** ~~invention of fact~~ during the National Championship Tournament and, where appropriate, issue penalties in accordance with Rule 9.10. The committee need not be physically present at a tournament to issue an in-tournament finding and/or penalty. In-tournament investigations and penalties require participation from at least three committee members. Committee members are not disqualified from this process by serving as an AMTA Representative at the tournament in question. The Competition Integrity Committee may establish deadlines and procedures for submitting requests for in-tournament review, which must be publicly posted on AMTA’s website no later than the date on which the National Championship Tournament Case is released. The Competition Integrity Committee may impose sanctions, including refusal to consider future requests, if it determines that a request for in-tournament review was frivolous. See Rule 9.28. Nothing in this rule shall preclude other processes for investigating allegations of ~~invention of fact~~ **violations of Rule 6.11** that exist in the AMTA Rulebook. **In-tournament investigation will not be utilized to review allegations of invention of fact not contemplated under Rule 6.11. All invention of fact complaints under Rule 7.21 must follow the procedures set forth under the rule and will be adjudicated post-tournament.**

Rationale: *At the direction of the Board following the July Board meeting, the Rules Committee and CIC formed a joint task force to evaluate the future of in-tournament review at the national championship. There was much deliberation and the consideration of many factors such as load on AMTA in terms of the sheer volume of complaints issued at the 2024 NCT, mental load on the competitors to make and defend against such high volume of complaints, the high number of non-actionable complaints, and how to still enable action for highly egregious invention violations, etc. In examining these factors, the task force determined that allowing in-tournament review for only Rule 6.11 violations—recantation and guilty portrayal—was most appropriate. The conduct prohibited under Rule 6.11 is generally more easily identifiable than invention of fact for students and on-site CIC members. Further, the conduct under Rule 6.11 is conduct that is generally not something that can be remedied by in-trial methods, such as impeachment. The task force struggled to find any sort of bright-line rule to cover egregious invention of fact in a way that did not open up the process to a high volume of potential complaints that surfaced at the 2024 NCT.*

Motion by Woodward to amend as follows:

Rule 9.11 In-Tournament Investigation.

For the 2023–2024–2025 season, the Competition Integrity Committee may in its discretion investigate allegations of violations of Rule 6.11(2) or (3) ~~invention of fact~~ during the National Championship Tournament and, where appropriate, issue penalties in accordance with Rule 9.10. The committee need not be physically present at a tournament to issue an in-tournament finding and/or penalty. In-tournament investigations and penalties require participation from at least three committee members. Committee members are not disqualified from this process by serving as an AMTA Representative at the tournament in question. The Competition Integrity Committee may establish deadlines and procedures for submitting requests for in-tournament review, which must be publicly posted on AMTA’s website no later than the date on which the National Championship Tournament Case is released. The Competition Integrity Committee may impose sanctions, including refusal to consider future requests, if it determines that a request for in-tournament review was frivolous. See Rule 9.28. Nothing in this rule shall preclude other processes for investigating allegations of ~~invention of fact~~ violations of Rule 6.11(2) or (3) that exist in the AMTA Rulebook. In-tournament investigation will not be utilized to review allegations of invention of fact not contemplated under Rule 6.11(2) or (3). All invention of fact complaints under Rule 7.21 must follow the procedures set forth under the rule and will be adjudicated post-tournament

Seconded. **Motion to amend passes.**

CIC-02 passes as amended.

EC-02: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Sohi to amend Rule 15.5 of the AMTA Rulebook as follows:

Rule 15.5 External Communications~~Communication with external media~~

(1) GENERAL RULE: Directors and Candidate Directors should notify the President or the President’s designee whenever they are asked to speak to the press, a traditional media outlet, or to influencers on behalf of AMTA and should only respond to said request with specific permission from the President or the President’s designee.

(2) SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITES: Directors and Candidate Directors shall refrain from posting or commenting in a representative capacity on social media platforms and websites without express permission from the President or the President’s designee.

