USA Wrestling
Virtual Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes
April 14, 2026

Board Members Present:
Bruce Baumgartner, President
Kerry McCoy, 2nd Vice President
Joan Fulp, 1st Vice President
Nate Engel, Secretary
Don Reynolds, Treasurer
James Ravannack, Past President
Lori Ayres
Beau Bartlett
Mark Bedics
Veronica Carlson
Rob Cate
Jason Christenson
Pat Culp
Claire DiCugno
Zac Dominguez
Adeline Gray
Erin Golston
Nick Gwiazdowski
Elliot Hopkins
Sam Julian
Jamill Kelly
Macey Kilty
Scott Kluever
Craig LaMont
Heather Lawrence
Joseph McKenna
Hardell Moore
Michael Moyer
Thomas Pompei
Patrick Ream
Jonny Ruggiano
Iris Smith
Lee Roy Smith
Robby Smith
Van Stokes
Danny Struck
Angie Taylor
Mallory Velte

Board Members Absent:
Jay Antonelli

Dymond Guilford
Xavier Johnson
Michael Macchiavello
Brett Monaghan
John Stefanowicz
Rick Tucci

Others Present:
Rich Bender
Megan Ball
Cody Bickley
Greg Dana
Aphten Goldman
Finbarr Kirwan
Richard Immel
Pete Isais
Mary Beth Powers
Meredith Wilson

The second virtual meeting of the Board of Directors of USA Wrestling for fiscal year 2025 was held on April 14, 2026 via zoom, President Bruce Baumgartner being in the chair. A quorum was present. The meeting was called to order at 5:04 pm MT. President Baumgartner welcomed everyone.

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

Approval of Minutes
First Vice-President Joan Fulp moved for the approval of the minutes for the November 24, 2025, Board of Directors meeting. Director Angie Taylor seconded. The minutes were adopted as submitted.

President's Welcome/UWW Update
President Baumgartner began his welcome by overviewing his attendance at various events since the last meeting. He emphasized gratitude and pride in the efforts made by the Board Members, State Leaders, officials, athletes, volunteers, and staff in making those events a success. He will attend a number of events over the next few months with a goal to gather input from all levels of the organization from senior level athletes to parents and coaches of youth wrestlers.

President Baumgartner updated the Board on the LA28 planning so far and expected ticket process. He also shared there will be a USOPC Audit later this year and preparation for that has begun. He concluded his President's update with reminders of the August 8th Board meeting and to reach out to him directly with any issues or questions members may have.

President Baumgartner moved into his UWW report. UWW is looking further into professional league opportunities and pathways to get wrestlers more opportunities to earn money and grow the sport. The organization is also finalizing the 2028 Olympic Qualification system. Russian and Belarussian age-group athletes may now compete under their countries' flags.

There have been no changes to event locations for U17, U20, or U23 World Championships yet. Senior World Championships have not been moved yet but anticipate that will be adjusted. President Baumgartner was assigned the technical delegate at the 2026 U20 World Championships, the 2027 Senior Pan-American Championships, and the LA28 Olympic Games.

President Baumgartner asked for any questions. He was asked what being the UWW delegate for the upcoming events and LA Games looks like. He overviewed his responsibilities and turned his report over to Executive Director, Rich Bender.

Executive Director Report / USOPC Update
Rich Bender gave the Executive Director Report. He began by inviting USOPC SVP, Chief of Olympic Sport Finbarr Kirwan to provide an update from the USOPC to the group.

Kirwan thanked the Board for the opportunity to connect and speak with one of the very best NGBs. He applauded the record membership levels over the last four years, and noted the anticipated loss when Bender's term expires on the USOPC Board of Directors later this year. Kirwan provided a quick recap of Team USA's performance in Milan-Cortina including the 12 Gold Medals and achieving the goal of being a top 3 nation for Winter Sports. Overall, the Games were a success and provided key learnings to bring to LA28 and Salt Lake City in 2034.

