



Annual Members Meeting Minutes

September 13, 2025

I. Call to Order - The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm ET.

Mr. Hughes thanked everyone in attendance, adding that we have many members attending in person and remotely.

II./III. Approval of Agenda – Conflict of Interest Disclosure

There were no conflict of interests with any agenda items disclosed.

IV. Approval of 2024 Minutes

Motion to Approve the Minutes of the 2024 Member Meeting by Ms. Mousaw. Second by Mr. Simkin. Passed

V. President's Report – Robert Hughes

- Thanked the Board and members of the staff for the good work put in this year.
- Some significant work has been put in to establish greater financial accountability – developing and adhering to a balanced budget.
- Called out the opportunities ahead of us in the 2025-2026 season with two home World Cups and the Olympic Winter Games in Cortina, ITA.

VI. Awards and Recognition

- A. Sam Venezia – Volunteer Spirit Award** was presented to Bruce Norman for the work he has contributed to the advancement of science withing the sport of luge and specifically for his contributions to the development of the Wolf-Pac data collection system.
- B. John Jenkins – Sport Passion Award** was presented to Wesley McDermott for the years of dedicated service he has given to the sport as a luge official and the development of educational materials to support officials training.

VII. Departmental Reports

A. Sport Update – Mark Grimmette, Director of Sport

- Highlighted the results turned in by Team USA in the 2024-2025 season, including 12 medals won at the World Cup level, a bronze medal by Emily Sweeney at World Championships, and 46 top-10 performances, and Forgan/ Kirkby placing 3rd in the Overall World Cup standings.
- At the Junior National Team level, the doubles team of Mueller/ Haugsjaa won three Junior world Cup medals to complement 2 medals in the team competition.
- Alpine Luge finished 6th in the Nations Rankings on the back of four top-10 finishes by Katie Cookman.
- A focus for the coming year will be the Olympic Winter Games in Cortina, ITA including how we maintain health and wellness of the team to prepare them best for competition. Also need to be prepared to leverage the opportunities presented by home World Cups.
- Also will leverage technology to gain a rapid understanding of the new Cortina track.
- National Team Committee was active in updating numerous policies related to athlete selection for various competitions.

B. Marketing and Sponsorship Update – Gordy Sheer, Director of Marketing and Sponsorships

- Highlighted the engagements USA Luge has had with sponsors at key events.
- Provided information that sponsor renewals are on track for 2026-2030 while we continue to search for new revenue opportunities.
- Social media continues to grow, even as the traditional and broadcast media evolve.
- The White Castle Slider Search continues to be a primary driver in the talent ID efforts of USA Luge.
- Great sponsor engagement at the two domestic World Cups and five sponsors are planning to attend the Olympic Winter Games in Cortina.
- Efforts are continuing to grow the exposure of US athletes – through press releases, hometown media stories, and TV appearances.

C. Financial Update – Scott Riewald, CEO

- a. The 2025-2026 budget was shared, outlining the various sources of revenue the USLA will benefit from in the 2025-26 fiscal year. The budget presented was a balanced budget that included ‘atypical’ expenses and income associated with two domestic World Cups and the Olympic Games.
- b. Specific focus was given on the funding received from the USOPC – the primary contributor to the USLA budget. It was called out that the USOPC funds are essentially restricted funds (they need to be applied against specific expenses – and most of those are associated with the National Team).

- c. A discussion of the budget, as well as an opportunity to ask questions, was presented to the membership in attendance.

VIII. Club Reports

A. Adirondack Luge Club – Larry Dolan

- **Organized a team trip to Bludenz this past year and proved to be really beneficial to athlete development.**
- **Leadership recognized for the effort put into running the luge club.**
- **Highlighted relationship with USLA and the collaboration between the two organizations.**
- **Planning on holding 25-30 session this coming season.**
- **Expressed a need for equipment. Bottleneck for sleds, in particular.**

B. Wasatch Luge Club – Michael Thomas

- 60 active members and celebrating 30 years as a club.
- Completed tourist start warming house – safe place to keep gear and support athlete performances.
- Hosted the National Team this past year giving the opportunity for athletes to connect across levels.
- Hosted National Championships this past year.
- Recognition given to current and past leadership of the Wasatch Luge Club.

C. Upper Peninsula Luge Club – Rich Matthews

- Focus of the club is to promote the sport of luge through public sliding events, summer and winter public luge clinics, and educational events at Lucy Hill.
- Support races during the season – open to the public. Have had over 200 new sliders experience luge.
- Have created the on-line video luge series to help train officials for the USLA.
- Excited about the opportunities that can come with alpine luge and growing the sport in the United States.

IX. Committee Reports

A. Race Committee Update – John Mowry, Chair of the Race Committee

- Thanks given to the entire Race Committee, comprised of representatives from all clubs. It has been an active committee.
- Attention is being given to recruiting and preparing officials for future events, including the 2034 Olympic Games. Referenced outreach to universities.
- Call out to all officials who volunteer their time and services to support luge.
- Revamped the Officials Handbook – a truly collaborative effort that resulted in a excellent document.

- Training (both FIL and national) for officials is offered throughout the season.

B. National Team Committee – Mark Grimmette, Director of Sport

- Information was presented in the Sport report – and the work developing and approving selection procedures was specifically cited as a true accomplishment of the committee.