(3) STATEMENTS ON BEHALF OF AMTA: In line with Bylaw 4.06, when authorized to speak externally on behalf of AMTA, Directors and Candidate Directors are required to act as part of a unified team in implementing decisions adopted by the Board. Speaking about activities conducted on behalf of the Board are inherently representative speech.

(4) NON-REPRESENTATIVE SPEECH: Nothing in this policy is intended to restrict the freedom of Directors and Candidate Directors from discussing their personal involvement in mock trial. When doing so, individuals should make every reasonable effort to indicate that they are not speaking in a representative capacity on behalf of AMTA.

(5) CONTENT REVIEW: The President, with approval from the Executive Committee, may implement a review process for any content published externally on behalf of AMTA to ensure brand and strategic consistency.

Rationale: This looks at external communications more holistically than the prior rule. As social media has evolved, this explicitly references the concept of “influencers” and how communication with an influencer can have the same impact as a traditional media outlet. This also provides flexibility to supplement our rules with a thoughtful content review policy as we work on expanding communications with our community and recognize the importance of a second set of eyes / being consistent with our voice to elevate our brand.

EC-02 passes.

RULES-02: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Smiley to add Rule 7.22 to the AMTA Rulebook:

Rule 7.22 Special Instructions.

- (a) **DEFINITION.** Special Instructions may be included in any case packet by the Case Committee. Special Instructions are rules specific to that particular case and have the same effect as an AMTA Rule for the time that the case is operative during the AMTA season.
- (b) **VIOLATIONS.**
 - (i) Violations of Special Instructions during a tournament are investigated and resolved by the AMTA Representatives under the procedures set forth in Chapter 9, unless the violation creates an improper invention.
 - (ii) If a Special Instruction contains the language “Violation of this special instruction may constitute an improper invention of material fact and are subject to review by the Competition Integrity Committee,” then violation of that Special Instruction can only be adjudicated by the Competition Integrity Committee following the procedures set forth under Rule 7.21. Any Special Instruction containing this language cannot be decided by the AMTA Representatives in their capacity as such.

Rationale: This issue came before the Board at the July 2024 Meeting and was referred to the Rules Committee for creation of a fulsome rule on this issue. The proposal at the July Meeting involved only the CIC’s role related to Special Instructions. The above adopts language from the previous proposal but now also includes direction that the AMTA Reps are responsible for enforcing Special Instructions that do not relate to invention of fact.

RULES-02 passes.

- VIII. Report by Halva-Neubauer (on behalf of Audit Committee).
Motion by Woodward to enter Executive Session. Seconded. **Motion passes.**
The Board entered Executive Session at 2:23 p.m. EST.
- Motion by Audit Committee to acknowledge receipt of the preliminary audit for FY2023 and directing President Sohi and Treasurer Warihay to sign the pertinent Management Representation Letter.** Seconded. **Motion passes.**
- Motion by Woodward to exit Executive Session.** Seconded. **Motion passes.**
The Board exited Executive Session at 2:48 p.m. EST.
- IX. Presentation of AMTA History Project (Halva-Neubauer)
- X. Unfinished/New Business
- Update by Selcov on compilation of favorite AMTA memories to be released in advance of AMTA's 40th Anniversary.**
- Update by TAC on recommendations for received 2026 National Championship Tournament host bids.**
- XI. Adjournment
Motion by Warihay to adjourn. Seconded. **Motion passes.**
The Board adjourned at 3:14 p.m. EST.



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Appendix A: Explanation of Agenda

Pursuant to AMTA Rule 10.2.1, the Executive Committee referred each motion to a Board committee based on the subject matter of the motion. All motions are referenced numerically by the abbreviation of the committee to which the motion was referred (e.g., EC-02, TAB-03.)

Each committee had the option of (1) advancing the motion to the Board with a positive recommendation; (2) advancing the motion to the Board with no recommendation; or (3) tabling the motion. Further, each committee had the option to make amendments to each motion prior to advancing it to the Board.

