



## BOD Meeting Minutes

October 2, 2024

### **Attendees:**

*USLA Board of Directors Members:* Bob Hughes, Zachary DiGregorio, Summer Britcher, Chris Mazdzer, Tucker West, Ty Danco, Robert Pokelwaldt, Bruce Norman, Jennifer Wesselhoff, Jeff Young, Michael Thomas, Larry Dolan

*USA Luge Staff:* Scott Riewald, Amy Chapin, Mark Grimmette, Lucy Beaulieu

Note: In the absence of a named President, Mr. Riewald (USA Luge CEO) ran the initial portion of the meeting, handing over leadership following the election of a President mid-way through the meeting.

### **Call to Order**

The meeting of the US Luge Association Board of Directors was called to order at 6:34 pm ET on October 2, 2024.

### **Conflict of Interest Discussions**

All Board members were asked to review the agenda and disclose any conflicts of interest that may exist based on the topics discussed. No conflicts were noted.

### **Approval of the Agenda**

A motion made by Mr. Norman to approve the agenda for the meeting. Second from Mr. Danco. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions and no discussion.

### **Approval of the Minutes from September 14 Board of Directors Meeting**

A motion to approve the minutes of the September 14 Board of Directors was made by Mr. Hughes and seconded by Mr. Pokelwaldt. Minutes were accepted with no abstentions and no discussion.

### **Introduction of Board Members**

As this is the first meeting with the 'new Board', including seven (7) new members, all Board members were asked to introduce themselves and share a bit about their experiences and what brought them to

the USLA Board of Directors. All board members, and USA Luge staff in attendance, shared a bit about themselves.

### **Questions from the Board**

There was a brief discussion around finances and fiscal prudence. Mr. Danco asked if the USLA has done a port-mortem on their finances and how they arrived at the deficit that subsequently required withdrawing money from the USLFF/ Foundation.

Mr. Riewald discussed that:

- There was a large draw against the foundation in 2023-24, leaving roughly \$1.1 million in the combined assets of the Foundation.
- The USLA has been operating over the past several years in an environment where expenses out-paced revenue. The organization has had increased costs related to technological development. Additionally, the cost of travel and generally doing business have increased as well, but
- Sponsorships and additional revenue have not necessarily increased in accordance.
- Opportunities to re-invigorate pursuit of sponsors and donors.
- The budget proposed for 2024-25 has been carefully put together to minimize the extent to which the organization may need to tap into Foundation resources.

### **Election of USLA President**

Mr. Robert Hughes was nominated as a candidate for president by Mr. Norman. Seconded by Mr. Larry Dolan. No additional nominations were made. Mr. Hughes will run for President of the USLA, unopposed.

A motion was made to elect Mr. Hughes as president by Mr. Norman, and was seconded by Mr. Dolan. Mr. Hughes was elected as President by a unanimous vote with one abstention (Mr. Hughes) and no discussion.

*Statement by Mr. Hughes.*

- Emphasis will be on working with CEO on maintaining fiscal responsibility and accountability within the organization.
- Acknowledges the challenges of the 2025-26 season as it brings expenses associated with the Olympic Games and hosting two (2) World Cups, which will provide opportunities for athlete qualification for Milan-Cortina.
- New energy on the board, excitement in USA Luge as well as in the Olympic Movement in general.

### **Recognition of Past President**

A motion was made by Mr. Danco to formally recognize the contributions of past-President, Erin Warren and thank her for her service to the organization. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dolan. The motion passed unanimously with no discussion, and the board formally thanks Ms. Warren for her years of service and the work she has done on behalf of the US Luge Association.

### **Election of Board Officials:**

Mr. Hughes shared the need to fill the Treasurer and Secretary positions.

Mr. Dolan made a motion to nominate Mr. Danco to serve as Treasurer of the organization. This was seconded by Mr. Pokelwaldt. Motion passed unanimously with no abstentions and no discussion.

Mr. Norman nominated Mr. Pokelwaldt to serve as Secretary of the USLA. This motion was seconded by Mr. Mazdzer. Motion passed unanimously with no abstentions and no discussion.

