

**USA Water Ski & Wake Sports
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Lake Myrtle Sports Park, Auburndale, FL
January 30, 2022**

(Minutes recorded by Melanie Hanson, edited by Doug Robbins, Bob Archambeau and Nate Boudreaux)

Virtual attendees noted in red

Officers in Attendance:

Doug Robbins* – Chair/HND
Robert Archambeau – President
Dale Stevens – Vice President
Joel Johanningmeier – Secretary/Treasurer, NSSA

Board Members in Attendance:

Jerry Bautsch – AWSA-SC
Connie Bergmark – AWSA-W
Don Bucher – AWSA-MW/HND (outgoing)
Charlie Buckley – USHA
Pat Byrne – AWSA-E (incoming)
***Tim Cullen – Past President/HND**
Michael Flynn – Independent Director
Christy Kingsmill – NCWSA
Alex Lauretano* – AAC
Jason Lee – AAC
Gerry Luiting – NSSA/HND
Andrew Martin – ABC (incoming)
Connor Poggetto – AAC
Dave Rezin – AAC
Doug Ribley – NSSA
Susan Richey – USA-AWSWS (alternate for Matt Oberholtz)
Cheryl Ruston – NWSRA

Absent:

Andrew Adkison – USOC/AAC
Kenny Stuart Jr. – AKA/HND
Cathy Williams – USA-WB

**Non-voting*

Committee Chairs in Attendance:

Jeff Clark – Bylaws

Leon Larson – Waterways

Jeff Smith – Judicial

Dale Stevens – Ethics/Nominating

Harley Wallace – Risk Management

Honorary National Directors in Attendance (in addition to the above):

Jeffrey Armstrong

Floyd McCreight

Bill Wenner

Headquarters' Staff in Attendance:

Scott Atkinson – Sr. Director, Communications and External Relations

Nate Boudreaux – Executive Director

Frances Buchanan – Business Operations Manager

Molly Crum – Partnership Services Manager

Melanie Hanson – Membership Services Director

Sandy Hardee – Membership Services Specialist

Jennifer Walker – Membership Marketing Director

Affiliate Organizations in Attendance:

James Krawczyk – Water Sports Industry Association (WSIA)

Alternate Board Members in Attendance:

None

Guests in Attendance:

Geneva Brett – USA-AWSWS Secretary/Treasurer

Lyman Hardy – AWSA President

Randy Melcher – EPIC

Karen Melnik – AWSA Eastern Region EVP

Kelly Pribbenow – EPIC

Bonnie Ruston – NWSRA

Timmie Mathern - USHA

Robert Howerton – AWSA SC EVP

All votes are unanimous unless otherwise indicated.

1. Opening

Chair Doug Robbins welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

2. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 a.m.

3. Announcements, Introductions and Roll Call

Board members, staff and guests introduced themselves and stated their title or position on the board.

4. Appointment of Parliamentarian

Jeff Clark was appointed as Parliamentarian.

- **Motion** to allow committee chairs, Headquarters' staff, alternate board members and guests to join the meeting with no vote – **approved**
- **Motion** to allow any action items coming from committee reports to be presented as motions with an automatic second – **approved**

5. Announcement of Quorum

A quorum was present.

6. Review and Approval of 2021 Board Minutes

- **Motion** to approve Jan. 31, 2021 board meeting minutes – **approved**
- **Motion** to approve Mar. 16, 2021 (virtual) board meeting minutes – **approved**
- **Motion** to approve July 28, 2021 (virtual) board meeting minutes – **approved**
- **Motion** to approve Oct. 26, 2021 (virtual) board meeting minutes – **approved**

7. Ratification of 2021 Email Board Ballot Votes

- **Motion** to ratify 2021 email board ballots votes – **approved**

*** Newly elected Sport Discipline Directors took their seats.

8. USA-WSWS Bylaws Committee Special Report – Jeff Clark, Chair

The written report was included in the BOD packet.

