

MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL

July 14, 2020
5:00 p.m. Mountain Time

Present:

Bruce Baumgartner, President, Chairman
Mark Reiland, 1st Vice President
Greg Strobel, 2nd Vice President
Van Stokes, Treasurer
Veronica Carlson
Zac Dominguez
Kyven Gadson
Mike Juby
Pat Smith
Steven Thorpe
Rick Tucci
Rich Bender, Executive Director, ex-officio
Les Gutches, Associate Executive Director
Gary Abbott, Director of Communications
Pete Isais, Events Director
Ryan Johnson, Director of Sales and Marketing
Laura Peeters, Safe Sport Director
Tony Black, State Services Director
Meredith Wilson, IT Director
Cody Bickley, National Teams High Performance Manager
Haley Scherr, Executive Assistant

Absent:

Kerry McCoy, Secretary
James Ravannack, Immediate Past President
Stan Dziedzic, UWW Vice President

1. WELCOME, ROLL CALL/OPENING STATEMENT

President Bruce Baumgartner welcomed those on the call. He noted his busy schedule with USA Wrestling activities over the last month, including numerous calls with COVID-19 committees, the Athletes Advisory Committee, the Black Wrestling Association and with the Women of Color group. He also noted an emergency call for the committee dealing with the USA Wrestling logo issue.

2. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 9, 2020 MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes made by Greg Strobel. Second by Mark Reiland

Approved.

3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

Rich Bender updated the committee on the activities of the national staff since the last call. He said he was proud how USA Wrestling was open to listen to a variety of viewpoints from its membership in the past month. He reported that staff was now able to come to the national office, with many still working remotely. There are two shifts when people can work from the office, a Monday/Thursday group and a Tuesday/Friday group, while everyone works remotely on Wednesday. He noted water damage at the office which was being addressed. He also praised the work of the various COVID-19 Committees which include experts who have been advising the organization on making good decisions.

4. FINANCE REPORT/BUDGET DISCUSSION

Van Stokes noted that the Finance Committee had met on June 29. The committee looked at the financial information from the first nine months of the fiscal year. The committee also reviewed the budget variance worksheet developed by staff, which reflected the current status of the finances since the COVID-19 pandemic occurred. He noted that projections show that USA Wrestling will not finish too far from achieving its budget for the current fiscal year, in spite of the challenges.

The committee also reviewed the draft budget for 2020-21 as submitted by staff, which reflected a \$247,000 deficit for the year. The committee spoke to staff directors and asked questions on specific items. The committee asked the staff to send a revised version with a balanced budget for their next meeting. In addition, the committee was sending specific questions on the proposed budget for the staff to provide answers prior to the next call. He also reported that USA Wrestling had filed its 990 and 990T forms as required.

5. SAFE SPORT UPDATE

Laura Peeters noted that the number of Safe Sport cases had increased in recent weeks. She noted that some cases have ended up at the U.S. Center for Safe Sport, while some others had been retained for USA Wrestling to handle. Bruce Baumgartner noted that the Athletes Advisory Committee would like to have Laura Peeters attend a future meeting so they could ask questions and be updated. Rich Bender praised Laura Peeters for her great efforts since joining USA Wrestling on a contract basis after the passing of Dan Prochnow. Rich noted that her background as an attorney and a past employee with the USOPC has been invaluable.

6. GRAPPLING UPDATE

Gary Abbott gave an update on the USA Grappling proposal, and noted that a conference call with himself, Rich Bender, Bruce Baumgartner along with USA Grappling leaders Rich Tado

and Blair Green had been very successful. The next step on the proposal to transfer UWW Grappling responsibilities would require the Executive Committee to approve staff writing a letter to United World Wrestling supporting USA Grappling as the organization to run UWW Grappling in the USA. Bruce Baumgartner said he would support writing the letter to UWW, when USA Grappling puts in writing a few things that had been agreed upon on the call. Van Stokes reported that he felt USA Wrestling had done its due diligence on this topic.

Motion to approve USA Wrestling sending a letter to United World Wrestling asking them to recognize USA Grappling as the U.S. organization to manage UWW Grappling, once USA Wrestling receives in writing a letter from USA Grappling agreeing to fulfill the specific items requested by USA Wrestling.

Motion by Greg Strobel, Second by Steve Thorpe. Approved.

7. UNITED WORLD WRESTLING UPDATE

Rich Bender reported that UWW had released a press release which announced a 2020 Senior World Championships in Serbia, which had not been on the schedule. The event would be conditional to having eight of the top 10 nations participating, and 70% of the entries of the previous World Championships. He noted that USA Wrestling had not budgeted a 2020 Senior Worlds, but a contingency plan was in place if it happens. He said the UWW Executive Committee would meet again in August to review its schedule again when there was more clarity about the COVID-19 situation. He also noted that 2020 U23 Worlds in Finland and Junior Worlds in Serbia (along with a UWW Congress) were also still on the schedule and would be discussed by the UWW Executive Board.

Bruce Baumgartner noted that it did not seem likely that the Senior Worlds would be held. He noted that USA Wrestling would find a way to go if it was in the athletes' best interest. He said that if conditions were safe, we would support them. Rich Bender noted that a decision on whether to attend would include input from many others, especially from the athlete leadership.

8. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION DISCUSSION

Bruce Baumgartner noted that USA Wrestling is committed to energizing and re-forming a Diversity and Inclusion Committee. It had been discussed in length at the emergency Executive Committee call, and there is a clear commitment to improve diversity in all areas of the organization. As an ad-hoc committee, the president would assign the committee members. A process had begun to collect suggestions on people to serve on the committee. He said that there are some short range things that USA Wrestling can do to improve in this area, but some issues may take a bit longer to address.

Rich Bender noted that Ryan Johnson and his team in Marketing was creating a brand guide on the use of USA Wrestling marks and it would be available in short order. He also gave information on the existing ad-hoc Diversity Committee, which had done good work on the

expansion of women's wrestling, but had an opportunity to make a wider impact moving forward. Van Stokes noted that it was important to get the right people involved and not to make the group too unwieldy. He also noted that the Long Range Planning Committee would meet soon, and Diversity and Inclusion would be included in any updates in the plan.

9. SENIOR TRIALS PROCEDURES/AGE GROUP PROCEDURES

Cody Bickley updated the committee on the process of changing the Olympic Trials procedures, which had gone through all three Sport Committees, with revised procedures now being reviewed by the USOPC. Once it is complete on the USOPC level, there will be either calls or email votes set up with each Sport Committee for approval. The Executive Committee may be asked to approve these procedures via email if they are ready before the next Executive Committee meeting.

10. BOARD OF DIRECTORS CALL – JULY 20

A meeting of the entire Board of Directors had been set via teleconference for July 20, where the issue of changing the USA Wrestling Bylaws to allow for a virtual Board of Directors meeting and election would be addressed.

11. BOARD ELECTIONS

If things go to plan, Bruce Baumgartner noted that he hoped to have Van Stokes, Kerry McCoy and Veronica Carlson come to Colorado Springs in person for the virtual Board of Directors meeting to oversee the election. Rich Bender and Meredith Wilson explained how the election would be held through electronic means.

Bruce Baumgartner noted that the next meeting of the Executive Committee was set for August 11.

12. NEW BUSINESS

Tony Black explained that the State Leaders Conference would be held remotely August 10-12, with State Leaders meeting on August 13 and a Junior Olympic Wrestling Committee meeting on August 14. Each of the different Age-Group Councils will also meet, but that schedule is not yet set.

Motion to adjourn by Mark Reiland, second by Greg Strobel.
Meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m. MT