Advanced Motions (Appendix B)

Motions advanced by committee with a positive recommendation do not require a second. These motions are indicated by a designation in green, e.g., **TAB-02**.

Consent Calendar (Appendix C)

The Consent Calendar comprises motions advanced by committee that, in the determination of the Executive Committee, are of a technical or non-controversial nature such that they may be adopted by the Board without further debate. Three Board members may ask that a motion be removed from the consent calendar; such a motion would then be subject to separate debate and action.

Tabled Motions (Appendix D)

These motions are designated in red with underlining, e.g., **TAC-09**. No action will be taken on any tabled motion unless five Board members ask that that a vote be held to untable the motion and the Board subsequently votes to untable. If the vote to untable the motion is successful, the untabled motion would then be subject to debate on its merits and action.

Voting Standards

For a motion to be adopted, it must receive a majority of the votes cast at a meeting where quorum is present. AMTA Bylaw 4.10. Motions to amend the Bylaws require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Voting Directors. AMTA Bylaw 8.02.



American Mock Trial Association
 Mid-Year Meeting of Board of Directors
 Via Zoom
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Appendix B: Full Text of Motions

SUMMARY OF ADVANCED MOTIONS

The full text of motions advanced are provided below. The shortened descriptions here are for reference only. Designations in **green** were advanced by the committee with a positive recommendation.

In cases where existing rules are being amended, rule language to be deleted is shown ~~struck through~~ and new language to be created is shown **in red**.

Motion	Description	Page
CIC-01	Introduces rule addressing stipulations, contradictions to stipulations, and procedure for adjudicating contradictions.	<u>2</u>
CIC-02	Redefines scope of NCT in-tournament investigation to encompass allegations solely brought under Rule 6.11 (recantation and guilty portrayal).	<u>3</u>
EC-02	Modifies AMTA external communications rule.	<u>4</u>
RULES-02	Introduces rule concerning AMTA Special Instructions and enforcement of the same.	<u>5</u>

CIC-01: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Randels Schuette (as amended by committee) to introduce Rule 7.23 of the AMTA Rulebook:

Rule 7.23 Stipulations.

(a) DEFINITION. Stipulations may be included in any case packet by the Case Committee. Stipulations are pre-trial agreements among the parties that certain matters cannot be disputed at trial. Stipulations may be procedural (e.g., pre-numbering of exhibits) or substantive (e.g., agreement to a particular fact in the case). For example, if a stipulation states that the light was red, neither party may argue or proffer witness testimony asserting that the light was green.

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(A) The Case Committee may include a Special Instruction for certain Stipulations stating: “Contradiction of Stipulations [insert numbers] may constitute an improper invention of material fact and is subject to review by the Competition Integrity Committee.” For any Stipulation listed in such Special Instruction, contradiction of that Stipulation can only be adjudicated by the Competition Integrity Committee following the procedures set forth under Rule 7.21. Any Stipulation listed in such Special Instruction cannot be decided by the AMTA Representatives in their capacity as such.

(B) Contradictions of all other Stipulations during a tournament are investigated and resolved by the AMTA Representatives under the procedures set forth in Chapter 9, unless the contradiction creates an improper invention.

(iii) **Prerequisite to complaint.** In order to bring a complaint under section (b)(ii), a team must show it raised the Stipulation contradiction in round and that the presiding judge failed to provide appropriate relief.

CIC-02: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Rules Committee and Competition Integrity Committee to amend Rule 9.11 of the AMTA Rulebook as follows:

Rule 9.11 In-Tournament Investigation.