a. Director Seating Allocations for 2022-2023

AWSA: East (Pat Byrne) replaces Midwest (Don Bucher) according to AWSA P&P 3.3

b. Sport Discipline Vote Allocations for 2022-2023

Andrew Adkison	USOC/AAC	6.6
Alex Lauretano	AAC	6.6
David Rezin	AAC	6.6
Jason Lee	AAC	6.6
Connor Poggetto	AAC	6.6
Dr. Michael Flynn	USOPC ID	6.6
Jerry Bautsch	AWSA	10
Connie Bergmark	AWSA	10
Pat Byrne	AWSA	10
Doug Ribley	NSSA	7
Joel Johanningmeier	NSSA	7
Gerry Luiting	NSSA	7
Christy Kingsmill	NCWSA	2
Cathy Williams	USA-WB	1
Andrew Martin	ABC	1
Cheryl Ruston	NWSRA	1
Charlie Buckley	USHA	1
Kenny Stuart	AKA	1
Matt Oberholtz	USA-AWSWS	1
Doug Robbins*	COB	1
Bob Archambeau	President	0
Dale Stevens	VP	0
Joel Johanningmeier	Sec/Treasurer	0
Tim Cullen	Past President	0

- **Motion** to approve the 2022-2023 Director Seating and Sport Discipline Vote Allocations as presented – **approved**

9. Review and Approval of Agenda

Robbins asked if any agenda needs reordered for any reason.

Robbins asked if any agenda items present a conflict of interest for any voting members of the board. If so, board members must disclose to allow for an adjustment of the votes. There were no conflicts disclosed.

- **Motion** to accept agenda as presented – **approved**

10. Nominating Committee Report – Dale Stevens, Chair (verbal)

a. Election of Officers and Honorary National Directors:

Officers: Stevens stated that the existing officers have agreed to serve another term and the committee received no other nominations. Robbins opened nominations from the floor. None were forthcoming.

Chairman of the Board – Doug Robbins
President – Bob Archambeau
Vice President – Dale Stevens
Secretary/Treasurer – Joel Johanningmeier

- **Motion** to approve the slate of officers as presented above – **approved**

Honorary National Directors – Jeff Surdej

- **Motion** to approve Jeff Surdej as an Honorary National Director – **approved**

b. Seating of New Officers – They were seated.

11. President's Report – Bob Archambeau

The written report was included in the BOD packet.

12. Executive Committee Report – Bob Archambeau, Chair

The written report was included in the BOD packet. Votes for Action Items 1 and 2 handled under Bylaws Committee report.

13. Executive Director's Report – Nate Boudreaux, Executive Director

The written report was included in the BOD packet and Boudreaux gave an overview via PowerPoint presentation.

ACTION ITEM: At Dave Rezin's request, HQ will work with and communicate to clubs on Get on the Water Week (GOTWW) clinic dates outside of the designated GOTW dates since many clubs have a lot of other events going on around 4th of July.

14. Treasurer's Report – Joel Johanningmeier, Secretary/Treasurer (Verbal)

The written report with the budget and budget notes was included in the BOD packet.

Boudreaux stated that the final 2021 financials are not yet complete; however, the totals listed for 2021 give an accurate enough picture to assist with budget projections. Closed 2021 financials will be presented to the board once completed.

Boudreaux noted that we are projecting a near \$40,000 budget deficit in 2022 due to significant increases in insurance premiums, magazine production costs, and legal expenses to defend an ongoing lawsuit and grievance. However, we will be receiving an Employee Retention Credit (ERC) of nearly \$60,000 at some point in 2022 (from credits due in 2020 and 2021) that will be used to offset the projected budget losses. The credit is not reflected in the actual budget but will be applied to the P&L in account 8028-Payroll Taxes once received.

The newly launched membership platform offers members the ability to select Auto-Renewal for 2023 membership renewal. This initiative was approved by the BOD several years ago, but we did not have the infrastructure to implement it until now. Previously we offered multi-year memberships for Individual Active members. The new auto-renewal option has replaced the multi-year membership offering for 2022. We will, however, still honor any existing multi-year memberships until they expire.

