

**USA Wrestling
Virtual Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes
December 3, 2024**

Board Members Present:

Bruce Baumgartner, President
Joan Fulp, 1st Vice President
Kerry McCoy, 2nd Vice President
Nate Engel, Secretary
Don Reynolds, Treasurer
James Ravannack, Past President
Jay Antonelli
Lori Ayres
Veronica Carlson
Rob Cate
Jason Christenson
Pat Culp
Zac Dominguez
Adeline Gray
Nick Gwiazdowski
Sam Julian
Jamill Kelly
Macey Kilty
Scott Kluever
Craig LaMont
Heather Lawrence
Sara McMann
Brett Monaghan
Michael Moyer
Thomas Pompei
Patrick Ream
Sally Roberts
Jonny Ruggiano
Katherine Shai
Lee Roy Smith
Robby Smith
John Stefanowicz
Van Stokes
Danny Struck
Angie Taylor
Rick Tucci
Mallory Velte

Board Members Absent:

Anthony Holman
Elliot Hopkins

Xavier Johnson
Michael Macchiavello
Joseph McKenna
Toccaro Montgomery
Hardell Moore
Iris Smith

Others Present:

Rich Bender
Megan Ball
Cody Bickley
Greg Dana
Pete Isaia
Richard Immel
Aphten Sterling
Meredith Wilson

The first virtual meeting of the Board of Directors of USA Wrestling for fiscal year 2024 was held on December 3, 2024 via zoom, President Bruce Baumgartner being in the chair. A quorum was present. The meeting was called to order at 5:02 pm MT. President Baumgartner welcomed everyone.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Oath of Confidentiality

Secretary Engel read the conflict-of-Interest statement and the Oath of Confidentiality. No members declared a conflict of interest.

Approval of Minutes

Director Jon Ruggiano moved the approval of the minutes of the August 17, 2024, Board of Directors meeting. Director Rick Tucci seconded. The minutes were adopted as submitted.

President's Welcome

The President stated in his welcome that USA Wrestling is off to a great year. He congratulated Terry Steiner and Van Stokes for their respective inductions to the National Wrestling Hall of Fame and thanked them for all their work through the years.

The committees are close to fully populated, and the board is now completely populated. All board members should have all requirements completed and conflict of interest disclosures have been sent out for completion.

Following the last meeting, President Baumgartner attended the U20 World Championships in Croatia where the men's team won. We had the first U23 Greco Roman world medalist and for the first time at any level we beat Japan at the Women's U23 World Championship. There is a lot of talent in the pipeline and the future is bright.

President Baumgartner overviewed the rest of his travel for the year and early January. He concluded his report by thanking Rich, the staff, the AAC, board members, and state leaders for their continued work and dedication.

Executive Director Report / USOPC / UWW Update

Executive Director Rich Bender gave the Executive Director Report. He thanked the Board of Directors for being the best in the movement. Rich reviewed the success of the 2024 season ending with 45 medals and a significant performance by the U23 Women's Freestyle Team beating Japan for the first time in a team competition since Women's Freestyle was added to the Olympic program. Additionally, the Men's Freestyle U17 and U20 teams brought home team titles this year.

Rich gave recognition to the state leaders on the call for their work and celebrated ending the year with an all-time membership high.

Rich congratulated Bruce on being elected to the UWW Bureau, and thanked Stan Dziedzic for his years of service on the bureau and his service to the organization. He clarified the new UWW transfer rule and how it may impact our teams.

He turned his report over to Greg Dana, Director of Finance. Greg shared that USA Wrestling has enlisted Vida HR, a local company to assist with performance management and general human resources needs. Greg reviewed the new positions that are being filled including a Social Media Coordinator, Digital Marketing Coordinator, two positions within State Services, and an Officials Education Manager.

Greg overviewed the options for a new building and the steps being taken to make a move that considers appropriate timing, cost, and staff needs. Greg also overviewed the process for the Long Range Plan as we move towards LA 2028. The process is starting with stakeholders of each style gathering at Summits and the next step will be meeting with the Executive Committee and then bringing the Long Range Planning Committee together. Board Members Van Stokes and Adeline Gray provided additional context on the first Summit held and the positive outcomes.