For the ~~2023-2024~~ **2025** season, the Competition Integrity Committee may in its discretion investigate allegations of **violations of Rule 6.11** ~~invention of fact~~ during the National Championship Tournament and, where appropriate, issue penalties in accordance with Rule 9.10. The committee need not be physically present at a tournament to issue an in-tournament finding and/or penalty. In-tournament investigations and penalties require participation from at least three committee members. Committee members are not disqualified from this process by serving as an AMTA Representative at the tournament in question. The Competition Integrity Committee may establish deadlines and procedures for submitting requests for in-tournament review, which must be publicly posted on AMTA's website no later than the date on which the National Championship Tournament Case is released. The Competition Integrity Committee may impose sanctions, including refusal to consider future requests, if it determines that a request for in-tournament review was frivolous. See Rule 9.28. Nothing in this rule shall preclude other processes for investigating allegations of ~~invention of fact~~ **violations of Rule 6.11** that exist in the AMTA Rulebook. **In-tournament investigation will not be utilized to review allegations of invention of fact not contemplated under Rule 6.11. All invention of fact complaints under Rule 7.21 must follow the procedures set forth under the rule and will be adjudicated post-tournament.**

Rationale: *At the direction of the Board following the July Board meeting, the Rules Committee and CIC formed a joint task force to evaluate the future of in-tournament review at the national championship. There was much deliberation and the consideration of many factors such as load on AMTA in terms of the sheer volume of complaints issued at the 2024 NCT, mental load on the competitors to make and defend against such high volume of complaints, the high number of non-actionable complaints, and how to still enable action for highly egregious invention violations, etc. In examining these factors, the task force determined that allowing in-tournament review for only Rule 6.11 violations—recantation and guilty portrayal—was most appropriate. The conduct prohibited under Rule 6.11 is generally more easily identifiable than invention of fact for students and on-site CIC members. Further, the conduct under Rule 6.11 is conduct that is generally not something that can be remedied by in-trial methods, such as impeachment. The task force struggled to find any sort of bright-line rule to cover egregious invention of fact in a way that did not open up the process to a high volume of potential complaints that surfaced at the 2024 NCT.*

EC-02: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Sohi to amend Rule 15.5 of the AMTA Rulebook as follows:

Rule 15.5 External Communications~~Communication with external media~~

(1) GENERAL RULE: Directors and Candidate Directors should notify the President or the President's designee whenever they are asked to speak to the press, a traditional media outlet, or to influencers on behalf of AMTA and should only respond to said request with specific permission from the President or the President's designee.

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(3) STATEMENTS ON BEHALF OF AMTA: In line with Bylaw 4.06, when authorized to speak externally on behalf of AMTA, Directors and Candidate Directors are required to act as part of a unified team in implementing decisions adopted by the Board. Speaking about activities conducted on behalf of the Board are inherently representative speech.

(4) NON-REPRESENTATIVE SPEECH: Nothing in this policy is intended to restrict the freedom of Directors and Candidate Directors from discussing their personal involvement in mock trial. When doing so, individuals should make every reasonable effort to indicate that they are not speaking in a representative capacity on behalf of AMTA.

(5) CONTENT REVIEW: The President, with approval from the Executive Committee, may implement a review process for any content published externally on behalf of AMTA to ensure brand and strategic consistency.

Rationale: This looks at external communications more holistically than the prior rule. As social media has evolved, this explicitly references the concept of "influencers" and how communication with an influencer can have the same impact as a traditional media outlet. This also provides flexibility to supplement our rules with a thoughtful content review policy as we work on expanding communications with our community and recognize the importance of a second set of eyes / being consistent with our voice to elevate our brand.

RULES-02: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Smiley to add Rule 7.22 to the AMTA Rulebook:

Rule 7.22 Special Instructions.

- (a) **DEFINITION.** Special Instructions may be included in any case packet by the Case Committee. Special Instructions are rules specific to that particular case and have the same effect as an AMTA Rule for the time that the case is operative during the AMTA season.
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 - (ii) If a Special Instruction contains the language “Violation of this special instruction may constitute an improper invention of material fact and are subject to review by the Competition Integrity Committee,” then violation of that Special Instruction can only be adjudicated by the Competition Integrity Committee following the procedures set forth under Rule 7.21. Any Special Instruction containing this language cannot be decided by the AMTA Representatives in their capacity as such.

