



USLA Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 28, 2023 @ 8:00PM EST

Zoom Call

Members Present: Erin Warren, Don Simkin, Scot McIntyre, Bob Hughes, Ken Yonemura, Bruce Norman, Summer Britcher, Chris Mazdzer, Tucker West, Adam Berlew

Staff Present: Jim Leahy, Mark Grimmette, Amy Chapin, Lucy Beaulieu

Ms. Warren called the meeting to order at 8:05PM

Approval of the December 21, 2022, Board meeting minutes

Ms. Warren noted that Ken Yonemura's name was missing from the attendance sheet. Mr. Leahy made a note, and it will be added.

Motion to approve the Minutes of December 21, 2023, by Scot McIntyre, second by Bruce Norman. Minutes approved.

Strategic Priorities Update - Updates were given on the following topics.

Culture Update – Jim Leahy

Mr. Leahy turned this over to the chair of the Culture Committee, Don Simkin. Mr. Simkin reported that the members of the Culture Committee, Chris Mazdzer, Brenna Payne and Lucy Beaulieu all went to respective staff and received significant input which led to the document in front of the board today. Everyone was eager to give info and Mr. Mazdzer did the bulk of the work and synthesized the info and what we see is this collaboration. We are hoping to have a retreat like gathering using Julia Clukey as a facilitator and this document will be used as a starting point. Mr. Simkin thanked everyone for making this process go so well. He also thanked Mr. Norman for our starting document as well as all the feedback that was contributed. It's a great work in progress. Mr. Mazdzer added that the hardest part was condensing the information – overall this is what we were hoping to achieve with input from many different stakeholders, so the information is successfully representative of all.

It was asked if prior to getting board approval of this document whether any other changes needed to be made. An explanation was made that this document includes a change to our existing Mission Statement so as to better align with our SafeSport policies.

Ms. Warren posed the question, how do we breathe life into this, how do we use this document to drive it into our operations? There was discussion on this, and suggestions included to perhaps post the document and video regarding our Core Values on the website or social media. Another idea is to make a collective video to introduce it to the organization and also plan a smaller meeting to discuss this to make it real. Also suggested was to develop rituals or practices to bring life to this. Further work and discussion will be needed.

Motion to Accept – this document including the updated Mission Statement by Bruce Norman, second by Adam Berlew. Passed.

Update on Technology Program and Testing – Mark Grimmette/Bruce Norman/Tucker West

Mr. Leahy began by stating that we all knew we wanted to include more outside engineering input. During the recent testing period in Park City a tech meeting was held which will be reported here.

Mr. Grimmette stated that we have split the technology into two parts. Research and Manufacturing. Mr. Grimmette continued with an overview of the various projects that are currently being done that included CAD designs, CFD, application of real time results, a new steel working group and the Park City testing with some athletes.

Mr. Norman discussed the data collection from the Park City testing and the overall project of developing a sled telemetry system. It is a widespread project where a great deal of data has been collected over many sleds and tracks over the past 6 weeks. We now have a prototype that can help analyze data instantly regarding the run athletes have just completed. Next, we can add statistics for comparison's sake. This is a major milestone completed and allows us to provide real analytics to athletes. Mr. Norman has already contributed over \$20k, not including his personal time, to this project and is asking the Board to contribute another \$7k of support to continue funding a wolfpack unit for each athletes sled.

The Board recognized Mr. Norman's commitment to the project and enthusiastically put their support behind this effort. Ms. Warren asked for BOD members to get in touch with her to give their level of support and she will take care of any shortfall and is excited about this project. Mr. Grimmette added that this will be a fantastic tool for the athletes in the future.

Mr. West reported that he went with a Wolfpack, and he trained with it on many sleds including in Park City. This allowed him to review information and use actual information prior to the next day sliding and he expects that the data will only get better in future as much more information is provided. There was discussion on what countries may have this technology. Mr. Norman stated that perhaps Germany and Austria have this, but this data is currently only

being done on rocket missiles. We now need coachable insight to the algorithm. Athletes see the potential and are excited. Ms. Britcher added that Mr. Norman made it very easy for the athletes to transmit info and she is excited to see the gains they can work on during the summer.

Mr. West also added that he has reached out the athletes and feel we are moving in a positive direction at this time. Many of the team members were able to meet the metallurgy group while in Park City. There are some concerns as the testing will be costly and need to make sure we can get grants for these costs. Overall feedback was positive though there were some comments and frustration on some parts of sled manufacturing.

The overall feeling is we now need to move forward and try to catch up with competitors.

Head Coach Staffing Update – Jim Leahy/Mark Grimmette

Mr. Leahy explained that we are currently in discussions with several candidates in mind to solidify the National Team staff and there are many moving parts. There are several candidates, and he hopes to come back on the May 12 meeting with an update on this. He did state that athletes and staff are fully engaged in this process.

End of Season Updates

22-23 Budget Outlook – Jim Leahy

Mr. Leahy reported that overall donations are down. We do have some fundraisers still to be held for the remaining balance of the fiscal year, but the drop in donations to USLA is concerning.

Team Performance – Mark Grimmette

Mr. Grimmette reported that overall, we had a good year. We had many athletes finish in the top 10 and top 5 spots. We believe we have the right coaches in the right spots. It was not an easy season, but we are pleased with the progress in the first year of the quad. Mr. Grimmette added that performance is moving in the right direction. Start performances are better and the sliding looks better. We made several good steps forward in the right direction and we need to continue to make positive strides going at forward.

Mr. West added that there were no Russians so look at the performances with that in mind and we do need to keep our foot on the gas. Ms. Warren added that each discipline, Junior and General Class displayed highlights which she felt was good and exciting to see.

Ms. Britcher added that regarding Women's Doubles that Maya Chan and Reannyn Weiler are still Junior athletes competing in General Class races. They would have done well if they competed in Junior level races.

Mr. Mazdzer added that he feels we have not done a good job at mixing the Junior and General Class athletes since we have not held a Senior National Championship in recent years. He felt that these races allow us to compete as one national team and give us a good depth chart. Mr. Grimmette explained that this has not occurred due to covid hangover, but the plan is to get back to this next season.

Overview on Lessons Learned and Status Update of Addie Albert – Jim Leahy

Mr. Leahy gave an overview of the injury sustained by Addie Albert (Jr. C Team member) and thanked Dr. Ken Yonemura and Dr. Eugene Byrne for their medical advice during her time in the hospital in Korea. Mr. Leahy continued that this is first time we had a horrific traumatic injury to a C team athlete abroad and it uncovered that we do have some gaps in our travel insurance for development teams. Our SNT is covered under the USOPC Elite Athlete Health Insurance, but all other classes are not covered under our secondary policy when they travel internationally. Moving forward all athletes not covered under EAHI will be provided travel insurance that USLA will bind with an additional carrier to medical coverage internationally.

USLA is assisting the Albert family with assistance to help defray their medical expenses incurred.

The family has told us that Addie is doing well, doing rehab at Cleveland Childrens Hospital. Addie has told our coaches that she wants to return this fall and we will continue to encourage her to stay positive.

Ms. Warren thanked everyone for their time stating that we covered a lot of information on this call.

Adjourned – The meeting was adjourned at 9:25PM.

Motion to adjourn by Chris Mazdzer and Second by Don Simkin.