

MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL

Wednesday, November 9, 2022
5:00 p.m. Mountain Time

Present:

Bruce Baumgartner, President, Chairman
Kerry McCoy, 1st Vice President
Joan Fulp, 2nd Vice President
Van Stokes, Secretary
Don Reynolds, Treasurer
Mike Macchiavello
John Stefanowicz
Rob Cate
Craig LaMont
Zac Dominguez
Steven Thorpe
Mallory Velte
Veronica Carlson
Rich Bender, Executive Director, ex-officio
Les Gutches, Associate Executive Director for Programs and Strategy
Gary Abbott, Director of Communications
Cody Bickley, Director of National Teams High Performance
Laura Peeters, General Counsel
Shannon Daugherty, National Teams
Megan Ball, Executive Assistant

Absent:

Nate Engel
James Ravannack, Immediate Past President
Stan Dziedzic, United World Wrestling

1. PRESIDENT'S GREETING

President Bruce Baumgartner welcomed the committee and asked members about any conflict of interest situations. John Stefanowicz and Mallory Velte noted a conflict of interest as athletes, but not to affect their ability to serve as committee members. Bruce Baumgartner also noted that the next meeting would be held on December 14.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 12, 2022 MEETING

Motion to approve the October 12 minutes made by Veronica Carlson, seconded by Steve Thorpe.
Approved

3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Bruce Baumgartner indicated that the Executive Director evaluation process had begun and will be discussed on the next Executive Committee call.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Rich Bender reported that Gordon Templeman of United World Wrestling contacted USA Wrestling to ask if it would bid on the 2023 World Championships. As requested, USA Wrestling made a bid to host the event at Dickies Arena in Fort Worth, Texas. It had been expected that either Istanbul, Turkey or Budapest, Hungary would host the event, but both situations were not able to be candidates for financial reasons. Also under consideration along with the USA were Baku, Azerbaijan and Belgrade, Serbia. Bender said that if the USA got the 2023 Worlds, it would not negatively impact the proposal for the USA to host the World Championships in 2027, which is a desire of USA Wrestling. The decision on where the 2023 Worlds will be held will be made within the week. Bender answered questions on this from Executive Committee members.

He indicated that USA Wrestling had completed its USOPC Compliance Audit. As the process unfolded, it was apparent that there would be no NGBs who would be found without any issues. He said that USA Wrestling should be proud of how it fared in this process, although there will be some small items which USA Wrestling will be considered not in compliance. Rich Bender noted a few situations that were infuriating in the process. He reported how the USOPC had issues with USA Wrestling's athlete representation, which included that there had been changes in the definition of an athlete. He praised Laura Peeters and Megan Ball for their work on this difficult process and thanked the Board for their efforts.

He also noted the positive financial results from the 2021-22 fiscal year, which will end with about \$1.9 million in revenues over expenses. Les Gutches also provided information on aspects of how these results were achieved. Rich Bender also noted the tremendous success of USA Wrestling competitively, with 49 World medals at all age levels, and seven USA World teams earning a spot on the World Championships podium. For the first time, the USA won the total combined medal count at the Senior Worlds. Bender also updated the Committee on the status of the hiring process for some open staff positions.

5. FINANCIAL UPDATE

Don Reynolds reported that the Finance Committee had met earlier in the week, including new Finance Committee members Ted Young and Angie Taylor. The Committee approved July and August statements. He discussed the positive \$1.9 million revenue over expenses performance in 2021-22. Reynolds indicated that USA Wrestling budgeted to have membership recover from the pandemic at 75% comeback from its previous high, but it actually came in at about 99%. He explained the decision to place some unrestricted cash in Treasury Bills, as a better use of the cash, with no risk and a higher return. He also noted that Les Gutches and the staff was working

on the yearly cash flow projections. At the end of October, USA Wrestling was 21% ahead of budget, and 26% ahead of last year. The next Finance Committee meeting was set for November 28. Les Gutches noted that the auditors had begun its field work for this year's financial audit.

6. AUDIT COMMITTEE OPENING

Bruce Baumgartner indicated that he would like to have Mike Juby assume the non-Board member opening on the Audit Committee and would like to name him as chairperson. He asked the Executive Committee if there were any objections, which there were none. He is working on the selection of a Board member position, which must be done by the December meeting.

7. NEW BOARD MEMBER ON-BOARDING

Bruce Baumgartner reported that on-boarding for Board members is completed, and feedback was tremendous. The new Board members are going through compliance and conflict of interest forms.

