

MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN-PERSON MEETING

Executive Committee Meeting
Saturday, April 27, 2024
6:00 p.m. PST

Present:

Bruce Baumgartner, President, Chairman
Kerry McCoy, 1st Vice President
Joan Fulp, 2nd Vice President
Don Reynolds, Treasurer
Van Stokes, Secretary
James Ravannack, Past President
Veronica Carlson
Rob Cate
Zac Dominguez
Nate Engel
Craig LaMont
Mike Macchiavello
John Stefanowicz
Pat Ream
Mallory Velte
Rich Bender, Executive Director
Megan Ball, Executive Assistant
Kenya Dixon, Manager of Safe Sport and Compliance
Aphten Sterling, Director of Business Development
Greg Dana, Director of Finance
Pete Isais, Director of National Events
Joe Russell, Manager of Men's Freestyle
Cody Bickley, Director of National Teams High Performance

Absent:

Stan Dziedzic, United World Wrestling

1. WELCOME

President Bruce Baumgartner welcomed the committee and called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm PST. He asked Van Stokes to read the Declaration of Conflict of Interest and Oath of Confidentiality.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR MARCH 13, 2024

James Ravannack made a motion to approve the March 13 minutes; Johnny Stefanowicz seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Baumgartner thanked everyone for all their effort and work that they collectively do for the organization. He thanked the staff in attendance as well as back in Colorado. He has heard numerous compliments from USOPC staff as well as others on the organization and the success of Olympic Team Trials.

President Baumgartner shared his upcoming travel plans which include the last Olympic Qualifier in Istanbul, a Living the Dream Medal Fund Victory Tour dinner in Philadelphia, the last ranking tournament, and U23 Team Trials in Geneva, Ohio. While overseas, he will be campaigning further for a position on the UWW Bureau. It is believed that election will take place in Albania between the U23 World Championships and the Senior non-Olympic weight World Championships in October.

The next Executive Committee meeting will take place June 5th, with the next in-person meeting being the Board of Directors meeting August 17th in Colorado Springs, CO.

President Baumgartner reviewed upcoming adjustments to Executive Committee Meetings. Instead of the same reports each meeting, the chairs of each committee can request to update or not. We will keep the President's report, the Executive Director report, the Finance Committee report, the AAC report, and a Grassroots update for each monthly meeting. President Baumgartner asked if there were any questions, and hearing none turned the meeting to Rich Bender for the Executive Director update.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT/USOPC/UWW REPORT

Rich Bender started off by thanking everyone for making it to meet in person. He thanked Pete Isais, the Director of National Events for his work on Olympic Team Trials and the US Open. He also thanked Rob Cate for his continuous efforts in helping the events team. He let the committee know the event would be held elsewhere in the future. The organization has hit 330,000 members so far this year and the credit for the organization's success belongs to the state leaders for the strength of the infrastructure all have contributed to.

Rich asked Cody Bickley to provide the group with a brief update on what is next for the Olympians. Immediately next is the final qualifying tournament in Istanbul and getting folks moved over to the short list. In early June, Cody will head over to Paris for a final site visit to ensure the space in Normandy is prepared for acclimation camp. On July 22, the Olympians and support staff will head over to Paris, arriving on the 23rd. On the 24th and 25th they'll get outfitted in all their gear and complete media day before heading up to Normandy for acclimation. They will return to Paris in waves, a few days before their competition date to adjust in Paris.

Additionally, there will be the non-Olympic weight World Championships in October. That team trials will take place in September. Cody turned the floor back to Rich to continue his update.

Rich advised the committee on a grievance received just prior to Olympic Team Trials due to the uniform requirements and the hearing and decision that was rendered following it.

He moved into the USOPC update sharing that the next Board of Directors meeting will take place in Indianapolis in June alongside the swimming trials. It is noted that Salt Lake City will likely be named the 2034 Winter Games host city during the IOC General Session before the Paris Games kick off. There is still a lot of discussion surrounding Russian and Belarussian athletes participating in Paris. For wrestling, that decision could be made very closely to the beginning of the Games.

On the UWW front, there has been talks of altering the transfer process. Rich is serving on an ad hoc committee to discuss this, and he will update further as more is formalized. Another committee has been established to discuss the establishment of a professional league for the sport. There isn't much to share yet regarding this, but more will come. The final UWW update surrounds a group of officials who were sanctioned due to a match at the European Championships. Casey Goessel being one of those affected. He has submitted an appeal, and the goal is to ensure he does not lose an opportunity to officiate in Paris due to this suspension before a hearing.

5. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Don Reynolds shared that the committee reviewed the February financials which serves as a critical check point for the year. Membership is driving positive revenue results with a current positive variance of almost \$1.6 million through the first 6 months. On the investment side, this is kept more on the back burner due to the upcoming market volatility, however all investments are strong and providing significantly higher returns than budgeted for. A subcommittee will be formed to review the membership card price and determine if any changes should be recommended to the Board in August.