Rationale: This issue came before the Board at the July 2024 Meeting and was referred to the Rules Committee for creation of a fulsome rule on this issue. The proposal at the July Meeting involved only the CIC’s role related to Special Instructions. The above adopts language from the previous proposal but now also includes direction that the AMTA Reps are responsible for enforcing Special Instructions that do not relate to invention of fact.



American Mock Trial Association
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Appendix C: Consent Calendar

SUMMARY OF CONSENT CALENDAR MOTIONS

The full text of motions advanced are provided below. The shortened descriptions here are for reference only.

In cases where existing rules are being amended, rule language to be deleted is shown ~~struck through~~ and new language to be created is shown **in red**.

Motion	Description	Page
EC-03	Amends rule concerning committee meeting scheduling to reflect current practice.	<u>2</u>
EC-04	Amends rule concerning Executive Committee composition to reflect current committee names.	<u>3</u>
EC-05	Amends bylaw concerning Executive Committee composition to reflect current committee names.	<u>4</u>
EC-06	Removes Strategic Planning Committee's five-year strategic plan task.	<u>5</u>
EC-07	Modifies rule concerning AMTA's use of social media platforms to reflect current practice.	<u>6</u>

EC-03: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Sohi to amend Rule 15.8 of the AMTA Rulebook as follows:

Rule 15.8 Meeting schedules.

The Board will set the time and place of the annual summer meeting at the preceding summer meeting. ~~Board committees shall meet on the morning prior to the annual summer Board meeting.~~

Rationale: *This just cleans up the current practicality of how we operate in terms of summer meeting planning – we pick a city/state and host, though the actual schedule comes later pending the host's ability to reserve space and Board member availability. In terms of committee meetings, not all committees need to meet in person and should also be able to meet at times other than the morning (ie the Friday afternoon) if all participants are free.*

EC-04: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Harper to amend Rule 15.7(8) as follows:

Rule 15.7 Meeting agendas.

....

(8) “NEW BUSINESS” MOTIONS. A ~~majority~~ vote **of 2/3 of the Voting Directors present at a Board Meeting** is required to allow a substantive motion before the Board for debate and deliberation under “new business” at a meeting. The Chair shall determine whether a motion offered as a new business item is “substantive.” Motions to set the date and/or location of a future Board meeting or to approve a tournament host or location shall not be subject to this rule.

Rationale: *Recent Board Meetings have featured incredibly substantive motions as New Business. By requiring a 2/3 vote, this amendment ensures that any New Business motions are viewed as significant by a substantial majority of the Board, thus finding that bypassing the usual process of committee review and recommendation is appropriate for consideration of any substantive New Business motion.*

EC-05: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Sohi to amend Rule 15.13 of the AMTA Rulebook as follows:

Rule 15.13 Executive Committee duties and procedures.

(1) **COMPOSITION.** The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, the Past- President/the President-Elect, the Secretary, the Treasurer, ~~and the Chair or Co-Chairs of the Tournament Administration Committee Chair, the AMTA Tabulation Director, the Rules Committee Chair, a Development Officer, the Academics Committee Chair, and a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committees Chair.~~ The President shall chair the committee and vote on matters before it only when necessary to break a tie.

(2) **CHARGE.** The charge of the Executive Committee is to:

- (a) establish and charge such committees as authorized by the Board and such ad hoc committees as become necessary;
- (b) appoint people to these committees;
- (c) monitor the work of those committees throughout the year, making such adjustments to the charge and composition as are needed to facilitate the goals of the committee;
- (d) compile the agenda for the annual Board meeting;
- (e) propose the budget to the Board;
- (f) establish relationships with internal and external constituencies;
- (g) handle issues not heretofore specified in the By-Laws.

