

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

Executive Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, February 7, 2024  
5:00 p.m. MT

**Present:**

Bruce Baumgartner, President, Chairman  
Kerry McCoy, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Joan Fulp, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Don Reynolds, Treasurer  
Van Stokes, Secretary  
John Stefanowicz  
Pat Ream  
Veronica Carlson  
Zac Dominguez  
Rob Cate  
Mallory Velte  
Craig LaMont  
Mike Macchiavello  
Rich Bender, Executive Director  
Megan Ball, Executive Assistant  
Kenya Dixon, Manager of Safe Sport and Compliance  
Aphten Sterling, Director of Business Development  
Cody Bickley, Director of National Teams High Performance  
Bill Zadick, National Men's Freestyle Head Coach  
Terry Steiner, National Women's Freestyle Head Coach  
Joe Russell, Manager of Men's Freestyle Programs  
Greg Dana, Director of Finance  
David Mathews, Director of Application Development  
Gary Abbott, Director of Communications & Special Projects  
Pete Isais, Director of National Events

**Absent:**

Nate Engel  
James Ravannack  
Stan Dziedzic, United World Wrestling

**1. WELCOME**

President Bruce Baumgartner welcomed the committee and called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM MT. He asked Van Stokes to read the Declaration of Conflict of Interest and Oath of Confidentiality. No conflicts were present.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR JANUARY 10, 2024**

Zac Dominguez made a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes; Pat Ream seconded. Treasurer Don Reynolds noted a small correction under the Finance Committee report to change “next” to “last.” Following a vote, the minutes were approved unanimously with the corrections.

### **3. PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

President Baumgartner will travel to the Living the Dream Medal Fund Dinner in two weeks in Miami. He has met with UWW Vice-President Stan Dziedzic and Rich Bender to review his UWW election strategy. He is working on ensuring the travel is the most cost effective by utilizing the USOPC IR Grant.

### **4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Rich Bender turned his time over to National Coaches Bill Zadick and Terry Steiner. Coach Zadick thanked the committee for their work behind the scenes. Men’s Freestyle wrapped up a camp the week prior. Nick Lee and Zane Richards will represent the United States at the Olympic qualifier in Acapulco. Coach Steiner also thanked the committee for all they do, and that he takes pride knowing that he works for the best NGB in the Olympic family. The Women’s Freestyle team will have a camp starting next week and will send Dominique Parrish, Kayla Miracle, and Amit Elor to the Olympic qualifier.

Rich thanked the coaches and wished the committee a Happy National Girls and Women in Sport Day. The NCAA has officially recommended women’s wrestling to advance to Championship status as early as 2026. This is a major accomplishment, and many have put in a lot of work over the years to make this happen. He made a special thank you to Gary Abbott for his years of work and support in this realm.

He noted that he and Kerry McCoy attended the funeral of John Graham, who played a huge role in the organization, especially in the 1980’s and 1990’s.

Rich will attend the Pan Am Olympic Games Qualifier and Pan Am Championships in Acapulco, there will also be a UWWA Congress and Hall of Fame Ceremony. At the Hall of Fame, three Americans will be honored – Steve Fraser, Sheila Wager, and Adeline Gray.

The 2024 U17 World Championships will be moving from Argentina. Potential locations are Greece or Croatia. The US will not make a bid due to the potential visa issues. USA Wrestling will begin transitioning Wrestling for Peace over to Dan Russell and the nonprofit he is establishing to continue the mission. This allows for USA Wrestling to ensure its focus will support the strategic plan and Long-Range Plan.

There will be a celebration for Art Martori and Sunkist Kids at the Olympic Team Trials.

In his report on the USOPC and United World Wrestling, Bender noted the transgender discussion in the Olympic movement. There is an interesting dilemma in what the USOPC advocates in this area, and where Congress would like to see it.

## **5. 2024 VOLUNTEER COACH SELECTION APPROVALS**

Cody Bickley shared that the sports committees overwhelmingly approved the selections. There were zero no votes, just a few abstentions. Kerry McCoy added that the national team staff was on the call and did a great job explaining how and why the selections were made. Zac Dominguez abstained from his vote to approve the Greco-Roman selections and Kerry McCoy on the freestyle selection. Mallory Velte and Veronica Carlson abstained from the votes for the Women's Freestyle selections. There was a motion made to approve the selections by John Stefanowicz and seconded by Pat Ream. The motion was unanimously approved.

## **6. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Don Reynolds let the committee know the finance committee reviewed and approved the October statements. They will meet on February 19<sup>th</sup> to review November and December statements. The organization is currently 16% ahead of budget, the Olympic Games expenses are clearly defined in the budget, and all signs point to a very strong financial position. Greg Dana added that the organization is being very intentional about money in reserves by how they are moved into money markets which are fully insured. He noted that the staff is slowly rolling out corporate credit cards for travel.

## **7. PAN AMERICAN OG QUALIFIER & CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Cody Bickley shared that Acapulco is under a Level 4 – Do Not Travel Advisory from the State Department. Very seldom does USA Wrestling travel to Level 4 nations, but we do notify the State Department of where we are at all times. We work with the USOPC on travel and safety options. For this situation, we need additional private security. This allows WCAP athletes to attend and the security team will be with our delegation 24/7. This could be \$50,000 or more cost, but has been deemed a necessary expense. Rich Bender explained how a hurricane destroyed the tourist infrastructure there and no U.S. airlines are currently traveling there. He also noted that UWW would not move the event. Bruce Baumgartner took a straw poll of the Executive Committee and nobody was against this, and directed the Finance Committee and staff to proceed with plans for the budget variance for the additional security.

## **8. ATHLETE ADVISORY REPORT**

There hasn't been much movement in the last month. The committee will meet next week. There was a Team USA AAC meeting in Florida, there is a slow rolling process moving to LA28. The goal is to have a strategic plan set for 2028. Another goal is to professionalize amateur athletes, so they have a lasting brand after retirement.

## **9. IN PERSON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

The meeting will take place between April 26 and April 28 at the U.S. Open in Las Vegas. There will be a normal executive committee meeting March 13, a virtual board meeting April 3, and the in-person Board meeting in August immediately following the Olympic Games.

## **10. DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORT**

The committee hasn't met since the last call. USA Wrestling has acknowledged both Black History Month and National Girls and Women in Sports Day. The social media posts and stories continue to move according to plan.

## **11. ETHICS & MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE APPOINTEE**

There is a current vacancy on the Ethics & Membership Committee. President Baumgartner would like to appoint Joan Fulp to the position. She accepted the appointment, and the committee voted in support of the appointment.

## **12. WOMEN'S WRESTLING UPDATE**

Joan Fulp shared that Louisiana is the 45<sup>th</sup> state to add a girls division to its wrestling state championships. The proposal includes 12 weight classes for the girls. Joan will attend the NFHS National Wrestling Rules meetings in April. She attends representing the USA Wrestling Girls High School Development Committee, they do not get a vote, but they do appreciate the invitation from Elliot Hopkins to attend.

At the national USA Wrestling level, membership numbers continue to rise with numbers today at 30,700 female members, up about 34% this year.

## **13. OLYMPIC GAMES INFORMATION**

Rich shared that USAW staff will make every effort to support committee members who would like to attend. Please contact Megan Ball or Morgan Benham for more information.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

No new business.

## **10. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The meeting entered executive session at approximately 6:05 p.m.