- **Motion** to approve the 2022 proposed budget as presented – **approved**

15. Insurance Report – Randy Melcher and Kelly Pribbenow, EPIC

The Insurance Advisory Group summary and written report from EPIC was included in the BOD packet.

Melcher and Pribbenow shared a presentation highlighting the current state of insurance market, insurance, regulatory and claims trends, risk management best practices, and highlights of changes to USA-WSWS's insurance coverage for 2022. The BOD thanked EPIC for the presentation, stating that it was informative, very thorough, and would be an excellent resource to share with our membership. Melcher said he would send a copy of the presentation to Boudreaux.

Melcher stated that liability insurance carriers are looking for sports organizations to go above and beyond the minimum requirements established by federal and state laws in the areas of abuse risk management, prevention, and education. Melcher noted that since the statute of limitations has changed in several states with respect to abuse and molestation claims, and that it is very important that organizations maintain historical policy records since claims can surface many years down the road. If an abuse claim from 10 years ago surfaces, the liability insurance policy that was in place at the time of the alleged occurrence is the policy that will respond to that claim. Gerry Luiting asked what happens if the liability insurance carrier that wrote coverage historically is no longer in business due to bankruptcy or insolvency. Melcher responded that most states have a State Guaranty Fund to handle situations where a licensed insurance carrier is not able to fulfil its obligations under an insurance policy. He also added that in the case where an insurance carrier is acquired by another carrier, the acquiring carrier would typically assume responsibility for the defense and handling of the claim.

Melcher noted the cost of defending and settling abuse and molestation claims are significantly higher today than what similar claims would have been 10 years ago. Fortunately, USA-WSWS's new liability insurance carrier provides higher abuse coverage than what was being provided under the expiring insurance policies through Philadelphia, but that despite the availability of increased limits, we need to be diligent in preventing abuse situations from occurring through our SafeSport efforts, including awareness and prevention training and comprehensive background screening.

Boudreaux stated that Local Organizing Clubs (LOCs) were sent an email outlining the LOCs responsibilities regarding Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policies (MAAPP). LOCs expressed concern that USA-WSWS is transferring liability to the LOCs. Melcher explained that our liability insurance policies provide coverage to the specified named insured parties with respect to events sanctioned by USA-WSWS. The coverage is underwritten with the expectation that all USA-WSWS rules & regulations, risk management & safety requirements, waiver requirements, SafeSport requirements, etc. are being followed. However, if something "falls through the cracks" from a requirements standpoint, the liability insurance carrier would still have a duty to defend and provide coverage subject to policy terms & conditions.

ACTION ITEM: USA-WSWS to send follow-up communication to clubs clarifying MAAPP requirements and liability concerns.

Robbins thanked Melcher and Pribbenow for their report and EPIC's valued partnership with USA-WSWS.

16. Committee Reports

All committee reports were unanimously approved by the BOD as submitted unless otherwise indicated.

- **Awards – Lori Krueger, Chair (absent):** The written report was included in the BOD packet.
- **Bylaws – Jeff Clark, Chair:** The written report was included in the BOD packet.

Action Item #1: Insert the following (suggested) Background Screening and SafeSport Training Requirements for Judges statement in the USA-WSWS SafeSport Handbook.

Clark noted that the wording presented by the Executive Committee for this action item differs from that presented by the Bylaws Committee, as noted outlined below.

Executive Committee Report Wording – USA-WSWS judges that are 18 and older who are appointed or assigned to work National Championship and/or IWWF sanctioned World or Confederation Championship events in their respective sports discipline.

Bylaws Committee Wording – All Judges that are selected and approved by a Sport Discipline of USA-WSWS to officiate in the National tournament and/or any IWWF-sanctioned event, will complete the Safe Sport Training and Background Check as required by USA-WSWS.

Revised Wording – USA-WSWS judges (who are 18 and older) who are selected and approved by USA-WSWS or one of its sport disciplines to officiate at a National Championship event, or any IWWF World Championship or Multi-Sports event (e.g., World Games), or Pan American Confederation titled event, shall complete the SafeSport Training and Background Screening as required by USA-WSWS.

