

MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL

Executive Committee Meeting
Tuesday, January 14, 2025
5:00 p.m. MT

Present:

Bruce Baumgartner, President, Chairman
Joan Fulp, 1st Vice President
Kerry McCoy, 2nd Vice President
Nate Engel, Secretary
Don Reynolds, Treasurer
Veronica Carlson
Rob Cate
Pat Ream
Mallory Velte
Craig LaMont
John Stefanowicz
James Ravannack, Past President
Rich Bender, Executive Director
Megan Ball, Executive Assistant
Cody Bickley, National Teams High Performance Director
Greg Dana, Director of Finance
Aphten Sterling, Director of Development
Gary Abbott, Director of Communications & Special Projects
Richard Immel, Senior Manager of Communications

Absent:

Zac Dominguez
Mike Macchiavello

1. WELCOME

President Bruce Baumgartner welcomed the committee and called the meeting to order. He asked Nate Engel to read the Declaration of Conflict of Interest and Oath of Confidentiality.

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Baumgartner noted that he attended the USA Wrestling staff holiday gathering in Colorado Springs, and met with UWW leader Peter Basca of Hungary, as well as with many athletes there. He explained how each staff director introduced their staff and gave updates on their year, and it was a nice event. He and Rich Bender decided not to attend the Beat the Streets LA fundraising event in January because of the ongoing fires in the community. He said his heart goes out to those affected in Los Angeles. He noted that his next activities will be to attend the Greco-Roman Summits in Colorado Springs on January 22 and January 29. He also noted that he will communicate about considering a change of time for the Executive Committee meetings.

3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Rich Bender noted that USA Wrestling will do what it can to help support the wrestling community in Los Angeles. He noted staff promotions, with Christina Hargrove becoming Senior Manager of Events and Megan Ball being named Manager of Executive Affairs. He noted that Safe Sport Manager Kenya Dixon will now be part of the State Services Department. He noted other new employees Jody Budde, Sarah Touchton, Jeremy Eyman and Sydney Jordan. He also shared a video created by new partner RUDIS. He also gave information on the launch of USA Bracketing, USA Wrestling's new meet management utility, and praised Dave Mathews and his team for its development.

4. GRECO-ROMAN SUMMIT/ BUILDING UPDATE

Greg Dana noted that a Women's Freestyle Summit had been successfully hosted. A Greco-Roman Summit will be held in Colorado Springs, Colo. with coaches on January 22 and with athletes on January 29.

He reported on research on a possible new headquarters building for USA Wrestling. He noted that four serious options had been researched, three of which can be a long-term plan. USA Wrestling is looking to buy or build. The goal would be to find a new home in 2025 to last through the 2028 Los Angeles Quad, then have a permanent solution to follow.

5. USOPC/UWW UPDATE

Rich Bender reported on the NGB Council meeting which was held earlier in the day. The USOPC plans going into this quadrennium shares our belief that this is one of the most important decades for the Olympic movement with Los Angeles and Salt Lake City Games on the horizon. He noted that a focus will be on athlete support (to include pay and services). He reported that Peter Basca of Hungary spoke to U.S. athletes at the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Training Center and said, "USA Wrestling is the gold standard for National Wrestling Federation." He noted that Peter Basca gave updates on UWW's plans for new rules and the transfer process.

6. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 2024

Mallory Velte made a motion to approve the December 2024 minutes; Joan Fulp seconded. Motion approved

7. FINANCE REPORT

Don Reynolds noted that in the last meeting, the Finance Committee reviewed and approved the financial statements. On the next call on January 27, the Committee will go through the October and November 2024 statements. He noted that the Finance staff will be changing over to a new

financial system at the national headquarters. He reported that as of December 31, membership was comfortably ahead of budget, with an 18% increase in revenue. He noted that if USA Wrestling matches its normal freestyle/Greco-Roman season activity that it should be a record year. Greg Dana gave more specifics on the new financial system that is being installed. Craig LaMont noted that at the local and state level, there is so much more interest in young people joining wrestling. He said that there were many more new people involved. Pat Ream reported that Missouri membership is up 6%, with 43% being new athletes.

8. ATHLETE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mallory Velte said the AAC is repopulating the Coaches Council with athlete representatives. She noted that USA Wrestling will be adding a staff resource for athlete career and life transition, and the AAC will be excited to collaborate with a new position. She noted that with the fires in Los Angeles, there was some great need within the wrestling community. She thanked USA Wrestling for sending shoes and apparel for the wrestling community families in need.

9. STATE LEADERS REPORT

Pat Ream discussed the membership growth of women in the organization, which included 34,400 women members of its 214,201 athletes. He noted that overall membership was up by 9.5% He also reported that the next Junior Olympic Wrestling Committee meeting was expected to be held before February.

10. TRANSGENDER POLICY

The Executive Committee was updated about an athlete who had been participating as a boy who, based upon USA Wrestling's policy, was allowed to enter as a girl in a sanctioned event in Iowa. There has been some substantial discussion about the situation on social media. Executive Committee members asked questions about the incident, as well as a variety of specific questions regarding USA Wrestling's Transgender Policy. It was explained by some that there is ambiguity in the policy, which makes it difficult for those who run grassroots programs to implement it. After extensive discussion, Bruce Baumgartner asked the national staff to do further research into the Transgender Policies of other national governing bodies and other organizations, and to provide input and options for the Executive Committee for its next call on February 11. Director of State Services Tony Black will be the lead person on the staff bringing the information for the next meeting.

11. NEW BUSINESS

Rich Bender thanked the Executive Committee for its support as Executive Director and said he was blessed and honored to serve the organization. He is grateful and thankful for the opportunity.

Meeting went into Executive Session at 6:42 p.m.

DRAFT