



# USLA Board Meeting

Friday, May 12, 2023 @ 6:00PM  
Zoom Call

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

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

**Call To Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:04PM. Ms Warren thanked everyone for participating on a Friday night, it was the only time that worked for everyone and she appreciates everyone's availability.

**Approval of Minutes** the March 28, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

Ms. Warren asked for any comments, questions, or edits on the minutes. With none, she asked for a motion to approve. Moved by Adam Berlew, seconded by Chris Mazdzer. Motion PASSED.

**Approval of language change to the USLA Whistleblower Policy**

A recent SafeSport audit has mandated the language of the Whistleblower policy to be updated to include the word "retaliation".

Motion to approve was moved by Bruce Norman, seconded by Bob Hughes. Motion PASSED.

**23-24 Strategic Planning**

Mr. Leahy stated the two critical issues from the past season that still need to address are the roles of Head Coach and where we go with regards to our sports technical issues.

Head Coach – Mr. Leahy was happy to report that Lubo Mick will move into the Head Coach role this spring. He also reported a formalized a commitment with Toni Eggert, former German Luge athlete to work with us on our technical projects with a contract beginning on May 15, 2023 and extending through the Olympic Games in 2026. Mr. Eggert has been to Lake Placid and met with the staff and has seen our operations. This is a major financial commitment by USA Luge that will vastly improve our athlete's performance along with improving our technical sled building needs.

Mr. Grimmette added that due to several confidentiality issues Mr. Eggert has requested we not announce his hiring until after October 1. He also added that bringing Mr. Eggert in will address

issues that we have been working on for quite some time. His expertise in building his own sleds for the past 10 years will be extremely valuable. Kufen production and sled performance is an expertise he will bring to us. This is an opportunity that will make us better.

Mr. Leahy added that this is the best opportunity for us to acquire additional sled making knowledge and the opportunity to make such a hire will ultimately benefit our entire program.

Ms. Warren added that this is not unlike what we did in the 1980's when Wolfgang Schadler was brought in. Mr. Leahy added that USA Luge will receive financial support for this position through a defined contribution from a generous donor. Without this support it would have been difficult to make this hire happen.

Mr. Grimmette then highlighted the makeup of the entire coaching staff at the National, Jr. National and Development levels. There will be a need to fill some coaching spots at the D Team level as we approach the 2023-2024 season.

### **High Performance Plan**

Mr. Grimmette gave an overview of the High-Performance Plan (HPP) stating that it has been submitted to the USOPC. We expect the dollar support to be flat because of the commitment of LA 2028. The additional support that we will receive is likely to be in the form of direct athlete support.

Mr. Mazdzer added that at the AAC meeting there was a discussion about "what a Team USA Athlete is". This could impact Elite Athlete Health Insurance allocations and other things. It could also influence how we structure our teams in the future.

Mr. Grimmette stated that he has surveyed the athletes regarding what former start coach, Mandy Hillebrand brought to the program. The needs/benefit analysis will be helpful as we move in another direction with the USOPC on a new hire. The role will better attempt to align our start training with sport science by developing studies in biomechanics and other metrics.

Mr. Norman commented on how this will transfer to the technical Wolfpack project he is championing, with additional technology transfer issues that the USOPC may assist with.

We have restarted communications with the Sled Manufacturing group. This focus should be on steels and kufen cores. Hudson Valley Community College (HVCC) has made some progress on making kufen cores. We have also added a metallurgist to our group.

Mr. Norman said they have just completed the second version of the wolfpack technology and he appreciated the financial support from the Board. This version will also begin recording athlete driving data.

Mr. Grimmette stated that the two areas that will need continued focus will be CFD and FEA analysis.

Finally, on June 5 USA Luge will be meeting with the USOPC and our track operators to emphasize our need for more track time. As the Covid lock downs are behind us, we need a

plan from the tracks to better understand how we move forward and align our development programs with more hours of track operations available to us.

Ms. Warren stated that we expect track staffing to continue to be a problem. We have received word that the Park City track will operate 5 days a week next year and that more staff have been hired. They have acquired some ice maintenance equipment from Calgary that has automated ice maintenance and perhaps we need to see if LP should invest in something of this nature.

FIL/USOPC Update – Jim Leahy

Mr. Leahy reported that the FIL Congress is coming up June 16-18 in Bucharest. Ms. Warren will also attend.

USOPC – had a meeting last week where the discussion on upcoming Olympic Games was a focus. It now looks like the IOC will not move on a 2030 for SLC. Sweden is a likely candidate to be the 2030 candidate and the sliding facility may be in Sigulda. SLC will likely get 2034.

Mr. Mazdzer added that at the AAC meeting he did hear that it will be a Stockholm/Riga situation at the 2030 games as well.

Mr. Leahy informed the Board that we have contracted with former athlete, Julia Clukey, to conduct athletes and staff DISC analysis. The initial assessment forms are set to be emailed next week.

We have been working on transferring our website to USOPC's new platform. Our migration will take place June 6. We are currently in the process of making sure all our information has been transferred. The old site was extremely difficult to navigate for any changes and we hope this is better.

Mr. Simkin suggested that we may want to have the new culture statement added to the new website.

Ms. Britcher added that she felt many athletes will be excited to participate in the DISC assessment. Assessment will be customized to athletes, coaches, staff etc. The overall feeling is this is a proactive step forward in self-analysis and working with each other.

Ms. Chapin added that we will move to a new database platform with Sport80 on/about September 1. The new platform will integrate membership, SafeSport, background screening and other communication messages that will enhance compliance requirements and better serve our constituents.

The Board was also alerted to the fact that the USOPC will be undertaking a large-scale audit with us. This is done every several years with all NGB's and it is now our turn. More to come as we begin the process.

*Motion to Adjourn moved by Adam Berlew, second by Don Simkin. Approved.*

Meeting adjourned at 7:45PM