

**MINUTES**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL**

Tuesday, February 8, 2022  
5:00 p.m. Mountain Time

**Present:**

Bruce Baumgartner, President, Chairman  
Joan Fulp, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Kerry McCoy, Secretary  
Van Stokes, Treasurer  
Veronica Carlson  
Mike Juby  
Mike Macchiavello  
Nate Engel  
John Stefanowicz  
Rob Cate  
Craig LaMont  
Mallory Velte  
James Ravannack, Immediate Past President  
Rich Bender, Executive Director, ex-officio  
Les Gutches, Associate Executive Director for Programs and Strategy  
Gary Abbott, Director of Communications  
Laura Peeters, General Counsel  
Cody Bickley, National Team High Performance Manager  
Morgan Rabine, Manager of Corporate Partnerships  
Megan Ball, Executive Assistant

**Absent:**

Steven Thorpe  
Stan Dziedzic, United World Wrestling

**1. WELCOME**

President Bruce Baumgartner welcomed the committee and introduced them to Megan Ball, USA Wrestling's new Executive Assistant. Megan provided information on herself and her background to the committee. President Baumgartner asked each member to turn on the video from the Zoom and introduce themselves.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 11, 2022 MINUTES**

Motion to approve the January 11, 2022 minutes, with one correction of a first name in the D, E & I report (Netra), made by Kerry McCoy. Second by Joan Fulp. Approved.

**3. PRESIDENT'S UPDATE**

Bruce Baumgartner said that it was a busy month, and that he would make his report as part of other agenda items as the call progressed.

#### **4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Rich Bender noted the challenges with the Bout at the Ballpark in Arlington, Texas, with daily changes in lineups. Iran did not attend, and was replaced by an international all-star meet. Mongolia did not get visas, and was replaced by Canadian athletes (with one all-USA bout). The event, held with Iowa and Oklahoma State, went well.

He reported on a COVID-19 Advisory Committee call, and said that the committee experts said it was a time for USA Wrestling to look for what's next, with light at the end of the tunnel as Omicron reduces. They said USA Wrestling was in good shape with its current protocols.

He explained the status of open positions at USA Wrestling, and a hiring process change, He noted a Safe Sport Audit was set for February 23. He also made a report on the USOPC meeting in Park City, Utah, which was held with parents and family of Winter Olympians unable to go to Beijing. He also reported that USA Wrestling had record revenue in the months of November, December and January this fiscal year.

#### **5. FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Van Stokes reported that through January 2022, USA Wrestling was ahead of projections on membership, and that the organization was in a favorable financial position ahead of budget projections. The Finance Committee was scheduled to meet again the following week.

#### **6. ATHLETE ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Veronica Carlson noted that a new Athlete Leader of the Year award will be created this year, voted upon by the Executive Committee, and will be presented with other USA Wrestling award at the U.S. Open. She noted that the AAC was still polishing up some athlete representative positions and working on on-boarding new representatives.

#### **7. WORLD TEAM TRIALS PROCEDURES**

Cody Bickley noted that when the Executive Committee approved a series of Team Trials Procedures in the January call that the Women's Freestyle procedures had not yet been finalized. He presented procedures for Women at the U15, U17, U20 levels, plus Senior World Team and Pan American Team procedures. The committee did not submit one for the U23 level, which was tabled in their meeting.

Motion to accept all the Women's Procedures presented by Veronica Carlson, Second by Nate Engel. Approved.

### **8. D, E & I COMMITTEE**

Kerry McCoy noted the recent committee call went well. He reported that Lori Ayres, who works with D1 Women's Wrestling and does women's coverage for FloWrestling, has been invited to join the calls. He mentioned plans for upcoming celebration months. He also noted that a plan was developing for education at the national office, state leaders and Board level is coming together.

McCoy noted that the NCAA had punted on the topic of transgender athletes to the National Governing Bodies, and that the committee had been looking at the issue. The Executive Committee discussed whether or not in the future to make the D, E & I Committee a standing committee or to continue forward as an ad-hoc committee.

### **9. SAFE SPORT UPDATE**

Laura Peeters reported that USA Wrestling would undergo a U.S. Center for Safe Sport administrative audit at the end of February. She noted that there will be a policy review, with documentation of a variety of areas to be presented. She also noted an increase in the volume of Safe Sport reports, mostly in the area of people behaving badly.

### **10. INDEPENDENT DIRECTOR**

Bruce Baumgartner noted that the initial review brought the number of potential candidates to 11 people. The Governance Committee reviewed them, and found three were not eligible. The USA Wrestling officers reviewed them and whittle the number of candidates to four. Bruce has spoken to all four and excited about them. These four will be sent to the Executive Committee members, with a subsequent meeting to discuss them. They aim to provide notice to the Board of Directors about a virtual meeting to select the Independent Director, so it can be voted upon in late March, perhaps on March 21.

### **11. WOMEN'S WRESTLING UPDATE**

Joan Fulp noted that Ohio and Iowa added official girls wrestling competitions, bringing the number of state sanctioned girls programs to 34. She noted that when states add the sport officially, the numbers jump quickly. She also said she is working with Tony Black on having a specific women's wrestling focus at the 2022 State Leaders Conference.

### **12. UWW UPDATE**

Rich Bender reported to the committee on the following items"

- 1) USA Wrestling secured nine Americans on UWW Commissions
- 2) UWW has awarded the 2022 and 2023 Men's and Women's Freestyle World Cup to Coralville, Iowa
- 3) UWW had some rule changes, and some were used at the Yarygin Grand Prix in Russia
- 4) The Rome, Italy ranking tournament was postponed and rescheduled for June
- 5) UWW named a new General Secretary – Carols Roy

### **13. MONTHLY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CALLS**

Bruce Baumgartner is asking Megan Ball to reach out to Executive Committee members to discuss a potential change in the date and time for future calls. He asked the committee to keep March 8 on the calendar, and he will let them know if the committee will meet or not, since the in-person meeting is later in the month.

### **14. IN-PERSON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Bruce Baumgartner asked all committee members to finalize details for the In-Person Executive Committee meeting in Iowa City. The meeting will start at 8:00 a.m. and finish by 12:00 noon, so members can attend the memorial for Mark Reiland. The meeting and the memorial are in the same hotel.

### **15. NEW BUSINESS**

Committee members discussed the nomination of wrestling persons for the upcoming election for the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame, including who should be nominated. Any committee members who had input were asked to send it to Rich Bender.

Rich Bender added information on the NCAA Transgender issue, and noted that USA Wrestling has had a long-standing policy. He noted that it is a unique issue in wrestling because of safety considerations. He praised United World Wrestling and the International Olympic Committee for its work in this area. He noted that USA Wrestling will work to have the best policy possible.

Cody Bickley reported that USA Wrestling, the USOPC, the Big Ten and the University of Nebraska were working to present Tervel Dlagnev with his 2012 Olympic bronze medal in Lincoln, Neb. on March 6, alongside the Big Ten Championships. He reported that the Olympic medal was now in possession of USA Wrestling for the presentation. Anita DeFrantz of the IOC and Rich Bender of the USOPC/USA Wrestling would make the presentation.

Bruce Baumgartner put the meeting into Executive Session to discuss Executive Director evaluation.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.