- **Motion** to approve Action Item #1 as revised above – **approved**

Action Item #2: Update USA-WSWS Compliance Chart as Necessary

- **Motion** to approve Action Item #2 as presented – **approved**

Action Item #3: Update language in the Education and Training Section of the SafeSport Handbook to reflect the new SafeSport Training requirements to the current standards. The edited language and strikeouts are in red letters with yellow highlights as shown below.

SafeSport Handbook, Education and Training Section

- Page 23, second bullet near bottom of page, update to 30 days:

Within the first **45 30** days of initial membership, or upon beginning a new role subjecting the Adult Participant to this policy.

- Page 24, first paragraph, update membership statuses and remove text regarding renewing membership:

If a member has not completed the SafeSport™ Core training or required refresher course, their USA-WSWS membership status will appear as **"Pending - Safe Sport" "inactive"**; and the member will be unable to participate in sanctioned events until the training is completed. New members **and those renewing their membership** will have 30 days upon registering to complete the training. Membership status during this period will appear as **"Waiting - Need Safe Sport" "pending"** until the training is completed. If, after 30 days, training is not completed, membership status will become **"Pending - Safe Sport" "inactive"** and you will be unable to participate until training is completed.

- **Motion** to approve Action Item #3 as presented – **approved**

Action Item #4 (taken from action items in the Executive Committee Report) – Safe Sport Training Clarification: Update page 90 in the USA-WSWS Policies & Procedures and SafeSport Handbook on who needs to be SafeSport Trained, as follows:

All USA-WSWS Active members (18 years old and older) **who compete or participate in sanctioned tournaments or events** or have regular contact with any **amateur** athlete or other Participant who is a minor;

- **Motion** to approve EC Action Item #2 as revised in yellow above – **approved** (*Opposed - Gerry Luiting*)

Clark told the BOD that in the past the Code of Conduct and Ethics document had been sent out to all board members and they were required to sign a statement that they had read and understood the document. This process has now changed and is an online form that they must complete. BODs should review Appendix III - Code of Conduct and Ethics, Conflicts of Interest and Gifts requirements in the Policies & Procedures Manual to prepare themselves to complete the new online form.

Clark reminded the board that if they have a Conflict of Interest with any issues that may be brought to the floor through financial relationships or family involvement, they must declare these conflicts before any issues are brought to the floor and if these conflicts change at any time during the year that the member must resubmit a new form. He also reviewed the gifts policy and gave examples for consideration.

Archambeau will be sending out a letter to each of the USA-WSWS directors and committee members and the sport discipline Presidents requesting the rosters of their current national board and national committee members. These lists will be used to update the website for all these members and will also be used to send each person a link to the new online Code of Conduct and Ethics, Conflict of Interest and Gifts form for them to complete and submit. All sections in the form must be completed in its entirety.

When the form is submitted, it will go to the Ethics Committee Chair and then the Ethics Committee who will review each form and, if there are any issues, contact the person for explanation and/or how to resolve the issue.

The deadline for accomplishing all of this will be March 15 of this year.

ACTION ITEM: USA-WSWS HQ to communicate above changes to SafeSport Handbook and Compliance Chart to members.

- **Ethics – Dale Stevens, Chair:** No reported issues
- **International Activities – Jim Grew, Chair:** No Report

- **Judicial – Jeff Smith, Chair:** No Report
- **Risk Management/Safety – Harley Wallace, Chair:** The written report was included in the BOD packet.

Action Item #1 – Inclusion of IWWF On-Water Concussion Recognition Tool (OWCRT) in Safety Handbook.

- **Motion** to approve Action Item #1 as presented – **approved**

Action Item #2 – Require all safety officials (Coordinator, State, Regional and National) to complete the CDC Heads-Up Youth Sports Concussion Awareness Training.

Wallace stated that the CDC training takes approximately 20-25 minutes to complete. Return-to-play guidelines are not currently emphasized in the Safety Handbook, Rules, and safety training curriculum so the addition of the OWCRT and CDC Training will be a huge asset.

