

MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL

Executive Committee Meeting
Tuesday, March 11, 2025
5:00 p.m. MT

Present:

Bruce Baumgartner, President, Chairman
Joan Fulp, 1st Vice President
Kerry McCoy, 2nd Vice President
Don Reynolds, Treasurer
Nate Engel, Secretary
Veronica Carlson
Rob Cate
Mike Macchiavello
Pat Ream
Zac Dominguez
Mallory Velte
Craig LaMont
James Ravannack, Past President
Rich Bender, Executive Director
Megan Ball, Manager of Executive Affairs
Cody Bickley, National Teams High Performance Director
Greg Dana, Director of Finance
Gary Abbott, Director of Communications & Special Projects
Richard Immel, Senior Manager of Communications
Kenya Dixon, Manager of Safe Sport and Compliance

Absent:

John Stefanowicz

1. WELCOME

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

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 2025

Joan Fulp made a motion to approve the February 2025 minutes; James Ravannack seconded.
Motion approved

3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT/UWW UPDATE

President Baumgartner noted that USA Wrestling was entering its busy season for its state leaders and staff, going through the summer. He noted that he has been attending state leaders calls and will be on the upcoming AAC call. He will attend the NCAA Championships in

Philadelphia, also attending the US Wrestling Foundation (USWF) and Burroughs Foundation fundraiser as well as the USWF Board meeting there.

In his UWW report, he noted that UWW has altered its transfer policy. He said all current transfers will be grandfathered in if they competed before Jan. 1, 2025. He noted there will be two transfers allowed each year. Other details are still being considered.

He reminded the committee about the Board Meeting on April 9. He has put together a group to work on By-Law change proposals. He aims to have all appointments made before the meeting. He also noted the In-Person Executive Committee meeting on April 26 in Las Vegas. At that meeting, Dave Mathews will give an update on USA Bracketing meet management.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT/USOPC REPORT

Rich Bender noted that Larry Buendorf, longtime USOPC Chief of Security and a friend to wrestling, passed away at age 87. He reported on the NCWWC Women's Nationals (for NCAA women) which was held in Iowa City. He noted that the wrestling community is handing off an excellent property to the NCAA, which will run the official NCAA Women's Nationals starting next year as its 91st Championships. He noted that USA Wrestling will continue to support women's college wrestling moving forward, just in a new role.

He noted that the USOPC and LA28 are in serious conversations with UWW about considering moving the wrestling competition for the Los Angeles Games to the Forum in Englewood, Calif. It would mean increasing fan seating from 6,000 to 16,000. He has asked USOPC President Gene Sykes for support. The change would make a \$50 million positive difference in revenue to the LA Games, and might move wrestling to the first half of the Olympic schedule. LA28 is now working hard on its professional staffing and expects key staff appointments in Q2 of 2025.

Bender noted that the UWW Technical Commission discussed many topics. He noted that the LA28 Qualifying system is likely to change, with a desire to reimagine qualifying through a ranking series system. He noted the success of USA Bracketing in just its first year on the market. He also noted a hearing in Congress about college athletics issues such as NIL and athlete pay, which ultimately became political and came to no conclusion. He also noted the current USA Wrestling membership had reached 317,000.

5. FINANCE UPDATE

Don Reynolds noted that the Finance Committee had approved the November 2025 financial statements in its most recent meeting, with the organization in a positive variance situation. He reported that USA Wrestling staff had switched over to a new financial system. The organization's revenue has been excellent through February 2025, with \$10.4 million in membership revenue, which was budgeted to be \$9.9 million, for a \$1.3 million positive variance. A portion of the variance was due to the membership price increase, but there was also

actual membership growth in the total. The high school season and the Kids wrestling season is wrapping up, with a turn towards the freestyle/Greco-Roman season. He stated that the balance sheet was strong, and the organization's finances are rock solid. He also noted that the April and May meetings will include an investment review.

Greg Dana gave more details on the financial system transition and said it will make the staff more efficient. He noted an April 1 change in employee health insurance, a switch from Cigna to Anthem, and explained the reasons for the change. He also provided an update on the national headquarters building project, with an expected change in location during 2025.

6. ATHLETE ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE

Mallory Velte reported that the ACC is doing well and has been forward thinking. The AAC is working on a newsletter, and is addressing Tax Season issues for athletes, including the situation of no taxes on Olympic bonuses. She noted the next AAC meeting was scheduled for the day after this Executive Committee meeting.

Veronica Carlson reported on the USOPC AAC, which will meet later that week on Thursday. She noted how the USOPC AAC is creating expert groups, which are working groups on specific interests among elite athletes. She also noted a \$100 million gift to the USOPC from philanthropist Ross Stevens which will help support athletes post-Olympic Games and assist in their financial security.

7. TEAM SELECTION PROCEDURES

Cody Bickley reported on selection procedures being presented to the Executive Committee, by the organization's three Sport Committees. He noted that the procedures would cover the Junior Pan American Games, the Senior Pan American Championships, and General Senior World Team procedures. He explained specific details in each of the selection procedure documents, and answered questions from the Executive Committee.

Don Reynolds made the recommendation to accept the three procedures with one vote. A motion to accept all three procedures, with one amendment on a date, was made by Zac Dominguez and seconded by Don Reynolds. Motion was approved.

Cody Bickley also reported on a change of USA Wrestling uniform rules. Females of the Muslim faith will be able to wear the UWW Classical Style uniform in USA Wrestling team trials events, to include the upcoming Women's Nationals in Spokane, Wash. USA Wrestling received input from its attorney Steve Smith as well as the USOPC ombudsman on this topic.

8. STATE LEADERS REPORT

Pat Ream noted that this was a busy time for state associations, with as many as 12 states holding state championship events the previous week, and just as many in the coming week. He noted that the new USA Bracketing event management program is getting excellent reviews once coaches, athletes and families use it at an event based upon his Missouri competitions. He is getting a sense that Fargo could be even bigger this summer than the record entries last year. He noted the growth in girls competitors in his state.

Bruce Baumgartner gave a brief update on the gender policy, which was discussed on the last Executive Committee call, and was approved online vote. He said the committee came up with a good policy, and it was posted on the website and state leaders were notified.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Rich Bender noted that he spoke with Chris Bevilacqua and his father Al Bevilacqua, a past USA Wrestling Man of the Year, was nearing his end of life. He noted that there was some discussion about recognizing Al this year.

Bruce Baumgartner noted that Edinboro, where he worked before his retirement, will add women's varsity wrestling. He also noted that there will be a Men's Freestyle Summit being organized this spring.

Motion to adjourn by Don Reynolds, Second by Mallory Velte. Meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.