(3) **PETITION FOR VOTE OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.** Any Board member may petition the Executive Committee to conduct an ad hoc Board vote. Such a vote will be conducted upon the recommendation of at least half of the Executive Committee members. In the event of such a vote, Board members will have at least three business days to respond. For action to occur, at least one half of the current Board members must respond in the affirmative.

Rationale: This cleans up grammar and updates to the current names of committees. It also more explicitly clarifies how the EC has operated in practice in past years, where certain committees have Co-Chairs.

EC-06: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Sohi to eliminate Rule 15.14 of AMTA Rulebook:

Rule 15.14 Strategic Planning Committee duties and procedures.

AMTA shall formulate a mission statement, identify core values, and establish a five-year strategic plan. The Strategic Planning Committee will guide this process, with input from all Board members.

Rationale: *Strategic Planning doesn't do this, and in my years on the Board, we've never had a five-year strategic plan. This is an antiquated rule that limits flexibility to delegate these tasks to the committees most equipped to handle the tasks. Moreover, the EC should be driving strategy and partnering with the full Board on execution. This committee shouldn't be mandated within our rules.*

EC-07: Advanced with a positive recommendation

Motion by Sohi to amend Rule 15.22 of the AMTA Rulebook as follows:

Rule 15.22 Interactive components.

AMTA shall utilize social media platforms to disseminate information, at the discretion of the ~~Communications Chair~~ **of the committee assigned to manage content strategy and** in consultation with the President. ~~Subsequent moderation and content strategies related to such platforms shall be developed by the Communication Committee subject to Rule 15.5 governing Board Communication.~~

Rationale: *We now use social media as our predominant communication channel, and this isn't controversial. This removes the specific mention of the Communications Chair / Communication Committee since we haven't used that title in multiple years and the new language provides flexibility for Social to be owned within other committees where relevant (ie "Marketing").*



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Appendix D: Tabled Motions

SUMMARY OF TABLED MOTIONS

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In cases where existing rules are being amended, rule language to be deleted is shown ~~struck through~~ and new language to be created is shown **in red**.

Motion	Description	Page
<u>EC-01</u>	Increases team roster size from 10 to 12 competitors.	<u>2</u>
<u>EC-08</u>	Amends definition of “New School” to expressly include any team that has paid a regional registration fee over the past five academic years but was not assigned to a regional tournament.	<u>4</u>
<u>EC-09</u>	Changes the year-long case release date from August 15 to August 30.	<u>5</u>
<u>RULES-01</u>	Amends benchbook contents to include exhibits; allows for copy of benchbook at witness stand.	<u>6</u>

EC-01:

Motion by Michalak (on behalf of Medvin) to amend Rule 3.7 of the AMTA Rulebook as follows:

Rule 3.7 Number of members on a team.

A team shall consist of no fewer than six members and no more than ~~ten~~ **twelve** members. No one may sit at the attorney table in the role of plaintiff or defendant unless that person is on the team's six to ~~ten~~ **twelve** person roster. Any team fielding more than ~~ten~~ **twelve** scoring team members will be disqualified from eligibility for team awards, individual awards and bid consideration. The record of the disqualified team will remain as initially recorded for tabulation and pairing purposes. No student may compete on more than one team for their school, unless that student is given permission to do so under Rule 3.10 by the AMTA Representatives at the tournament.

Rationale: *In recent years, the complexity and volume of AMTA case materials have significantly increased. For instance, last year's Criminal case State of Midlands v. De La Porta / Cameron involved two defendants and required separate defense strategies, resulting in a "three-sided" case that stretched to 257 pages and 30 exhibits. This year's Civil case is similarly extensive, featuring 260 pages and a whopping 42 exhibits, with the added challenge of two possible defense strategies depending on the Plaintiff's argument of death by Rodenticide or Potassium. In contrast, the last Civil case in 2022-2023, Felder v. KC Air, was only 192 pages with 22 exhibits at the start of the season.*

This trend toward more complex and dense cases places an inequitable burden on smaller teams. With fewer members, each student is required to assume multiple roles and prepare for various scenarios, often necessitating students prepare three roles and anywhere from 3-6 cross-examinations, which can be overwhelming. This increased workload has led to student burnout, with many citing the high demands of mock trial as a reason to withdraw from the activity altogether. Member retention is practically non-existent for smaller teams, forcing them to start from scratch each competition season. When new team members see the workload that is involved, they are intimidated and scared away.