Internally, staff directors have begun working on the budget for next year and will submit a proposal to the finance committee in June to review and work through any edits before the Board reviews and approves in August.

6. STAFF REPORT – HR UPDATE

President Baumgartner turned the meeting over to Greg Dana who presented a report from a firm hired to review the current Human Resources practices and provide an overview of what is done well, areas to improve, and how to move forward. The review began in November and the report was received two weeks prior to this meeting.

The report showed that employee benefits are very strong, employees are proud to work at USA Wrestling, and the employee files, policies, and procedures are well documented. The main

priorities moving forward to improve the organization include improving recruitment and staff onboarding and creating a more consistent feedback process. Staff will look to formalize a flex-time policy and develop a program for transitioning long-term employees into retirement. Leadership will examine options for internal or contracted human resources staff.

7. ATHLETE ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

John Stefanowicz highlighted the goals of the AAC over the next 12 months including gaining more autonomy with EAHI and how it is awarded to national team members. Additionally, AAC members would like to identify and provide further financial literacy education to athletes. There are recognized resources through the USOPC, however they would like these resources to be expanded further.

8. STAFF REPORT – SAFE SPORT UPDATE

Kenya Dixon provided the Safe Sport report. The next Safe Sport Audit will be an event audit at the Southeast Regionals in Georgia. The documentation requirements are due in two weeks. NGBs have been providing feedback on the MAAPP policies. Our policy changes have been submitted to the Center and will be approved by June.

9. BEACH WRESTLING TEAM SELECTION PROCEDURES APPROVAL

President Baumgartner introduced the Beach Wrestling Team Selection Procedures. It covers team selection for the 2024 U17 and U20 Beach World Championships, as well as the last three Senior Beach World Series events. It was put together by staff (Gary Abbott, Jaimie McNab) and our UWW Beach Commission volunteer leader Ed Duncan. All committee members received a copy and were able to review. Rob Cate made a motion to approve the procedures. Johnny Stefanowicz seconded. All members were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

10. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Kerry McCoy shared that a subcommittee has been put together with Afsoon Johnston as chair to review options for cultural and religious competitive gear. This committee will work with several stakeholders to identify options for those who cannot currently participate in Women's Freestyle due to the uniform. Kerry acknowledged that we are wrapping up Diversity Month in April and looking forward to Asian-American History Month in May and Pride Month in June. Despite busy schedules, the communications team has kept up with celebrating the identified holidays. The next DEI Committee call is May 29.

11. STAFF REPORT – LONG RANGE PLAN UPDATE

Greg Dana presented a long-range plan update to the committee. He reviewed the work that had been done previously for the organization's strategic planning and advised that a re-prioritization

of the strategic plan had been done to focus on the short term as we lead into the Paris Games. Following the Games, staff and the long-range planning committee will convene to identify the priorities moving into LA28. Greg requested the members review the laminated sheet provided that highlighted the key strategic priorities of the organization and served as a visual guide to where departments are currently focusing their work.

For the past 4 months, department directors have reported to the staff where their focus is and how it impacts the strategic plan and organization. Some of the common themes included improving the customer experience, increased utilization of technology, further investment in women and the Greco-Roman program, and continued excellence through strategic partnerships and competitive performances.

12. WOMEN'S WRESTLING UPDATE

Joan Fulp shared that at the NCAAs last month there was a celebration for the 20th year anniversary of the first women's Olympic team. In 2004, high school girls' participation was at 4,008, now in 2024 there are over 65,000 participants. For 2024, this shows an estimated increase of 15,000 participants from 2023. As of this meeting, there are currently 5,193 female wrestling leaders in the USA Wrestling membership system. This is up 30% from 2019.

Moving forward, the goal is to identify what is best for women's wrestling and those areas included modified folkstyle rules, alumni engagement, increased media visibility, and education around the uniqueness of female athletes. One anticipated change is to increase the minimum body fat percentage to 19% for high school girls. Joan thanked all of the members for their role in the growth of women's wrestling and concluded her update.

13. STATE LEADERS/GRASSROOTS UPDATE

Pat Ream provided the grassroots update. He reviewed the membership numbers by state and overall. The numbers continue to increase in both female and male participants. He applauded the various state leaders for their efforts and said the next focus should be on retention rates and how to improve those. Additionally, in some states the ratio of athletes to wrestling leader can be as high as 10:1, this brings the question of are all coaches in compliance with their membership, background check, and certifications and how can we ensure this further. State leaders are looking forward to the release of the event management system and how that can assist in compliance concerns. Pat shared that all the regional positions for women's age group council as well as other state leadership positions are up for election through the summer with many of the elections taking place in Fargo in July. He encouraged all to attend the meetings in Fargo if possible.

13. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

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Motion to adjourn: Veronica Carlson
Second: Rob Cate
Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm PST

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