



**Board of Directors | Regular Meeting | September 14, 2024
Meeting Minutes**

Location: Held remotely via Zoom

Present: Jenny Schumacher (Chair), Shameeka Quallo (Vice Chair), Erin Andica, Jordan Cantrell (entered 10:48am), Mike Choi, Andy Coggins, Mario Dispenza, Tayler Harris, Adam Kleinfeld, John McGovern (exited 10:18am), Sara Soto, Sally Van de Water.

Staff Present: Matt Sicchio (CEO), Andrea Andrews (Director of Finance & Compliance), Michael Gattone (Senior Director of Sport Performance), Pedro Meloni (Director of Events & Sponsorship), JP Nicoletta (Director of Sport Development).

Guests Present: multiple members present.

1. **Call to Order.** JS called the meeting to order at 9:10 am, and welcomed all guests, BOD members and staff. Provided instructions for guests in attendance, reviewed the agenda and determined that a quorum exists.
2. **Declarations of Conflicts of Interest.**
 - a. JM: none.
 - b. SS: none on agenda. Blanket statement, IWF Cat 1 TO, member of a club in NY.
 - c. TH: none on agenda. Blanket statement, spouse is contractor to USAW HP team. Club owner and National TO.
 - d. SV: none on agenda. Blanket statement, Cat-1 TO, co-owner of gym with spouse who is a coach and course instructor.
 - e. MD: none.
 - f. MC: none on agenda. Blanket statement, Cat-1 TO, club owner.
 - g. AC: none.
 - h. EA: none.
 - i. JS: none on agenda. Blanket statement. Cat-1 TO, club owner.
 - j. SQ: none.
 - k. AK: none on agenda. Blanket statement, member of USA Karate's ethics committee.
 - l. JC: none.
3. **Chair Report.** JS reviewed the USAW BOD operating model from September 2023 meeting, outlining the function and role of the BOD.
4. **CEO Report.** MS presented an update on 2024 operational activities. This included highlighting our generational results at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, and high-level operational headlines related to

membership, coach education, national events, strategic planning, and staffing updates to the HQ team.

MS addressed the topic of athlete funding, which has been an active topic among our members over the last several weeks. He noted:

- USAW's 2024 budget allocates 38% of the \$7.5M budget in programs and expenses that directly support high performance athletes.
- An Olympic year comes with exceptional expenses that required us to adjust our budget accordingly.
- Our investment in high-performance athletes is aggressive relative to other NGBs.
- We made hard choices in the 2024 budget due to exceptional expenses associated with Olympic qualifying and the Olympic Games themselves. These choices were made in consultation with the Board and the AAC.

5. **Finance Report.** AA presented USAW's financial standing, budget adjustments and noted the 2023 audit was completed and returned from our third-party auditors as "clean." These audited financials will be posted to the USAW website. AA noted the addition of a new staff accountant to the Finance team, transition to a new accounts payable system, WSO and other financial process improvements and financial institution RFP process to transition USAW's banking relationship.

AA presented a request to make a special withdrawal from USAW's investment accounts under USA Weightlifting's Endowment & Investment Spending Policy to support operational cash flow through the balance of 2024. Following discussion, SQ made a motion: "I move to approve USA Weightlifting's request to make a special withdrawal of \$300,000, from its investment accounts in response to exceptional circumstances pursuant to section 2.3 of the USAW Endowment and Investment Spending Policy." The motion was seconded by JS. After a brief additional discussion the motion carried.

6. **Operations Reports.** USAW HQ team members delivered departmental updates from their areas.

- a. **High Performance.** MG shared observations from the recent Olympic Games and summarized high performance activity and results.

MG and MS presented a proposal to make an exception to the in-force and Board-approved Competition Funding Policy to give USAW the discretion to fund additional 2024 IWF World Championships expenses for athletes who will otherwise be fully self-funded.

