

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, October 20, 5:00 p.m. MT**

Present:

Bruce Baumgartner, President  
Mark Reiland, First Vice President  
Joan Fulp, Second Vice President  
Kerry McCoy, Secretary  
Van Stokes, Treasurer  
Jim Ravannack, Past President  
Steve Thorpe  
Mike Macchiavello  
Mike Juby  
Rob Cate  
Veronica Carlson  
John Stefanowicz  
Stan Dziedzic, UWW Vice President

Absent

Craig LaMont

Staff:

Rich Bender, Executive Director  
Les Gutches, Associate Executive Director  
Pete Isais, National Events Director  
Ryan Johnson, Director of Sales and Marketing  
Gary Abbott, Communications Director  
Meredith Wilson, IT Director  
Laura Peeters, General Counsel  
Cody Bickley, National Team High Performance Manager  
Haley Scherr, Executive Assistant

The Executive Committee was called together to discuss participating in the 2020 World Championships in Belgrade Serbia, in early December. President Bruce Baumgartner welcomed Joan Fulp to her first meeting on the Executive Committee.

President Baumgartner indicated that the organization reviewed the opinion of several other expert groups to include the USOPC Chief Medical Officer Jonathan Finnoff & USOPC liaison to the State Department Jen Gallagher, COVID-19 Public Relations and Messaging Committee and the COVID-19 Advisory Committee. An Athlete Advisory Committee call was also held. There was a survey sent to athletes and the results were provided to the Committee for review and consideration in the discussion.

There was discussion of why USA Wrestling is hosting events nationally but may consider not participating in international events. The consensus of the groups that met was that the USA has exceptional medical care, which could not be guaranteed in other nations. Traveling internationally creates another set of problems. There was also concern about what would happen to an athlete or delegation member if someone were to test positive while overseas, and when or if they could return home.

There was a Russian National Championship held in Moscow which did not follow health and safety protocol. An Around the Rings article stated the Russian Sambo European Championships scheduled for late November was cancelled due to COVID.

John Stefanowicz provided some insight into the military wrestlers and their ability to participate. The DOD has a set of rules but groups within that may add additional rules/requirements to this. The military has stated that the wrestlers are not allowed to travel/attend any events until after January 1. There is not a current blanket ban preventing international travel but things are fluid and can change at any moment. As an example in South Carolina, military is not allowed to leave without 30-day notice but it varies across the USA.

The group discussed the results of the athlete survey, which did not show that a strong percentage of the athletes had supported either position, either attending the World Championships or not attending the World Championships. Kerry McCoy talked about the decision in 2002 when the USA did not compete in the World Championships in Iran, as an athlete on the team that did not attend, and what his perspective is now about the difficult decision reached by USA Wrestling 18 years ago.

The committee agreed to make a decision based on the facts we have now, recognizing that things may change. The Executive Committee will take into consideration the wishes of the athletes but fully understand that a decision must be made based on the safety and welfare of our athletes and delegation. According to both John Stefanowicz and Veronica Carlson, the athletes want a decision sooner rather than later, so they can plan accordingly. It was noted that there is also a relatively short timeframe for the selection of the World Team. The USOPC has to approve the selection procedures and the selection event would have to be held by mid-November.

**Motion:** Rob Cate – “to make a decision by voting tonight on whether to attend the 2020 World Championships in Serbia”.

**Second:** Veronica Carlson.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

Gary Abbott explained the plan for process of announcing the decision once it was finalized. A press release would be distributed that night, and then a virtual press conference would follow the next day to provide an opportunity for Q&A after the announcement is made. Information will be shared with athletes and Board prior to the official press release being posted and sent to the media.

**Motion:** Rob Cate – “In the interest of the health and safety of our athletes and due to the current worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, we move that USA Wrestling not send a team to Serbia to participate in the World Championships”.

**Second:** Veronica Carlson.

**A voice vote was decided upon, and the motion carried unanimously.**

The committee discussed the language of the press release, and agreed that it should indicate that the Executive Committee unanimously approved the decision.

Steve Thorpe thanked Mike Juby for his many years as state chairperson in Kansas, in recognition that he decided to no longer serve in that role within Kansas USA Wrestling.

John Stefanowicz asked how to replace an at-large member of the Board, which must be done with the passing of Greg Strobel. He was told that based upon the by-laws that the President would appoint this position, because it was not from a constituent group.

Motion to adjourn by Mark Reiland, Second by Rob Cate. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.