Kirwan outlined the four key themes the USOPC is prioritizing ahead of LA28. The themes being collaboration, investment, environment and pipeline protection. He overviewed how each theme relates to the USOPC's relationship with USA Wrestling. In closing, he reiterated gratitude to Rich Bender and USA Wrestling for membership growth, athlete performance, and strong governance before answering a few questions from the board and turning his time back to Bender.

Shifting into his report, Bender shared he is in the middle of a two day USOPC Board Meeting and had a very recent NGB Council call. A major focus of the calls included LA28 Ticketing and the success from the first wave of ticket drops.

As of today, USA Wrestling has 375,033 members. This is an all-time record for the organization and we keep hunting for the 400,000 member mark. The State Services department continues to serve and identify ways to improve member experience daily.

USA bracketing has been a massive success and the team continues to grow to best serve the customer base. Recently, over 39,000 users were in the system over a weekend with a peak of 1,200 unique users logged in simultaneously. The USA Bracketing team is committed to being highly responsive to state associations and customers who depend on USA Wrestling's technology.

Following last year's Safe Sport Event Audit, the clean report was finally received this afternoon. There will likely be another Event Audit later this year. Additionally, the Center has named a new CEO in Benita Fitzgerald.

The Events department is hard at work to not only keep the normal schedule rolling but to support the Senior Pan-American Championships next month in Coraville and gear up to host the U23 World Championships in Las Vegas this October. There have been some challenges with visas, however USA Wrestling has engaged both the USOPC and Jetr to support where needed.

The Communications team has been filled out and fully staffed. They are embracing new technology and measuring performance daily. So far, they are seeing 8–9% consistent growth across platforms, positioning wrestling for greater relevancy and future growth.

National Teams continue to demonstrate exceptional depth and sustained success as preparations intensify for Final X and the upcoming World Championships in Las Vegas, both of which will play a critical role in finalizing Senior World Team selections. The U17 and U20 Women's Freestyle World Teams have already been selected, showcasing the remarkable talent pipeline that continues to develop across all age groups.

The Finance department continues to strengthen USA Wrestling's financial operations through a commitment to continuous improvement, innovation, and responsible stewardship of organizational resources. Over the past year, the team has modernized accounting processes and expanded the use of technology to improve efficiency, streamline workflows, and better support staff across the organization.

Bender concluded his report by acknowledging the loss of Bobby Douglas and J. Robinson and their impact on the organization and sport as a whole. USA Wrestling will host a reception Friday of the US Open to honor Coach Douglas.

There were no questions for Rich.

Building Update

Greg Dana provided an update on the successful completion of USA Wrestling's headquarters relocation to the former USA Volleyball facility. The new headquarters brings all Colorado Springs-based staff together in a modern, collaborative workspace and was acquired for $4.0 million, below its $4.25 million appraised value.

An overview of the lease-back agreement with USA Volleyball was provided, noting that USA Volleyball will lease the building's first floor under a four-year, expense-only arrangement. The structure preserves USA Wrestling's nonprofit status and property tax exemption while creating a mutually beneficial partnership, with USA Volleyball covering the building's operating expenses.

Greg reported that the capital project remains on budget, with approximately $5.35 million invested to date against the approved $5.6 million budget. The majority of project costs have been capitalized as fixed assets, strengthening the organization's balance sheet by converting financial investments into a long-term real estate asset. Final project work, including HVAC

adjustments, furniture, security, signage, and exterior improvements, is expected to be completed under budget.

An update was also provided on the former headquarters, which is currently listed for sale. Leadership continues to work with the property's broker while evaluating long-term storage needs that were previously accommodated at the former building. The Norwood Group is assisting in identifying a permanent storage solution, and proceeds from the eventual sale are expected to fund those needs, with any remaining funds potentially being returned to the capital campaign reserves.

There were no questions for Greg.