Although increasing the roster cap will not directly allow for easier recruitment of members, it will introduce several benefits to AMTA teams. Regarding workload distribution, expanding the roster to 12 members allows for a more equitable distribution of responsibilities, enabling each student to focus on a specific role and reducing the pressure on individual team members. Schools with the capacity to field more than 10 students can better manage their teams. By accommodating larger rosters, schools may opt to send fewer teams with larger rosters to competitions, thus helping to alleviate financial burdens—especially for those that must travel considerable distances and incur costs accordingly. For smaller programs with less experienced students, a 12-member roster can facilitate learning and growth. Newer participants can receive mentorship while engaging more comfortably in mock trial activities, allowing for each student to only prepare for one role at a time. This could have massive downstream impacts to retention of team members. By mitigating the overwhelming demands placed

on students, we can enhance retention rates and foster a more enjoyable and sustainable experience for students who compete in AMTA. If teams wanted to remain with their current roster of ten students, we have seen that this works for some schools, and there would be no disadvantage to these schools who choose to remain as-is.

In light of the evolving landscape of AMTA case materials and the accompanying challenges for teams, we urge the AMTA to adopt this proposed rule change. By increasing the maximum team size to 12 members, we can better support our students, promote equitable participation, and ensure a more balanced and enriching mock trial experience.

EC-08:

Motion by Smiley and Leapheart to amend Rule 1.2(i) of the AMTA Rulebook as follows:

Rule 1.2 Definitions.

Unless given a different meaning in a particular Rule, the following words and phrases shall have the following meaning:

. . .

- (i) “New School” means any school that has not ~~paid a regional tournament registration fee~~ **been assigned to a regional tournament** during the previous five academic years.

Rationale: An issue came up this year where a school had paid regional fees within the five academic year time limit, but they never completed registration and thus did not compete at a regional. Because the rule only contemplates the paying of regional tournament fees and doesn’t account for a school that never receives an assignment, that school could not be considered a “new school” under our rules. This motion aims to correct for this oversight. It is intended to ensure that a school that has not had a regional assignment in the past 5 years may be considered a new school even if they previously paid fees. If they fail to receive an assignment in the previous 5 years, either through failing to complete all the steps or if AMTA is not able to assign them to a Regional for some reason, then these schools should be able to be counted as “new schools.”

EC-09:

Motion by Smiley and Sohi (individually and on behalf of Selcov) to modify Rule 15.12 of the AMTA Rulebook as follows:

Rule 15.12 Case Committee duties and procedures.

. . .

(2) CASE RELEASE DEADLINE. Each year's case will be made publicly available no later than August ~~15~~ **30**.

(a) Procedure for Approving Subject Matter of Principal Case. The Case Committee will inform the Executive Committee of the subject matter of the principal case it proposes to use the following year no later than seven (7) days prior the date that the Case Committee wishes to release the Case Summary, but may submit same at any point during the year. For purposes of this subsection, "Principal Case" is defined as the case problem that is to be released on or before August ~~15~~ **30** each year and used for Regional and Opening Round Championship Series tournaments. . . .