C. Grievance and Complaint Hearing Committee – Scott Riewald, CEO

- Committee is being led by Rick Patzke, who brings many years of experience in the Olympic sport world.

D. Audit and Ethics Committee Update – Scott Riewald, CEO

- Committee has been reinvigorated and active in reviewing financial audits, providing input on compliance, review of conflict of interest statements to ensure we are functioning as an elite sport organization.

E. Internal Athlete Council – Tucker West

- Purpose is to support the mission of USA Luge, by primarily by working with the USLA and ensuring athletes have a voice in decisions that are made.
- Talked through the IAC structure.
- Called out good collaboration with the USLA in working on policies and activities that impact athletes – from the high performance plan to athlete agreements.

X. CEO Report

A. Performance Against Strategic Plan

Communication: *Improve and maintain a high-level of communication with all USLA Stakeholders.* Actions taken against this pillar in the past year include:

- Membership Newsletters sent regularly to the USLA membership providing updates and information more broadly.
- Town Hall Meetings to share information and provide the opportunity for Q&A with USLA staff.
- Utilization of Sport80 as a communication tool.
- Social Media Efforts to enhance the interaction with members, grow the 'luge family,' and support athletes and partners.
- Pro-active Planning and Transparency in information that is shared.

Financial: *Secure the ongoing funding and financial stability necessary to underwrite the USLA's activities and program enhancements.* Actions taken against this pillar in the past year include:

- Continued and Enhanced Relationships with Current Sponsors.

- Identification of New Sponsor(s) via continued outreach to new companies with potential ties to the characteristics of luge and the values of USA Luge.
- Outreach to ID New Sources of Revenue including previously untapped resources through the USOPC, event sponsors/ supporters, local community, and targeted donors.
- Grant Writing and the solicitation of local support for initiatives
- Fiscal Responsibility through a zero-based budgeting process and fiscal responsibility to achieving a balanced budget.

Structure: Optimize and align staff resources against the USLA's primary objectives.

Actions taken against this pillar in the past year include:

- Staff organized around key functions – leveraging/ maximizing strengths of each team member.
- Redistribution of Development Team Responsibilities to provide greater control into the hands of the coaches leading the teams.
- Leverage Partnerships and Relationships/ Collaboration to bring in support that can complement in-house expertise (e.g., technical partnerships).

Technology Development: *Provide the fastest sleds in the world, tuned to each athlete.*

Actions taken against this pillar in the past year include:

- Steels Project – Ice friction reduction. The steels working group has advanced the understanding of the steel-ice interface and how to enhance sled performance.
- Wolf Pac System – Data collection and analysis system designed to capture data to support performance and accelerate the learning curve for athletes learning a track.
- 3D Printer – In-house fabrication of key sled components/ molds has enhanced in-house capabilities and experimentation with different ideas.
- World Leading Partners – Collaborators are world-leaders in their field.

Pipeline Development: *Maintain a robust developmental pipeline of world-class athletes. Provide resources necessary for all levels of development to increase luge proficiency.* Actions taken against this pillar in the past year include:

- Slider Search Program has continued and continues to be the primary vehicle to bring new athletes into the sport.
- Luge Challenge/ Alpine Luge – programs on snow provide exposure to luge and align with the FIL's vision for how to grow the sport.
- Clubs continue to provide great opportunities and experiences to support athlete development.
- Relationships/ Partnerships with UOLF/ ORDA continue to grow, opening the doors to potential new programs and initiatives to support luge in the US.

B. Membership Survey Results

A survey was distributed to USLA membership asking about the organizations performance against the stated core values. A summary of the information collected by asking respondents to rate how well they agree with a statement made about each value, with a rating of '1' indicating the responded 'strongly disagrees' with the statement to 5 indicating the respondent 'strongly agrees' with the statement

Growing and Developing the Sport (score of 3.99 out of 5)

Statement: *USA Luge is actively contributing to the growth and development of the sport of luge.*

Respect (score of 3.85 out of 5)

Statement: *USA Luge treats everyone with respect, values ideas, and interacts professionally and courteously regardless of role, background or opinion.*

Continuous Improvement (score of 3.80 out of 5)

Statement: *USA Luge actively works to improve its programs, services, and operations in support of the mission.*

Ownership/ Accountability (score of 3.40 out of 5)

Statement: *USA Luge demonstrates ownership and accountability through transparency, taking responsibility for its actions, and following through on commitments.*

Collaboration (score of 3.58 out of 5)

Statement: *USA Luge fosters a collaborative environment by promoting a sense of 'team,' demonstrating inclusiveness, and a willingness to work together to achieve shared goals.*

Communication (score of 3.17 out of 5)

Statement: *USA Luge communicates with a frequency and level of clarity that allows me to have the information I need when I need it.*

Regardless of the value being discussed, the comments from the membership aligned around several consistent themes, to be addressed going forward.

- Increasing Responsiveness and Consistency/ Clarity of Communication
- Doing more to promote Unity and Alignment across constituents
- Defining the Performance Pathway and articulating expectations for athletes/ families at each level within the luge 'system.'
- Better Articulating Funding Decisions and Resource Allocation
- Better connecting with, and recognizing Natural Track/ Alpine Luge.
- Providing greater insight into how we evolve as an Organization

XI. Open Discussion/ Q&A

XII. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.