Finance Committee Report
Treasurer Reynolds provided the Finance Committee Report. USA Wrestling remains in a very strong financial position, with total assets reaching a record high of $38.3 million and net assets totaling $32.8 million. The organization's balance sheet continues to strengthen following the acquisition of the new headquarters, with the investment transitioning from financial assets to fixed assets.

Through the first six months of the fiscal year, financial performance has exceeded budget expectations. Revenue is approximately $1.5 million above budget, driven by record membership and exceptionally strong participation in national events. Expenses remain below budget due in part to the timing of staffing additions, resulting in an operating surplus significantly ahead of projections. While acknowledging that expenses will increase during the remainder of the fiscal year as National Team and international competition costs are incurred, Treasurer Reynolds expressed confidence that the organization is well positioned to finish the year ahead of budget.

Treasurer Reynolds also outlined upcoming priorities for the Finance Committee, including ongoing financial oversight, comprehensive investment reviews with USA Wrestling's investment partners, and the development of the organization's next fiscal year budget.

JOWC/Grassroots Update
Director Pat Ream provided the JOWC update. The JOWC Committee met on March 12 to address ongoing grassroots initiatives, including updates to rules language and the implementation of the new Executive State Director Grant Program. Despite challenging timing due to youth state tournament schedules, the committee successfully convened and advanced key priorities.

The committee approved updated weigh-in language to provide greater clarity and consistency, requiring athletes to weigh in wearing an unmodified singlet as manufactured. The revision addresses previous areas of ambiguity and establishes a clear, enforceable standard for competition.

An update was provided on the Executive State Director Grant Program, which is designed to support state associations in growing membership and strengthening grassroots programming. Following a review process, grants were approved for Michigan, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and

Texas. Each approved state will receive ongoing guidance and accountability support from a designated JOWC committee mentor to help ensure effective implementation and responsible use of funds.

The committee emphasized that the grants are intended to drive measurable membership growth, enhance state-level programming, and strengthen the athlete development pipeline. Grassroots membership continues to show significant growth, supported by expanded opportunities for coaches and athletes and a continued focus on building pathways toward Olympic-level success. Looking ahead, the committee will continue supporting regional events, qualifiers, and programming leading into the freestyle and Greco-Roman seasons.

Long Range Plan Update
Director Van Stokes provided the Long Range Plan Update. The Long Range Planning Committee reviewed last met on March 30th to review the strategic priorities and hear from staff Directors where initiatives and accomplishments align with four strategic pillars: sustained competitive excellence, growing the base, building the brand, and connecting the community.

Director Stokes overviewed highlights of these initiatives as they relate to each pillar with the Board. The Committee also discussed the importance of intentionally developing culture across all areas of the organization, including the National Team environment, staff culture, and state association relationships. The new headquarters facility was highlighted as an important resource in supporting a modern, collaborative work environment and advancing the organization's strategic goals.

Director Stokes recognized the progress made through the Long Range Planning process, noting the strong alignment between department initiatives and the organization's strategic pillars. The Long Range Planning Committee will meet again ahead of the next in-person Board meeting and begin evaluating future priorities beyond the 2026–2028 strategic window.

2026 General World Team Procedures Update
Cody Bickley presented the 2026 General World Team Procedures to the Board. The primary updates focused on clarifying the challenge process and expanding language related to Final X scenarios. USA Wrestling worked with coaches, athletes, officials, and the USOPC Athlete Ombudsman Office to review and refine the language, ensuring the procedures are clearly defined and provide appropriate guidance in unique circumstances.

Updates included additional clarification regarding situations where an athlete qualified for Final X but is unable to compete, including how World Team status and National Team rankings would be determined based on the athlete’s qualification pathway.

Additional clarification was also added regarding situations involving weight management, including an athlete failing to make weight. The revisions were designed to provide greater transparency and consistency for athletes, coaches, and stakeholders throughout the World Team selection process.

The updated procedures were reviewed and supported by all three Sport Committees. Voting results included strong approval from Men's Freestyle, Women's Freestyle, and Greco-Roman committees, with the revisions receiving near-unanimous support.

