

Local

Race to replace Trubish heats up as PAU heads to elections

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BY GEORGE KATONGOLE

The Pool Association of Uganda (PAU) has unveiled a detailed roadmap to its 2026 elective general assembly, setting the stage for a potentially transformative leadership contest following the exit of long-serving chairman Bob Trubish.

Addressing the media at the association's offices in Kamwokya on Thursday, Electoral Committee vice chairman Herbert Nsimbi said the process would prioritise transparency, credibility and independence amid heightened scrutiny within the sport. "We are committed to delivering a free, fair and credible election. The committee will operate independently and strictly within the electoral code to ensure the integrity of the process," Nsimbi said.

The electoral timetable kicked off with the official call for nominations, which will run until March 30. A scrutiny period will follow before the final list of candidates is published on April 8, marking the start of the official campaign season. District-level elections are scheduled between April 9 and 20, followed by regional polls on April 26 to elect national delegates. Candidates' debates will be held on May 3, with the final campaign push closing on May 22 ahead of



In Charge. PAU Electoral Vice Chairperson Herbert Nsimbi (C) addressing the press alongside committee members Racheal Namawanda (L) and Musa Mivule Ssemakula. PHOTO/EDDIE CHICCO

polling at the National Elective General Assembly on May 23.

Fees doubled

Candidates will have to dig deeper into their pockets to contest for office, with nomination fees significantly revised upwards.

The chairperson will now pay Shs2m, double the previous Shs1m, while all other executive positions will require Shs1m, up from Shs500,000. The women's affairs docket, which previously attracted Shs300,000, has also been standardised at Shs1m.

The Electoral Committee insists all aspirants must meet minimum eligibility requirements under Article 63 of the PAU constitution, including age, education and experi-

ence thresholds, Ugandan citizenship and a clean disciplinary record. Chairmanship candidates must possess at least an A-Level certificate, while the treasurer is required to have an accounting background.

In addition to nomination forms signed by proposers and seconders, candidates must submit police clearance obtained within three months, a curriculum vitae and signed consent forms for background checks and compliance with the electoral code.

Campaigning before April 8 has been prohibited, except for the limited purpose of seeking nomination signatures. The code of conduct further bans vote-buying, defamatory, hate speech and misuse

of association resources.

Early contenders emerge

With Trubish opting not to seek re-election after eight years in charge, attention has shifted to an intriguing field of potential successors.

Robert 'Pipo' Kayanja, a familiar voice on the microphone at PAU events and the former vice chairman, has expressed interest in the top seat. He is expected to face competition from former Samia-Bugwe County North MP Gideon Onyango.

Trubish's decision to step aside comes at a critical moment for PAU, which is racing to comply with registration requirements set by the National Council of Sports (NCS)

under the new Sports Act. Failure to do so could jeopardise its status as the sport's national governing body.

Other positions are also attracting interest. Muhammad Wasswa Kayunga is expected to contest for technical director, a role currently held by Donald Ampumuza, while Rogers Ssemunda is said to be eyeing the general secretary position.

High-stakes election

The elections are seen as a chance to steady an association grappling with financial strain, internal divisions and a quiet competition elsewhere.

In recent months, sections of the pool fraternity have petitioned authorities over alleged financial mismanagement, while disputes over borrowing to finance activities have exposed deep fractures within the game.

Nsimbi acknowledged the tense backdrop but expressed confidence that the process would help restore order.

"All stakeholders are encouraged to respect the rules, prepare documentation in time and allow the committee to execute its mandate without interference," he said.

KEY DATES - PAU 2026 ELECTORAL TIMETABLE

- March 20:** Official call for nominations
- March 30:** Close of nominations
- March 31 - April 7:** Scrutiny of nominations, objections and validation
- April 8:** Final list of candidates published; campaigns officially begin
- April 9 - 20:** District-level elections
- April 26:** Regional elections (national delegates)
- May 3:** Candidates' debates
- April 8 - May 22:** Campaign period ends
- May 23:** Polling day