- **Motion** to approve Action Item #2 as presented – **approved**

Wallace stated that the Committee will be working on providing recommendations to the BOD/Safe Sport for revisions to the [Safe Sport Pre-Event Checklist](#) to differentiate event requirements for specific events.

Leon Larson is working on safety statistics which will be shared with the BOD once completed.

- **Towboat – George Lindy and Will Bush, Co-Chairs (absent):** No Report
- **USOPC AAC – Andrew Adkison, AAC/USOC Representative (absent):** The written report was included in the BOD packet.
- **Waterways – Leon Larson, Chair:** The written report was included in the BOD packet.

17. Sport Disciplines' and Related Organizations' Reports

- **Athlete Advisory Council (AAC) – Alex Lauretano, Chair (Verbal):** Lauretano stated that the AAC is having difficulty finding enough athletes to comply with the USOPC 33.3% athlete representation requirement.
- **Water Sports Industry Association (WSIA) – James Krawczyk, Director of Operations (verbal):** Krawczyk stated that there have been several personnel changes at WSIA. He

is a 14-year staff member of WSIA in marketing technology and was recently promoted to Director of Operations following Larry Meddock's retirement and Kevin Michael's departure as Executive Director in November. WSIA added Brad Fralick as chief government affairs officer. Fralick has 30 years of experience in multi-state lobbying and is a lifelong water sports enthusiast. As a lobbyist, he has worked with MADD, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Coast Guard to develop legislation to keep waterways safe. NMMA staffer Lee Gatts also joined WSIA as its new Director of Government Affairs. In his previous role with NMMA, Gatts advanced and protected advocacy efforts, spearheading the protection of wakesurfing activities from harmful legislation in multiple states, enhancing boater safety and education throughout the southeast region, and protecting recreational boating and fishing access to the water.

WSIA is working on proactive state legislation to keep waterways open, mediating bans on ballasted boats, and promoting boating education among other programs. Wake Responsibly is their largest boating education campaign.

WSIA Summit 2022 will be held Feb. 23-24, 2022, at the Resort at Squaw Creek in Lake Tahoe, Calif. Boudreaux will be attending to represent USA-WSWS.

- **American Kneeboard Association (AKA) – Kenny Stuart, President (absent):** The written report was included in the BOD packet.
- **USA Wakeboard (USA-WB) – Cathy Williams, President (absent):** The written report was included in the BOD packet.
- **American Barefoot Club (ABC) – Andrew Martin, President:** The written report was included in the BOD packet.
- **National Collegiate Water Ski Association (NCWSA) – Christy Kingsmill, Chair (verbal):** Skier/Team Stats: NCWSA was fortunate to be able to retain so many teams/skiers from 2019 to 2021 after taking 2020 off from tournaments and so much turnover in team leadership.

Events:

- Nationals 2020 – Event moved to Spring 2021 and then cancelled again due to COVID precautions and team restrictions.
- Nationals 2021 – Bennett's (Tri Lakes Ski Team) hosted the event with great attendance after taking a year off from competitions.
- Nationals 2022 – This event will be held at San Marcos River Ranch in Martindale, TX on October 13-15, 2022.
- All-stars 2021: Our premier spring event was held in Windsor, CO hosted by Purdue and Western Washington.
- All-stars 2022: This event will be held in Harmony, NC along with Team Trials May 20-22, 2022.

- Worlds 2022: FISU University Worlds, combined with wakeboard, will be held in Minsk, Belarus on August 24-27, 2022

Awards

- Male Outstanding Leader of the Year - Reilly Riefsteck, Iowa State University
- Female Outstanding Leader of the Year - Anna Prior, Ohio State University
- Male Athlete of the Year - Quinn Haines, University of Alabama
- Female Athlete of the Year - Brooke Baldwin, University of Alabama
- Team of the Year - Arizona State University