Director Sam Julian made a motion to approve the 2026 General World Team Procedures as presented. Robby Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Athlete Advisory Committee Report
Director Robby Smith gave the AAC Report. Director Smith is currently serving as Interim Chair while Chair Mallory Velte is on maternity leave.

The AAC has worked collaboratively with USA Wrestling and the USOPC on several important issues, including athlete concerns related to schedule changes surrounding Final X, ensuring athletes have appropriate guidance and support throughout the selection process. The committee has also addressed governance and conflict-of-interest considerations involving athletes serving on committees while employed by USA Wrestling, with the goal of creating greater clarity, transparency, and consistency.

Additional areas of focus have included improving athlete resources and opportunities through collaboration with National Team staff. The AAC has provided input on National Team contracts, athlete compensation opportunities associated with international competition, and efforts to maximize available resources for athletes competing at the highest levels. The committee has also engaged in discussions regarding updates to elite athlete health insurance programs through the USOPC and how changes may impact USA Wrestling athletes.

Director Smith highlighted the strong engagement of the AAC, noting consistent participation and active involvement from committee members. He emphasized the committee's commitment to collaboration and ensuring athletes have a meaningful voice in organizational decisions. President Baumgartner thanked the AAC for their continued efforts to work collaboratively with USA Wrestling for the benefit of athletes and the sport.

Team USA AC Update
Director Veronica Carlson provided the Team USA AC update. She highlighted the recent appointment of a new Executive Director, Funny Blakemore, a 2008 Olympian with extensive leadership experience in collegiate athletics and athlete representation. Under new leadership, the Commission has established key priorities focused on increasing awareness among athletes, clarifying roles and governance structures, strengthening alignment with the USOPC, and elevating the athlete voice in organizational decision-making.

Carlson discussed ongoing governance conversations within the Commission, emphasizing the importance of maintaining broad athlete representation across all sports and ensuring that smaller National Governing Bodies continue to have a meaningful voice. She noted that the Commission has made progress toward stronger collaboration with the USOPC, creating a more unified approach to addressing athlete needs and concerns.

Additional areas of focus include expanding mental health resources and addressing abusive or harmful messaging directed toward athletes, reviewing representation opportunities within athlete leadership groups, and supporting efforts to better understand and improve athlete compensation structures across sports.

Director Carlson also highlighted the importance of the annual Athlete Listening Survey, encouraging USA Wrestling athletes to participate, as the feedback collected helps guide Commission priorities and advocacy efforts.

Constituent Group Reports
President Baumgartner called for reports from the constituent and other group representatives.

First Vice-President Joan Fulp provided an update on the continued growth of women's wrestling at the high school level. The Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association recently voted unanimously to officially sanction girls wrestling, bringing the total number of states with sanctioned girls wrestling programs to 48 states.

Fulp also provided an early update on participation trends for the 2025–26 season. Based on weight assessment data collected from state high school athletic associations, which has historically served as a strong indicator of participation levels, early numbers continue to show significant growth. With data received from 28 states and prior-year participation numbers included for remaining states, the current estimate is approximately 85,000 girls participating in wrestling-related weight assessments, an increase from approximately 79,000 the previous year.

While final participation numbers are still being collected and are not yet ready for publication, Fulp highlighted the continued momentum of girls wrestling nationwide and the organization's ongoing progress toward reaching the milestone of 100,000 female high school wrestlers.

Director Jay Antonelli was unable to attend the meeting and provided the Armed Forces Sports Council update via email. President Baumgartner provided the update to the Board on his behalf. The Armed Forces held their wrestling championships in March at Ft Bliss TX which the Army team took the championship in both styles. The 2026 Military world championships to be held in Novosibirsk, RUS have been cancelled due to world events. Right now, there is no alternative site. Wrestling will be included in the World Military Games in 2027 held here in Charlotte, NC late June, early July 2027.

Director Jonny Ruggiano of the Federation of Clubs did not have a report at this time. The group will meet later this month at the US Open.

