

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

Wednesday, November 10, 2021  
6:00 p.m. Mountain Time

**Present:**

Mark Reiland, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Joan Fulp, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Kerry McCoy, Secretary  
Van Stokes, Treasurer  
Veronica Carlson  
Mike Juby  
Mike Macchiavello  
John Stefanowicz  
Rob Cate  
Craig LaMont  
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  
Steve Fraser, Chief of Donor and Alumni Relations  
Cody Bickley, High Performance Manager

**Absent:**

Bruce Baumgartner, President, Chairman  
Steven Thorpe  
Stan Dziedzic, United World Wrestling

**1. WELCOME**

First Vice-President Mark Reiland welcomed the committee and reported that President Bruce Baumgartner would not be able to attend the meeting. Bruce Baumgartner asked that Mark Reiland conduct the meeting in his absence.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 12, 2021 MINUTES**

It was noted that the October 12, 2021 minutes had an error in its header that needed correction. Motion to approve the October 12, 2021 minutes with the header corrected made by Craig LaMont. Second by Mike Juby. Approved.

**3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE**

Rich Bender reported on the UWW Congress, which was held alongside the U23 World Championships in Belgrade, Serbia in November. Due to COVID-19, this Congress was moved to this location and later date. There were elections, and two candidates for the UWW Bureau who USA Wrestling supported were elected: Don Ryan of Canada and Pedro Gama Filho of Brazil. Rich Bender also explained the rule changes that were announced during the meeting. He also noted that all scorekeepers at the major events will need to be Category 1 referees. He noted that USA Wrestling President Bruce Baumgartner and his wife attended the meetings. Bruce was making contacts to help lay the groundwork for his candidacy for the UWW Bureau in the 2024 elections. He also noted that an effective Technical Commission meeting was held.

Craig LaMont, who also attended the event, noted that the efforts by UWW to improve the quality of officiating has been working.

Rich Bender also reported that USA Wrestling's Junior/U16 Nationals in Fargo, N.D. would serve as a training ground for international officials, and that a Type 1 and Type 2 clinic would be held there in 2022. USA Wrestling would provide free room and board for international officials who attend. He also noted that UWW Americas was beginning to work together better, and Bruce Baumgartner spent much time with the other leaders from our continent.

#### **4. WORLD TEAM SELECTION PROCEDURES**

Cody Bickley presented the 2022 Senior World Team Trials Procedures, which were being presented to the Executive Committee, one each from the three Sport Committees. He explained that in 2022, there would be a return to the structure used most recently in 2019, which included a qualification system including a World Team Trials Challenge Tournament in May and two Final X events in June. Bickley explained that each Sport Committee had met twice on the procedures and answered specific questions from the Executive Committee on the documents.

Motion to accept all three 2020 Senior World Team Trials Procedures made by Kerry McCoy, seconded by Van Stokes. Approved.

#### **5. FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Van Stokes reported that the Finance Committee had met on November 1 and would meet again on November 27. At their meeting, the committee looked at preliminary data for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2021. He noted that the numbers as presented indicated that USA Wrestling did better than its projections. He noted that national staff had made sacrifices that allowed the organization to have a successful financial year during the challenges of the pandemic and praised the staff efforts that led to a successful outcome. He noted that in the new fiscal year that membership through October 31 was strong and that the committee was cautiously optimistic about the year ahead. He noted that data from December 2021 and February 2022 would be key times to evaluate the new year. Les Gutches noted that recently USA Wrestling had its second biggest day of income of all time, and that most of the wrestling programs nationally seems to

have opened up. Van Stokes praised the organization for providing stability during an extremely challenging time. Les Gutches answered some questions concerning corporate software upgrade plans.

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

Veronica Carlson noted that Nate Engel had been named as a Greco-Roman representative to fill a vacancy. She noted that three athlete representatives were up for vote for two Executive Committee positions: Adeline Gray, Mallory Velte and Nate Engel. The at-large election would be held through the membership system. Jon Stefanowicz indicated that athlete representatives to committees were on track to be populated by the end of the calendar year.

## **7. D, E & I COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Kerry McCoy reported that the D, E & I Committee had met earlier in the day. The main topic of the discussion was about the celebration strategy, with a specific plan about what should be included in the celebrations becoming more standardized. He also noted that the committee was discussing Transgender Policy, and how it can be reviewed and improved moving forward. He noted that the committee hopes to have a diversity education plan in place by the next Board of Directors meeting. He discussed information received through the recent demographic survey which was provided to the membership. He also talked about a shift in focus from an external national perspective to an internal review of the staff, Board and state leadership.

## **8. SAFE SPORT UPDATE**

Laura Peeters reported that the U.S. Center for Safe Sport and the USOPC had disseminated the pricing structure for next year, which includes \$2.7 million coming from the National Governing Bodies. The breakdown, based upon a formula, ended up increasing the amount USA Wrestling would have to pay, which was a considerable increase. She reported that she and Rich Bender were investigating the data and hoping to get the amount charged to USA Wrestling changed. According to the Center, USA Wrestling is considered a higher user of services from the Center. Laura Peeters and Rich Bender answered questions from the committee concerning details about the services provided by the Center as well as the perspective of other NGBs about that service. Laura Peeters also reported on the event audit done by the Center at USA Wrestling's Junior/16U Nationals in Fargo. She noted that USA Wrestling had done well, and its membership system set the gold standard among NGBs.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

Rich Bender reported that the USOPC funding for USA Wrestling, which was a result of this year's High Performance Plan and our teams' performances, ended up very well. While USA Wrestling was told to expect a 20% reduction in support, USA Wrestling actually ended up with

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a 6% increase in funding. He praised the National Team staff and noted that the USOPC sees USA Wrestling as a good investment.

Rich Bender also noted that the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Training Center was opening back up, and that there would be a vaccine requirement. The USOPC will be fully funding a number of training camps for USA Wrestling and that resident athlete beds had been approved.

Rich Bender reported on staff updates, including the hiring of an Executive Assistant very soon. He also noted plans to address staff needs in the Marketing area. He answered questions from the Committee about specifics of staff changes.

Joan Fulp reported on the growth of girls wrestling in Alabama, and progress in the effort to make it an official sport there.

Van Stokes noted that he recently had taken USOPC and Board Span courses and felt that USA Wrestling was hitting high marks in many areas. He also recognized Veterans Day, as well as the U.S. Marine Corps birthday, and thanked the military for their service.

Meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.