8. BOARD ONBOARDING

Bruce Baumgartner and Rich Bender have made calls to all of the new Board of Directors members. Megan Ball and staff are working on getting all members current with membership and Conflict of Interest statement signatures, with an October 15 target deadline. They are also working to get members of all of the committees also current.

9. DE&I COMMITTEE REPORT

Kerry McCoy that the committee met a week prior to this meeting. He reported on a meeting with the Big Ten, which should result in some new joint initiatives. The Big Ten is looking to do a women's clinic at this year's Big Ten Wrestling Championships. They discussed the social mentoring/networking for minority assistant wrestling coaches to discuss their path to the next step in their careers. He expects future collaboration with other conferences such as the Big 12 and the Pac 12. There is also opportunity for activities surrounding the NCAA Championships in Tulsa, Okla. in 2023. The committee has also revisited the transgender issue in its meeting. McCoy reported that there is much good work going on.

10. ATHLETE ADVISORY REPORT

John Stefanowicz noted that the AAC was doing much work on compliance, and reported that he attended the USOPC AAC meeting in Los Angeles. The committee also had discussions about athlete stipends. He also noted the AAC involvement in the Team Selection Procedures process.

Stefanowicz passed on a request concerning the Team Selection Procedures, about a concern if a World or Olympic medalist were to enter the U.S. Open and get hurt, that there is not an injury

delay clause for them in the procedures which progressed through the Sport Committees. There was discussion about a World medalist who does not accept their Final X position, then goes to the U.S. Open and gets injured, and would like to have a chance to have a medical delay. There was substantial discussion among the Executive Committee members about this possible scenario.

11. TEAM SELECTION PROCEDURES

Cody Bickley explained the process which led to the Trials Procedures that were approved by the three Sport Committees. He gave perspective about why the procedures placed additional importance on the U.S. Open. Cody Bickley noted that these are not only the 2023 World Team Procedures, but also includes the 2023 Pan American Games selection. He noted that the proposal went to National Team members, the AAC and to the specific Sport Committee for feedback and discussion. He noted that at the Sport Committee level, there were not any “no” votes, although there were two abstentions in men’s freestyle and two in women’s freestyle. He noted the changes in the procedures reflected the concerns about the number of events in the process, the cost to the wrestling clubs, and the desire to improve the U.S. Open. He noted that the procedures approved by the Sport Committees protect proven performers and is a clean process.

The committee had extensive discussion on the issue raised by John Stefanowicz, and whether to vote upon the procedures at this Executive Committee meeting or to seek additional input. When asked by the committee, John Stefanowicz noted that this specific issue just came up and was not discussed during the process that developed the proposal.

Motion to approve the Greco-Roman Team Selection Procedures by Van Stokes, Second by Mallory Velte. Approved.

A motion was made to approve the Men’s Freestyle and Women’s Freestyle Procedures as written, and to conditionally approve any changes to the injury clause if approved by the Men’s Freestyle Sport Committee and/or the Women’s Freestyle Sport Committee. This motion was passed.

Laura Peeters and Cody Bickley were tasked to submit the language on the injury clause to send to the two committees.

12. COMPLIANCE REPORT

Laura Peeters discussed the USOPC Compliance Audit and noted that there will be some changes required that will come back for discussion and vote to the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. She noted that there is no Safe Sport Report at this time.

13. WOMEN’S WRESTLING REPORT

Joan Fulp reported that a girl's wrestling event was being formed in New Hampshire, which is not official but is a new opportunity in that state. She reported that the first USA Wrestling State Women's Director zoom call had been held the previous week, and that starting in 2023, they will meet regularly (monthly or every 90 days). Other topics being worked on are how to increase female athletes competing in freestyle, a new website created by Lori Ayres called The WCWC (where high school and college resources are housed), as well as new alumni initiatives.

14. NEW BUSINESS

Van Stokes noted the Long Range Planning Committee was waiting for staff review of the most recent document, which will be followed by committee review and then presented to the Executive Committee.

Laura Peeters noted a new SafeSport response and resolution policy. Details on how we respond to Safe Sport requests will soon be posted. A State Safe Sport Coordinator call will be held in the upcoming weeks. She also noted the discussion going on with the U.S. Center for Safe Sport, about whether they would accept complaints on emotional and physical abuse. She noted a steady stream of cases within the wrestling community, although some of those involved are not USA Wrestling members. There is also a discussion on whether non-NGB sports organizations would be under the umbrella of the Safe Sport statutes.

Motion to adjourn by John Stefanowicz, second by Van Stokes. Adjourned at 6:50 p.m. MT