Director Thomas Pompei provided a written National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics report included in the board packet. He had no additional items to report from the written report provided.

Director Mark Bedics provided the National Collegiate Athletic Association report. He highlighted the successful launch of the inaugural NCAA Women's Wrestling National Championship, recognizing it as a significant milestone for the continued growth and

advancement of women's wrestling. Bedics thanked USA Wrestling leadership and staff for their support and involvement across NCAA championship events.

Bedics also noted the approval of the NCAA Division III Women's Wrestling Championship, which is scheduled to begin competition in 2028. Future NCAA championship planning will continue to include Division I and Division II women's championships, with Division III operating as a separate championship moving forward.

The 2025 NCAA Division I Men's Wrestling Championships in Cleveland were also recognized as a major success, drawing more than 103,000 spectators and achieving sellouts for nearly every session. Bedics noted the continued strength and growth of NCAA wrestling events, with future championship locations already secured, including St. Louis for 2026. Bidding processes for future championships across men's and women's divisions will begin this summer, with selections expected to be announced in early 2027.

Director Brett Monaghan provided a written National Junior Collegiate Athletic Association report included in the board packet.

Director Elliot Hopkins provided the National Federation of State High School Associations report. Elliot thanked Rich, Bruce, Joan, and Mike Moyer for their long-time collaboration. NFHS just finished the rule change meeting, it will be a full 14-day process, and a press release overviewing changes will be posted Thursday.

Director Mike Moyer provided a written National Wrestling Coaches Association report included in the board packet. He also provided a verbal update on the continued growth and expansion of collegiate wrestling. The National Wrestling Coaches Association (NWCA) has added 37 new intercollegiate wrestling programs for the upcoming year, including the addition of men's and women's programs at Judea College in Pennsylvania. Moyer noted that Pennsylvania now has approximately 78 collegiate wrestling programs across all levels, highlighting the continued momentum of the sport nationwide. Since 2000, collegiate wrestling has grown by approximately 464 programs across men's and women's divisions.

Director Moyer emphasized that while collegiate wrestling continues to experience significant growth overall, Division I programs remain a key area of focus due to ongoing challenges facing the sport. He highlighted continued efforts to protect and preserve programs at the highest level, including recent advocacy efforts to support at-risk programs.

Director Moyer also provided an update on legislative advocacy efforts, noting that the NWCA has been actively engaged in Washington, D.C., meeting with more than 100 elected officials and staff members over the past 18 months. These efforts are focused on ensuring wrestling and other Olympic sports are considered in discussions surrounding antitrust protections and future collegiate athletics policies. Moyer stressed the importance of continued collaboration between the NWCA, USA Wrestling, and the broader wrestling community to protect and strengthen the future of the sport.

Director Lee Roy Smith provided a written National Wrestling Hall of Fame report included in the board packet. Director Smith highlight the upcoming 50th anniversary of the NWHOF and the 49th inductee class that will be celebrated at Honors Weekend in June. President Baumgartner and Rich Bender thanked Director Smith for his dedicated service to the NWHOF and USA Wrestling as he plans to hand over the reins to a new Executive Director this year.

Director Sam Julian provided a report from USWOA. He reported continued growth in USA Wrestling's officiating program, with officials supporting major events including the inaugural NCAA Women's Championship and the Armed Forces Championships.

He highlighted ongoing education and development efforts such as webinars, rules updates, leadership training, and instructional resources aimed at improving consistency and officiating standards nationwide.

Director Julian also noted the launch of Officials Training Academies in Colorado Springs, where officials participated in hands-on training and collaborated with coaches and athletes during national team camps.

He thanked USA Wrestling for its continued support, emphasizing that expanded domestic and international opportunities are strengthening the organization's officiating program globally.

New Business
President Baumgartner asked for any additional updates or new business. Hearing none, he thanked the all for attending and the efforts made to make USA Wrestling better every day.

Motion to adjourn: Lee Roy Smith
The meeting adjourned at 7:02 pm MT