NCWSA Hall of Fame: Inducted Connie Bergmark, Jeff Clark, and Tom Murphy

- **National Show Ski Association (NSSA) – Doug Ribley, President:** The written report was included in the BOD packet.
- **National Water Ski Racing Association (NWSRA) – Cheryl Ruston:** The written report was included in the BOD packet.
- **USA Adaptive Water Ski & Wake Sports (USA-AWSWS) – Susan Richey (Alternate for Matt Oberholtz):** The written report was included in the BOD packet.
- **U.S. Hydrofoil Association (USHA) – Charlie Buckley, President (Verbal):** COVID-19 significantly impacted most of their events in 2021. Buckley thanked Chain of Records hosts, Geno Yauchler and Eric Gran, for hosting such a great event which allowed him to witness first-hand the many accolades of show skiing and other sport disciplines. USHA recently elected five new board members. USHA is planning a Nationals event to be held the end of October or beginning of November. They would be interested in buddying up with another sport discipline(s) for this event. Boudreaux stated that Polk County Sports Marketing (PCSM) is interested in bringing events to the Polk County area and there could be an opportunity to partner with USA Wakeboard on an event.
- **American Water Ski Association (AWSA) – Lyman Hardy, President:** The written report was included in the BOD packet.
- **Pan Am and IWWF Updates – Dana Garcia:** The written report was included in the BOD packet.

Lyman Hardy stated that in the past, participants in AWSA Class L or R (record capability) sanctioned tournaments were required to purchase an IWWF single-event license for \$7 each or an annual license for \$25. Due to administrative constraints, AWSA proposes to eliminate the single-event license option and require participants to purchase the \$25 annual license for these events.

- **Motion** to approve elimination of the IWWF single-event license for AWSA Class L and R sanctioned events – **approved**

ACTION ITEM: Communicate IWWF license change to AWSA skiers who participate in AWSA Class L and R events.

NSSA questioned how the IWWF license requirement will affect the 2022 IWWF Show Ski World Championships. Andrew Martin (ABC) and Lyman Hardy (AWSA) suggested that NSSA contact IWWF about a bulk license option. ABC currently utilizes the bulk license option whereas AWSA utilizes the per skier license. *Note: After consultation with IWWF there will be no IWWF fees for the Show Ski World Championships.*

18. Old Business

There was no old business.

19. New Business

- **Membership and Event Sanctioning Pricing** - Boudreaux shared a USA-WSWS Membership and Sanctioning Pricing Chart with the BOD which was created at the request of the Executive Committee and shows past and future pricing for memberships and event sanctioning. Proposed price increases for 2022 have been pushed out to 2023 due to the addition of a 3% technology fee on all transactions implemented with the launch of the new membership platform. The only exception was the addition of the \$50 practice/exhibition sanction fee implemented in 2022 that was originally approved by the BOD two years ago.

Boudreaux noted that in the past, the BOD had asked HQ to do more frequent, smaller increases based on financial need. He asked for BOD feedback on amount and frequency of increases moving forward considering the \$40,000 budget deficit proposed for 2022.

ACTION ITEM: BODs asked HQ to create several pricing proposals along with how each proposal would affect our financial position for their review.

- **Background Screening** – Boudreaux shared the concern of sport disciplines and members related to data security when completing a Background Screening application through NCSI and the requirement to provide a social security number.

ACTION ITEM: BODs requested that HQ seek additional information from NCSI regarding data security and the social security number requirement and, if necessary, investigate other companies who provide this service for their review.

- **Sport Discipline Communication to Members** – Currently USA-WSWS provides sport disciplines the ability to send email communications to their members through Constant Contact, where the sport discipline creates the content and HQ provides the email list and sends the communication. Boudreaux stated that HQ hopes to provide sport disciplines with permission-based access to member email communications via our new membership platform in the future.

ACTION ITEM: BODs agreed that HQ should require separate email addresses for each sport discipline/region sending email communications to their members so as not to jeopardize email deliverability of USA-WSWS member communications and transactional emails. Unsubscribe functionality will need to be included in all sport discipline/region email communications to allow members to opt-out of these specific email categories.

23. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at 8:00 a.m., Sunday, January 29, 2023, at the Lake Myrtle Sports Complex in Auburndale, Fla. (tentative based on availability of banquet venue).

ADJOURN

- **Motion** to adjourn at 2:15 p.m. – **approved**