

December 14, 2018

All FSA Members

Dear Members

Some of you have demonstrated your concerns regarding the current suspension of Helen Biaggi. Throughout the summer and since October 1, 2018 you have been reading about the suspension and not understanding that there is definitely a back story to this issue. This suspension was not discussed, as in the past, other suspensions the rights of privacy were implemented for all parties involved. As in past practices, this suspension was handled in the same manner. Recently, Helen Biaggi has formally requested a waiver of her right to privacy. Therefore I can release some of the back story details.

I can assure you that this issue was not a one time incident between two parties. The FSA is an organization with an organized structure in dealing with issues that require our intervention. The Helen Biaggi suspension was a result of a hearing that was precipitated by multiple shufflers reporting incidents that occurred at FSA tournaments. The full board held a hearing on March 25, 2017. The full board is comprised of 21 elected members. There are seven (7) Districts with each having 2 board members, a District President and a District State Representative. The other seven (7) voting members are the FSA President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Keeper of Records.

On March 25, 2017 an executive full board hearing was held with all 21 board members present. There were six charges leveled against Helen Biaggi. During the hearing Helen Biaggi pleaded guilty on two (2) of the six (6) charges and then found guilty of a third charge. One charge she was found not guilty for lack of evidence with the last two charges dismissed as the one party had passed away and the other party had already returned to Canada and couldn't be present at the hearing. After hearing from all parties, the full board voted and levied that Helen Biaggi be suspended from the 2017 Tournament of Champions and the 2017 FSA Masters as well as be placed on a two (2) year probation with the stipulation that if there were any further incidents she be suspended for one year.

In March of 2018 there was another incident which violated her probation and the full board decision of March 25, 2017 with the one (1) suspension directed by the board initiated.

A special board meeting of all 21 board members was called on September 29<sup>th</sup> prior to the start of the 2018-2019 shuffleboard season to review the process that was followed. After lengthy discussions from all board members, the full board voted and the one (1) suspension was again upheld. On October 13, full board meeting the Helen Biaggi suspension was brought up to all 21 board members and for the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) time, the vote was that the majority of the board felt the suspension was warranted. Since the October 13, 2018 meeting, I have had two (2) board members from two (2) different districts come to me with two individuals that wish to have their privacy respected, have stated they too in the past have been verbally assaulted and bullied by Helen Biaggi.

It is a very slippery slope in honoring every board member, witnesses, plaintiffs, and

defendants their individual rights of privacy and also the rights of those expressing their freedom of speech. **All FSA members have a right to engage in shuffleboard in a courteous, sportsmanlike, and above all, a safe environment to enjoy shuffleboard.**

I understand that some members of the Association have been displeased that Helen Biaggi was suspended. Please understand that this was not a decision that was haphazard or easily decided by the full board. However, it is important that we not allow the good decisions that this Board makes in the interest of the Association and its members be dictated by postings on message boards or opinions of members who are being misled by the half-truths and misleading statements that some individuals on those message boards are claiming. Helen Biaggi is not the only person over the years to be suspended by the full board for a year.

I as president, only have one vote in the decision making. One of my core duties is to provide the full board with all information necessary for them to make an informed decision. I went to great lengths to provide the full board with an extensive collection of information for the September 29<sup>th</sup> meeting as well as the October 13<sup>th</sup> board meeting. This information was provided to all twenty one (21) full board members and was used in making the informed decision to suspend Helen Biaggi. Unfortunately, there are individuals that do not understand all the stress and anxiety that the full board has gone through in dealing with this issue. These volunteering twenty one (21) board members are only trying to do the what they feel is in the best interests of **ALL** shufflers. The full board voted three (3) times that the suspension was warranted and given that, Helen Biaggi should honor the full board decisions, serve her suspension, and come back next year with a clean slate.

I want to thank those who supported the full board and those who have expressed an appreciation for the amount of time each member puts in volunteering their free time to serve the FSA. I am hoping you now see that this was not just one incident or an easy decision we had to deal with. I feel everyone should take an active part in their respective Districts to learn all the complexities of our organization. Our main goal is to provide a structured set of rules and regulations to represent all shuffleboard players with a courteous, sportsmanlike, and above all, a safe environment to enjoy shuffleboard.

Sincerely;