Rationale: *With the addition of Rookie Rumble, our students—especially the junior returning members—are doing a lot and we’re already seeing burnout among these members in our community. While we wholeheartedly believe that Rookie Rumble should continue because it is a great opportunity for our younger community members to meet and work with each other outside of their own schools, a little more space needs to be created between summer practice tournaments and AMTA’s core season. Moving the deadline for the year-long case release from August 15th to 30th provides our students with enough time to rest and reset between cases. It also provides AMTA more time to prepare the year-long case. This is especially true for any Board or community members helping both with Rookie Rumble and the year-long case. Moreover, the wording of the rule means the case must be released by the deadline—if in the future we don’t think summer tournament burnout is a concern / there are fewer summer tournaments, we’re still able to release the case earlier under this modification.*

In conjunction with the Rookie Rumble Committee and the AMTA President, a survey of 86 past Rookie Rumble participants was conducted. We asked whether students would want to move Rookie Rumble up to the last weekend in June or to keep it on its current weekend in July. The overwhelming majority (58.1%) picked the last weekend in July as the preferred tournament date with the next largest percent of those surveyed (23.5%) stating they had no preference. If the students, especially those on quarterly systems like many public universities, cannot do Rookie Rumble any earlier in the summer, then it is our responsibility to create a system that gives them time off between cases. We are fortunate to have students that are incredibly dedicated to this activity, but it is important that they are allowed to have baked-in periods of relaxation from this activity as well. Changing the year-long case release by two weeks does not materially affect students’ ability to learn and utilize the year-long case, but could go a long way to letting our students have the break they need from this activity.

RULES-01:

Motion by Holstad to amend Rule 7.19 of the AMTA Rulebook as follows:

Rule 7.19 Benchbooks.

(1) A team may present a benchbook to the presiding judge and witnesses only in strict compliance with the following: The benchbook is to be a standard plastic 3-ring binder, no wider than 1.5 inches, and only solid white, solid black, or solid blue in color. The front and back of the binder shall be blank; no logo or cover page is permissible. No logo or insignia shall be visible except for that of the binder manufacturer or retailer.

(2) Unless otherwise specified in the Special Instructions of the case materials, the benchbook for the presiding judge shall include each of the following items found in the most recent case release or revision in the following order:

- (a) The pleadings (e.g., complaint and answer; criminal complaint or indictment;)
- (b) Stipulations;
- (c) Pre-trial orders;
- (d) Midlands case law;
- (e) Statutory law;
- (f) Jury instructions and/or verdict forms;
- (g) Midlands Rules of Evidence;
- (h) Special Instructions. The benchbook may include labeled tabbed dividers for the purpose of separating and identifying the various sections.
- (i) Exhibits. Exhibits – except for any specific physical exhibits allowed by the Special Instructions – must be in numerical order based on their assigned number in the case packet with numerical tabs.

(3) Unless otherwise specified in the Special Instructions of the case materials, the benchbook for the witnesses shall include only the exhibits found in the most recent case release or revision. Exhibits – except for any specific physical exhibits allowed by the Special Instructions – must be in numerical order based on their assigned number in the case packet with numerical tabs.

(4) Other than the material listed in subsection (2) or authorized by special instruction, the benchbook for the presiding judge may—but is not required to—contain the character evidence notification form (if completed). If contained in the benchbook, the completed character evidence notification form shall be placed after the Special Instructions, unless otherwise specified in the Special Instructions of the case materials. The benchbook shall not contain any other material.

(5) Any team intending to present the presiding judge or witnesses with a benchbook shall show its opponent the benchbook in captains' meeting. A benchbook not shown during captains' meeting may not be used. Any objection regarding the compliance of a benchbook with this Rule must be raised with the AMTA Representative at the captains' meeting. If both teams desire to use a compliant benchbook, the plaintiff/prosecution team shall use its benchbook.

(6) The benchbook for witnesses may be left on or near the witness stand for ease of access by witnesses if there is appropriate space for the benchbook to be placed when not in use and if the presiding judge allows for such placement.

Rationale: *If AMTA is looking for ways to speed up trials (or, atleast to prevent obnoxiously long trials), one way to do so is to allow for benchbooks to be placed on the witness stand.*