

**CLUB FROM PAGE 6**

"because the board was so large and not everybody showed up."

"The state said that having an election under those circumstances was not against the way of doing business. It felt the election should stand, and it didn't have a problem with it."

**OPPOSITION VOICES OPINION**

In light of the confusion about the meeting date, some members think the election was conducted in an underhanded manner, and the refusal to revoke only cemented those opinions.

"The issue was compounded when Wong abolished the board and instituted a three-person steering committee consisting of himself, his wife, Kimberly, also an active member of the club, and Fred Nassar. The four officer posts were eliminated, too, and are now the collective responsibility of the committee."

"If they had done a revote, there's a very good chance the Wongs would get re-elected, because they do a lot of volunteer work and everybody knows who they are," said Steve White, a former FSC coach and board member.

Zaleski said he approached outgoing FSC president Les Charbarneau about a revote to protect the integrity of the process. He said he was told it

was a done deal; it had been announced to the MSYSA.

"It was getting harder than it needed to be," Zaleski said. "Mistakes happen but, when you're unwilling to do something about it, that's another story."

In protest of the election, a number of board members resigned only to learn a few weeks later they had been dismissed anyway, Diehl said.

Wong's decision to have a smaller committee conduct business and to rewrite the bylaws is seen by some as his attempt to dominate the FSC.

"We've had our money taken from us, our club name that a lot of us have put our time, heart and soul into - all over an election without a quorum," Diehl said.

White said the Wongs and Nassar are very nice people and doesn't question their integrity. But he does think there needs to be more checks and balances.

"In the past, if you had a disagreement with the president, you could come to the board and voice an opinion and they would vote on it," White said.

"Now you talk to a three-person panel and it's hard to overrule a husband and wife when they have two of three votes."

"If Bruce got re-elected, everything would be fine if the election was done properly. All the animosity would end."

**'CAN'T JUST DO ANYTHING'**

According to Wong, his objective is to make the club more efficient and less bur-

dened by bureaucracy, not to control it.

The steering committee doesn't operate in a vacuum, he added. All major decisions and expenditures are reviewed by a three-person oversight committee, which has veto power. Wong said he started with three people on the steering committee to get things done initially, but his plan is to increase that number to five in the future and possibly seven eventually.

"We can't just do anything, because we still have to go through the oversight committee to get approval on things," Wong said. "The advantage of this is I don't have to call a meeting of 18 people to make a decision."

"Granted, this is a lot of work. And, if anyone thinks my wife and I agree on everything, they haven't talked to my wife."

He added the board discussions by the old board often resulted in nothing being done. White and Zaleski agreed that was a problem.

"If you have 18 people on the board and want to implement something, you never make a decision," Wong said.

"Something was always being tabled. It's very flattering that people think I have so much power. I can't even get my kids to clean the living room, and they think I have the power to run the soccer club. I only guide the soccer club."

**CONTROL OF PURSE STRINGS**

Money is an issue, too. While no one who spoke to the

Observer alleges any impropriety by Wong or the steering committee, Wong said he has heard rumblings in the community and is bothered by it.

FSC bank statements reviewed by the Observer show a checking account balance of \$31,811.04 as of early June, and the club has another \$26,799.70 in a certificate of deposit, which is set aside as a building fund, Wong said.

He said the club takes in about \$80,000 a year and spends the bulk of it for uniforms, officials, registration fees with various leagues and insurance.

"You need about a \$20,000 cushion," Wong said. "We can't operate on credit, because we're a non-profit. If we ran a zero bank balance, that wouldn't be very prudent."

Wong, who works as a product manager for General Motors, addressed the concerns some people have regarding his stewardship.

"Am I going to jeopardize the amount of money I make, my tenure and livelihood with GM for \$20,000?" he asked.

Wong added he would welcome a formal accusation and the chance to settle the issue.

"Put it in writing and bring me to court; I'll provide you all the stuff," he said. "Then it will be said and done, but nobody is willing to do that."

Wong, who will hold the position of chairman for two years as the new by-laws stipulate, said he's willing to take

the heat to improve the club.

"When I step out, all the bad blood follows me," he said. "In two years, I'm gone and they can still complain about me. My focus is on the kids and laying the groundwork for (the next group of club leaders)."

**EMPHASIS ON TEACHING KIDS**

One of Wong's priorities has been the creation of a developmental program for younger players.

The emphasis was on competitive select and travel teams.

"The focus is more on developing than competing and winning at that age level," Wong said. "The problem with our club, historically, is that it has been run by parents with kids at the older end. The kids at the bottom got left out. That was wrong."

Wong has created a continuing education program for coaches - most of whom are parents - so they can progress up the age-group ladder with their own child's team.

He also has established a liaison with Farmington Public Schools and the Farmington Hills Recreation Division to support and promote soccer.

John O'Brien, another former board member and current coach, was outspoken about the election, too, but he thinks the Wongs are on the right track and is willing to give them a chance.

"The Wongs have put a lot of

solid effort into developing a better soccer club," he said.

"Maybe they are stepping in the right direction. If they're improving the soccer club, so be it."

**GOVT. HAS NEUTRAL STANCE**

Farmington Hills councilwoman Vicki Barnett received a number of phone calls from club members who were upset about the election issue and wanted the city to get involved.

The city provides and maintains the soccer fields at no expense to the club. Club members had hoped the city would use its influence and leverage in regard to the fields to affect a change in the election.

Barnett asked Special Services Director Dave Boyer to investigate the matter. Since the MSYSA gave its blessing to the election, the city won't interfere in club business, according to Barnett.

"The fact the (MSYSA) signed off on the election makes it legitimate," she said.

"The city has to rely on a sanctioned club to run the fields. We can't take sides."

"Just as if there's a change in the administration of the community, we wouldn't expect everything to fall apart, because there's been a change in leadership."

"We're simply following the continuity bargain."

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**Twisters storm past Grizzlies, 47-0**

It was the Lakeshore Football League's Kickoff Classic, but in truth it was the Michigan Twisters who did all the kicking.

On Saturday at Devin Stadium in Willow Run, Westland's Charles Fountain caught two touchdown passes, Jaquan Wright ran for two and John Robinson threw for two as the Twisters blasted Toledo's Glass City Grizzlies 47-0.

The Twisters gained 409 yards on offense with a variety of players contributing, including three

quarterbacks. On defense they were equally effective, limiting the Grizzlies to just 76 yards on 41 plays.

Fountain caught a 62-yard touchdown pass from Orlando Wright, who was 4-of-8 passing and also ran 11 yards for a TD. The Westland native also scored on a 39-yard strike from Robinson, who was 3-of-6 with a second scoring pass of 19 yards to Dont Hamilton.

Wright led the ground game for the Twisters, which produced 240

yards. Wright carried just four times but gained 113 yards, scoring twice. Jason Gibson got 86 yards on 10 tries, with one TD.

The Twisters' defense picked off two Grizzlies' passes, Bob Pensari (Canton) intercepting one and Rich Peoples the other, while allowing just four completions in 23 attempts for 45 yards.

The Twisters take on the Southern Michigan Timberwolves at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at Eastern Michigan University's Rymcarson Stadium.

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