

MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL

Wednesday, February 8, 2023
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
John Stefanowicz
Rob Cate
Zac Dominguez
Veronica Carlson
Craig LaMont
Mike Macchiavello
Nate Engel
James Ravannack, Immediate Past President
Rich Bender, Executive Director, ex-officio
Gary Abbott, Director of Communications
Aphthen Goldman, Director of Business Development
Megan Ball, Executive Assistant
Morgan Benham, Manager of Corporate Partnerships

Absent:

Steven Thorpe
Mallory Velte
Stan Dziedzic, United World Wrestling

1. PRESIDENT’S GREETING

First Vice-President Kerry McCoy made the Conflict of Interest statement. John Stefanowicz noted that all athlete representatives have a conflict on some issues, that does not affect their ability to vote.

President Bruce Baumgartner welcomed the committee. He reminded the committee that his goal was to keep all meetings to 60-90 minutes and that more detailed reports should be sent in writing in advance.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR JANUARY 11, 2023 MEETING

Joan Fulp noted one correction from the women’s wrestling report section of the January minutes, with the addition of “their first” to the sentence on state meets. It should read: “three states were holding their first official state girls meets.”

Motion to approve the January minutes with the correction made by John Stefanowicz, second by Zac Dominguez. Approved

3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Bruce Baumgartner noted that work is being done on the date for the in-person meeting, with a goal of determining the where and when during this meeting. He said that there are some by-law updates in progress and a virtual Board meeting that needs to be scheduled to discuss by-law changes. He is working with staff on a plan for which international events he should attend this year, as part of the UWW election campaign.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT/USOPC REPORT

Rich Bender noted that the 2022-23 year was one that the organization should be proud of, which was reflected in the recently completed annual report. He noted that it has busy for our National Team, with some outstanding efforts at the first UWW Ranking Event. He also noted women's team training in Hungary and Greco-Roman training in Croatia, plus a team of women wrestling in Sweden. He noted a large team going to the second ranking event in Egypt. He also noted how the tragic earthquake in Turkey, which impacted wrestlers in the region, caused the postponement of the Yasar Dogu event, which the USA planned to attend.

He reported on a meeting with the Executive Director of the Congressional Commission on Olympic sports, Kevin Brown, who he updated on issues such as Safe Sport and finances. He noted that the commission staff has made a massive document request from the NGBs, going back to 2017. He also reported on a new lawsuit against the USOPC and the NGB for Ski and Snowboard. Rich Bender also recently met with the Sports Manager of LA28, Nicolo Campriani, and that they will rely on NGBs for volunteers and leadership within their sports. He updated Campriani on USA Wrestling's efforts to seek U17 Worlds in 2025, U20 Worlds in 2026 and Senior Worlds in 2027, and could use some LA28 resources for those events. He also noted that USA Wrestling is seeking to help Paris 2024 Wrestling Sports Director Ender Yaksi with volunteers to work for wrestling in Paris.

He also updated the committee on the progress in hiring for a Senior Communications Manager and a Safe Sport Manager and provided an update on working with contracted counsel for certain projects, He noted that USA Wrestling is breaking membership records so far this year, and that Final X location and date is being finalized.

5. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Don Reynolds said the committee met January 30, and reviewed and approved November and December statements. He noted that they reflected excellent results. With \$575,000 revenue over expenses. He noted that membership revenue is 15% ahead of budget, with other revenue on

track and no current concerns on the expense side. The committee is looking at USA Wrestling's investment policy and will meet with portfolio manager Steve Post on the next call.

6. ATHLETE ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

John Stefanowicz noted that the AAC is working with the USOPC on some issues including athlete housing as sustenance. He noted that when athletes' personal lives change, it can disqualify them from being on-campus at the training centers. He also noted several meetings on quadrennial athlete stipend increases. There is a focus on keeping high-level athletes in wrestling as coaches. He also noted the AAC by laws will need an update with a change in the athlete description. He also noted that through the USOPC Athlete Advisory Council, USA Wrestling athletes expressed that they are not comfortable about allowing Russia and Belarus back into international sport.

7. DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Kerry McCoy noted a meeting with USA Wrestling staff Meredith Wilson and Gary Abbott on a planning process for the DE&I celebrations, with meetings a month before each celebration to allow for time for research and execution of plans. He also noted that there are plans for some committee activations at the Big Ten Championships and the NCAA Championships in March.

8. SAFE SPORT REPORT

Megan Ball said the number of cases are about the same as usual, with most of the issues concerning behavior issues between adults. She explained to the committee how if someone is not a USA Wrestling member, that means they are not a participant in the Safe Sport code process. Rich noted that people still have a duty to report, regardless of if an individual is an NGB member. Megan also noted that applications are closed for the Safe Sport position, with a goal of having a hire within the month.

9. WOMEN'S WRESTLING REPORT

Joan Fulp noted that girls high school wrestling is growing tremendously based upon data from weight management, with over 52,000 this year, in comparison to 35,000 last year. She reported that New York became the 37th state recognized for adding a girl's wrestling championships. USA Wrestling female membership is also growing. She reported on the recent two-day Committee to Advance Women's Wrestling, held virtually with the key stakeholders within wrestling leadership. The plan is to create and ensure the longevity of the sport, for both males and females, through this process.

Rich Bender reported that USA Wrestling is sponsoring the NCWWC (the nationals for NCAA women) by covering the expense for the officials. Jim Ravannack noted that the first unofficial Louisiana girls state event was held, in spite of barriers set by the state high school association.

Kerry McCoy noted that women's college wrestling exhibitions are being held alongside two EIWA men's dual meets, a dual meet held with clubs at Columbia, and additional exposure at the Div. I level.

10. IN-PERSON MEETING

Bruce Baumgartner noted two options, in Denver on April 6 and in Las Vegas alongside the U.S. Open on April 25. The committee discussed different aspects of these options, including timing and costs. After each member gave their input, it was decided to hold it on April 25 in Las Vegas, with more details to come.

Contractually, the Man and Woman of the Year must be given out at the U.S. Open, so Executive Committee members should send nominations to Gary Abbott at the national office. The Executive Committee must vote upon it, with a plan to include on the March 8 call. There will also be a separate vote on Athlete Leader award.

11. NEW BUSINESS

Kerry McCoy noted that the change in the US Open schedule is causing some issues for clubs and RTCs having additional cost expenses by having to stay there additional days. Zac Dominguez also noted that many coaches have expressed concerns on how the events are spread out this year.

The Executive Committee went into Executive Session at 6:02 p.m.