### **Discussion of USLA Committees**

The USLA by-laws contain term limitations on committee positions, which creates challenges for a small organization that relies on a small group of volunteers. The question was posed, 'Can we work around the limitations, and keep the currently constituted committees?' It was discussed that we could make changes to the by-laws to better reflect the pool of volunteers we have available.

Mr. Hughes moved to create a blanket decision to maintain current committee members, even if they have exceeded their by-law defined term limits.

Ms. Britcher brought up the need to bring in fresh ideas to the committees. Concerns were expressed that the committees would be stagnant without new members coming on board; we should look for opportunities to bring in new blood and ideas. Hesitant about the board making a blanket statement for all committees.

Mr. Riewald added that we could make a temporary resolution to keep the committees as currently constituted, while developing transition plans for the impacted committees that would allow new blood to be brought in over a period of time and avoid a large-scale departure of volunteers and institutional knowledge.

A revised motion was made by Mr. Hughes, to extend committee member terms until the next Board Meeting, while we look into which committee members are not in compliance with the by-law defined term limits. Motion was seconded by Mr. West. Motion was approved unanimously, with no abstentions and no additional discussion.

A request was made of the Board to bring forward ideas of individuals who could serve as potential committee members. We will work to fill spots and bring forward a slate of committee members for consideration at the next board meeting.

Ken Yomenura was proposed as someone interested in serving on the Ethics Committee.

### **Review of the Complaints and Grievances Procedures**

Previously the Complaints and Grievances procedures were included in the by-laws, but under the guidance of the USOPC, we have pulled those out of the by-laws to serve as a stand-alone document. The document brought forward meets USOPC guidelines, and any changes from previous language are minor and simply provide additional details/ clarification on the procedures of handling a complaint or grievance.

A motion to approve the Complaints and Grievances Policies and Procedures was brought forward by Mr. Danco, and was seconded by Mr. Pokelwaldt.

Discussion – Ms. Wesselhoff asked for clarification that all text highlighted in red are the proposed changes and that these changes are supported by the US Olympic & Paralympic Committee. Mr. Riewald confirmed this is true. Additional information was provided about the type of issues that would come forward as a complaint or a grievance.

*Complaint* – typically are directed towards membership, either organization to member or member-to-member, and can be related to a violation of USLA by-laws or policies.

*Grievances* – directed at the organization. Discussed a Section 9 violation that would challenge a denial of an athlete's right to compete at a protected competition. Additionally, if it is felt that the organization has violated their by-laws, this could also be brought forward as a grievance.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the Complaints and Grievances Procedures, as presented, with no abstentions and no additional discussion.

### **'Fiscal Year-end' Financial Report**

Ms. Beaulieu presented historical financials in two summary slides. The slides showed the audited income numbers. The numbers for 2024 are not the audited numbers, but the auditors will be conducting the audit of the past year's financials in December 2024. Numbers show stagnant revenue with an increase in expenses over the past several years. Audited financial statements show a decrease in assets from \$3 million to \$1.5 million over the past 4 years. Mr. Hughes presented a short overview of the US Luge Foundation (USLFF) and how it lives alongside the USLA.

Mr. Norman made a request for the Financial Slides reviewed during the meeting be shared with the Board after the call. USA Luge staff were charged with sharing that information.

**Other Business:**

*Contact List:* The request was made by Mr. Hughes to develop a Contact List with email and phone numbers for all Board Members. USA Luge staff will build that prior to the next meeting.

*Next Meeting(s):* Mr. Hughes opened a discussion about the next meeting. It was proposed the Board meets again prior to the National Team's departure for the first World Cup. The range of November 14-16 was proposed, with USA Luge staff charged with surveying the athletes/ team to identify an appropriate time that would minimally impact training. Additionally, we will look to identify a timeline for future meetings and distribute that.

No additional topics were brought forward for discussion.

**Adjournment**

Motion to Adjourn brought forward by Mr. Pokelwaldt and seconded by Ms. Britcher.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:45 pm ET.