Following discussion, motion made by SQ as follows, "I move to make an exception to the USAW Competition Funding Policy, allowing USAW to evaluate whether it can provide financial support to athletes competing at the 2024 Senior Worlds who would otherwise be fully self-funded, and, if feasible, to distribute such funding. This exception is contingent upon USAW projecting a balanced budget by the end of the fiscal year." Motion seconded by JS. Further discussion. Motion carried.

MG introduced a new National Team Program, intended to commence as of January 1, 2025, for Board feedback. USAW's goal is to present this new program to membership in October 2024. The rollout will include multiple Q&A sessions for members to learn more about the

program following its release and publication. The USAW HQ team will provide the Board with a link to the draft document no later than 9/16 with a deadline of 9/26 for Board comments and feedback. Such comments and feedback should be entered into the digital document.

- b. **Events.** PM summarized results from 2024 national events and sponsorships. Ratings from recent National Championships week in Pittsburgh, PA was the highest since the introduction of Nationals week. Shared several new partnerships would be announced publicly in the coming weeks. Shared that we will be returning to Columbus for NAOS1 and National University Championships with some expansion of the participant cap.
 - c. **Membership & Coach Development.** JN provided updates from our sport development work, including data on membership and coach education results. Coach education results this year are similar to 2023 – suggesting we may have reached a new normal for our legacy coach education programs. We are excited to share that USAW’s Level 1 course was approved for inclusion in the ARMY COOL program, making it available to soldiers as continuing education that would be paid for by the Department of Defense. This represents an exciting expansion of our coach education work in the military sector, and is the result of nearly two years of hard work by Anna Swisher and JN.
 - d. **Communications.** Will Edmonds (Director of Communication) is unavailable as he is in route to Spain for Junior Worlds. MS stood in for Will. He presented data showing the “bounce” we received from Olympic-related coverage and noted an intentional pivot that USAW will make following the Games to tell a broader range of stories across our community.
7. **2025-2028 Strategic Plan.** Matt noted that a digital version of the latest draft will be shared following the Board meeting with an opportunity for Board members to share feedback. We will evaluate that feedback and bring an updated version back to the Board for approval in Q3/Q4, before rolling out to the membership by the end of the year. This plan will inform the priorities we build into the 2025 operational budget that will be presented to the Board for approval in December.
8. **Miscellaneous Reports.**
- a. **AAC.** EA provided an update to the Board regarding upcoming athlete elections for both the Team USA Athlete Commission and the USAW Board. EA, JS, and MS are working closely together on these details to ensure our process is compliant with USOPC, Team USA AC, and USAW requirements. EA also shared recent AAC activities, including AAC meetings, engagement at National Championships Week via the dedicated AAC-booth, feedback on USADA’s anti-doping efforts, and anticipation of a new intake form on the USAW website later this year to assist the AAC in triaging athlete questions and requests.
 - b. **USAW Foundation.** TH provided an update on the USAW Foundation’s activities. She is the USAW BOD representative to the Foundation Board. She shared that fundraising in the lead up to the Paris Games is expected to net \$20,000 in revenue to the Foundation and the Paris Strong donor program at the Games is expected to net \$47,000 in revenue to the Foundation. The Foundation is working aggressively to launch a new program to raise money for the LA2028 quad. TH will share the pitch deck with the USAW Board when it is completed.

- c. **International Relations.** MS provided a brief update on USAW's international relations work. We are scheduling a dedicated Board meeting (via Zoom) for October at which Ursula Papandrea (General Secretary) will provide the Board with a more detailed update on this topic. In the meantime, MS shared that our international relations priorities include the 2025 IWF election and USAW's participation in the UMWF.

9. **Executive Session.**

- a. JS motion to enter executive session. AC second. Motion carried.
- b. Executive session entered at 3:10pm MT.
- c. Topic: Judicial Committee docket update.
- d. JS motion to exit executive session. TH second. Motion carried.
- e. Executive session exited at 3:18pm MT.

10. **Adjournment.** JS motion to adjourn. AC second. Motion carries. Meeting adjourned at 3:20pm MT.