

MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL

In-Person Executive Committee Meeting
South Point Arena, Las Vegas, Nevada
Tuesday, April 25, 2023
6:30 p.m. Pacific Time

Present:

Bruce Baumgartner, President, Chairman
Kerry McCoy, 1st Vice President
Joan Fulp, 2nd Vice President
Don Reynolds, Treasurer
John Stefanowicz
Rob Cate
Zac Dominguez
Mike Macchiavello
Nate Engel
Steven Thorpe
Mallory Velte
Craig LaMont
Veronica Carlson
Gary Abbott, Director of Communications
Cody Bickley, Director of National Teams High Performance
Meredith Wilson,
Richard Immel, Manager of Communications

Absent:

Van Stokes, Secretary
James Ravannack, Immediate Past President
Stan Dziedzic, United World Wrestling

1. PRESIDENT'S GREETING

Bruce Baumgartner noted that some Executive Committee members and national staff had been delayed in their travel to Las Vegas, but there was a quorum to conduct business.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR MARCH 8, 2023 MEETING

Motion to approve the March 8, 2023 minutes made by Kerry McCoy, second by Steve Thorpe.
Approved

3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Bruce Baumgartner reported that he attended the Living the Dream Medal Fund check presentation in Philadelphia, Pa., which was done along with the U.S. Wrestling Foundation,

which was a very good event. He noted that there could be some new stewards for this fund as a result of this event. He praised the USWF for its “Let’s Wrestle” campaign. He noted that he planned to attend the National Wrestling Hall of Fame induction in Stillwater, Okla. in early June, and that USA Wrestling Executive Director Rich Bender was being inducted, along with other worthy inductees.

Kerry McCoy read the Conflict of Interest Statement.

Bruce Baumgartner also will attend Final X in Newark, N.J. in June as well as the USMC Junior/16U Nationals in Fargo, N.D. in July. He noted that USA Wrestling will have some by-law changes this year. Due to changes required by U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee, there will be more Board meetings than the one annual meeting held in recent years. The Committee members discussed whether or not the in-person Executive Committee meeting would need to be held in the future. Bruce Baumgartner also asked Executive Committee members to email him if there were any additional by-law amendments that would need to be done this year. He noted that the next Executive Committee meeting was set for May 10, and said that if there were no pressing issues at that time, that he may cancel that Executive Committee meeting.

4. NATIONAL TEAMS AND USA WRESTLING STAFF REPORT

With Rich Bender not yet in attendance due to flight delays, Cody Bickley briefed the Executive Committee on matters in the National Teams Department, as well as other topics from the national staff. He noted that the U.S. Open this year would be exciting and praised Rob Cate and the local organizers for their efforts. The event would feature almost 5,000 athletes in a variety of divisions. He noted the high quality of entries at the U.S. Senior Open, which was a result of the changes in the qualifying process for the Senior World Team and Pan American Games Team.

Cody Bickley noted that the U.S. will send a strong team to the Senior Pan American Championships the following week, and that the U.S. still needed to qualify three weight classes for the 2023 Pan American Games. He gave an update on the situation with Russia and Belarus concerning participation in UWW events this year. He also noted that after much work with Athlete Advisory Committee leaders John Stefanowicz, Mallory Velte and Veronica Carlson, there would be changes in the upcoming National Team athlete contract. The most recent version would have stipend increases for No. 1 athletes who are not World medalists. He noted that planning for the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris is well underway. He noted that USA Wrestling will partner with wrestling leaders in Normandy, France for training prior to the Paris Games. This year, as a test run, women’s freestyle and Greco-Roman will train there to prepare for the 2023 Senior Worlds in Serbia. This year, the men’s freestyle team will train at Ramstein AFB in Germany again. Veronica Carlson thanked Cody Bickley for his work with the athlete leaders on the contract, and the support by USA Wrestling for the changes to be implemented.

5. ATHLETE ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

John Stefanowicz noted that the AAC Report was similar to what was reported at the Board of Directors meeting earlier in April. He noted the work on the athlete contract, and said the other major issue was working on compliance with the USOPC. He noted there were some blind spots in the compliance report, and the AAC had meetings with the USOPC audit team. The result was a win for USA Wrestling on all fronts. The discussions included what was ethically correct vs. legally correct, and the result was a great compromise. He noted that there was great talent among the athletes, and a need to keep past athletes involved. The goal is not to have the same athletes on multiple committees, but to widen the number of athletes involved and not burden some athletes too much.

6. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Don Reynolds noted that the Finance Committee met the previous night, and that they reviewed and approved the March financial statements. He reported that at this time, USA Wrestling was operating with a \$1.3 million positive variance in the fiscal year, with \$1.1 million of that coming from the increase in membership. He noted that a few years ago, only two states had over 10,000 members, but this year, there are now seven states over 10,000 with the potential to end the year with 10 states at that level. He noted that the organization has \$9.3 million in unrestricted funds, but that would be reduced in the final four months due to an increase in spending activity and fewer new members joining. Reynolds said that the unrestricted cash level should be at \$7 million at the end of the fiscal year. He noted that USA Wrestling had placed some of its cash into T-bills to create additional revenue for the organization when it had a strong cash position. He also updated the committee on the hiring process for a new Director of Finance, with a screening committee to meet in early May and with interviews set for mid-May.

7. DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Kerry McCoy noted that the report would be similar to what was presented at the recent Board meeting. He noted meetings with staff members concerning the organization's diversity celebrations. He made a report on the composition of the DE&I Committee, and that the committee was inviting additional people into the meetings. This should result in some new people joining, in addition to the solid core group of current members.

The committee discussed the future of the D,E & I effort, and whether this committee should become an official Board committee or remain as an ad-hoc committee appointed by the President. Bruce Baumgartner noted some of the limitations that could occur if it becomes a Board committee, and that in its ad-hoc status, that experts could be included. There was discussion on when it might also be appropriate to add D,E & I duties at the staff level.

8. SAFE SPORT REPORT

There was no Safe Sport report for this meeting

9. WOMEN'S WRESTLING REPORT

Joan Fulp reported that the number of girls competing at the high school level would see a healthy increase this year, and that there are now 38 states where the state association conducts a girls state competition. She noted that starting on September 1, USA Wrestling leader members will need to have education concerning coaching girls and women.

She noted specific areas for work moving forward: 1) organization models; 2) state models, with focus on coaches and referees, 3) Mentorship, collaboration and widened conversation, 4) RTC plans for support for women; 5) When do we separate opportunities for boys and girls?; 6) Focus on media. She said the key is education.

Kerry McCoy noted that the NYC RTC ran a recent novice tournament that was a success. He also noted that there could be some changes in the RTC criteria for women which would make it more inclusive and available.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Bruce Baumgartner noted the excellent new commercial from the Shriners Hospital that had a positive wrestling focus, and the video was shown for the committee members.

Kerry McCoy asked about the new partnership with Band, and Meredith Wilson explained how that relationship worked.

Rob Cate welcomed the committee to the U.S. Open this week, thanked them for attending, and explained the scope of the large event. He also encouraged the committee members to spend time in the VIP area, where a number of people paid for access. He asked the committee members to help make this event special for those in the VIP area and others who are participating.

The Executive Committee went into Executive Session at 6:40 p.m.