Following additional comments and discussion on the Summits and building options, President Baumgartner thanked Rich and Greg and requested Treasurer Don Reynolds provide the Finance Committee Report.

Finance Committee Report

Treasurer Reynolds gave the Finance Committee Report. Since the previous board meeting, the Finance Committee met and approved the August financial statements officially wrapping up the 2024 fiscal year. The organization ended the year in an extremely strong financial position with \$19.5 million in net assets. From an operational point of view, there was a positive variance from budget to actual for \$3.1 million – the bulk of which coming from membership and events. All of that activity resulted in \$9 million in unrestricted funds which helps to get closer to the goal of six months of operating reserves.

So far, this year is also off to an exceptional start. Event sanctions are up 19% through the first three months pointing too a successful year to come.

Board members asked how the new event management system may impact the finances. It was stated the numbers are conservative at the moment, but to expect an increase in next year's budget.

With no additional questions, President Baumgartner turned to the next agenda item.

JOWC/Grassroots Update

Director Pat Ream gave the JOWC Report. All states are up in membership numbers, even in states that seemed to have an extraordinary year last year are consistent again this year.

The next JOWC meeting is expected to take place in January. There have been some major changes in state leadership including four of the largest states having changes, some expected and some not. Pat and other leaders are keeping a close watch and working with the new leaders to help keep everything steady. It is expected that Southern Plains will change locations this year and all is off to a good start.

Joan Fulp added that the bimonthly meetings Tony Black holds for state leaders are incredibly valuable for communicating information across the country and applauded David Mathews for all the work he's done in developing the membership system even further.

Athlete Advisory Committee Report / Team USA AC Update

Director Mallory Velte gave the AAC Report. She thanked Johnny Stefanowicz for his last four years as chair and the leadership he demonstrated. Mallory reviewed the newly elected positions. She commended Adeline Gray, who has been working with the coaching staff to develop a retirement letter for athletes to come from the coaches, thank them for their dedication, and ensure they know the resources available to them.

The AAC is also working on expanding their calls to include more athletes and bring more leaders into the fold as well as soliciting more athlete feedback on team procedures.

Mallory also provided the Team USA AC report, where she shared their goal of becoming autonomous from the USOPC to further support athletes. Questions around how the funding would work were answered further by Mallory and Rich Bender.

Constituent Group Reports

President Baumgartner called for reports from the constituent representatives.

Director Jon Ruggiano provided the Federation of Clubs report. The federation will return to having more formal meetings and request the clubs come together at the US Open and have formal communications established.

Director Lee Roy Smith provided the National Wrestling Hall of Fame report. They have wrapped up officer elections with a new Chairman John Harris, new Vice-Chairman Tom Keen

and new Secretary Audrey Pang. Ed Gallegos is returning as Treasurer. John Russell will lead their Board of Governors. They also have a new board member in Kim Martori-Wickey. Lee Roy reviewed the upcoming induction class for NWHOF. The celebration will take place the weekend of June 6, 2025. They currently have an endowment campaign ongoing and look forward to the 50th year celebration in 2026. There were no questions.

Director Jay Antonelli provided the Armed Forces Sports Council report. They have just returned from CISM and did well over in Armenia. They had a silver medal from the Women's Freestyle team and a bronze and silver medal from Greco. There were no questions.

Director Thomas Pompeii provided the NAIA report. They have a national championship coming up soon and are working with the NWCA to develop a Hall of Fame with them.

Director Mike Moyer provided the NWCA report. He acknowledged his tenure on the board and the phenomenal growth the organization has had since he began. He shared the new programs across the country and their needs. He updated the board on the large settlement involving the NCAA. Board members asked if he could reiterate the number of new college programs. There are 403 new programs since 2000. 184 of the 403 are women's collegiate programs.

Director Sally Roberts provided a report for Wrestle Like A Girl. Sally overviewed the planning process of the 2025 Women's Wrestling Championships and the work the committee has been doing with the NCAA to prepare for the NCAA to make Women's Wrestling a NCAA Championship sport.

New Business

President Baumgartner asked for any additional updates or new business.

Additional conversation revolved around the UWW Transfer rule and the process to get it this far.

With no further updates, President Baumgartner called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn: Lee Roy Smith

Seconded: Scott Kluever

The meeting adjourned at 6:22 pm MT.