



# USLA Board Meeting

Monday, March 18, 2024, at 3:30PM  
In Person Meeting & Zoom Call

**Members Present:** Erin Warren, Don Simkin, Bob Hughes, Scot McIntyre, Bruce Norman, Summer Britcher, Chris Mazdzer, Tucker West

**Staff Present:** Jim Leahy, Mark Grimmette, Lucy Beaulieu

**Call To Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:03PM.

## **Approval of the October 14, 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 Chris Mazdzer, seconded by Don Simkin. Motion PASSED.

## **Approval of the Today's (March 18, 2024) Agenda**

Ms. Warren asked for any comments or questions on today's meeting agenda. With none, she asked for a motion to approve.

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

## **Approval of No Conflict of Interest via the Agenda**

Mr. Leahy explained this new segment to the board meeting. This is a new practice of addressing potential conflict of interest based on the agenda. Ms. Warren inquired if there were any items on the agenda which any board member believed represented a conflict of interest for themselves whereby, they would need to recuse themselves from the discussion.

No concerns or conflict of interest were raised.

## **President's Report**

- **Update on Committee Population**

Ms. Warren shared on the screen the *USLA Committees* document that Mr. Leahy sent to the board on March 15, 2024.

Mr. Leahy indicated that he would discuss with Ms. Wendy Guthrie of WJG Consulting some potential recommendations for the Audit and Ethics Committee. A background in human resources is important.

Mr. West stated that they will work with the AAC reps to work on the athlete reps for Audit and Ethics Committee.

Mr. Hughes asked if the Natural Track spot was still required to be seated on the National Team Committee. Ms. Britcher asks if we can add an additional artificial track seat to the National Team Committee if natural track seat is still required. Mr. Leahy commented that as we revise the bylaws, we can investigate incorporating an additional seat on the committee.

Mr. West asked what happened to the Fundraising Committee. Mr. Leahy replied that with the number of committees needed to be populated it was best to focus on standing and operating committees.

- **Update on Hiring**

Ms. Warren reported that Prodigy Search was hired by USA Luge in the recruitment and hiring of the new CEO. This executive search firm is co-funded by USOPC and USA Luge. The nationwide search started in January. Prodigy Sports submitted a list of candidates with appropriate profiles. This list was passed on to the hiring committee. The hiring committee has identified the top five candidates. The Hiring Committee comprises of Mr. Simkin, Mr. Mazdzer, Mr. McIntyre, Ms. Warren and Mr. Leahy.

Mr. Simkin said that the search is going in the right direction. The top 5 candidate profiles came from different diverse and very interesting backgrounds.

Both Mr. Mazdzer and Mr. McIntyre said that it is a great pool of top five candidates and is excited about it.

Ms. Warren said that the interview process will go quickly.

Mr. Hughes asked about the late Mr. Dmitry Feld's position, Marketing Manager, to which Mr. Leahy replied that he had started the conversation with Mr. Gordy Sheer. Mr. Sheer is deciphering what he really needs in that specific role. Mr. Leahy also reported that USA Luge is thinking of hiring a Sports Operation Assistant to help Mr. Grimmette with his workload.

Mr. West asked who the five candidates are. The group individually discussed the top five candidates.

Mr. West was asked to talk about Mr. Toni Eggert leaving the organization. Mr. Grimmette replied that he hasn't had a chance to talk to the athletes about Mr. Eggert's departure. He wanted to get all the feedback from athletes. Mr. Leahy added that the organization will need another sled tech and possibly bring somebody to be in Lake Placid all summer. Ms. Warren asked Mr. Grimmette on the hiring timeline for a sled

tech. Mr. Grimmette responded that we must work quickly on this matter, and he hopes to have this position by May.

- **Looking forward to FIL Congress in Lake Placid**

Ms. Warren announced that USA Luge along with the Olympic Regional Development Authority are hosting the FIL Congress on June 14 – 16, 2024. ORDA won the bid to host both FIL and IBSF Congress in Lake Placid in June. Mr. Leahy added that USOPC awarded USA Luge \$30,000 grant money to host the FIL Congress in Lake Placid.

## **CEO Report**

- **Financial Report**

Mr. Leahy reported the equipment budget for the fiscal year will be higher than anticipated and equipment purchases hopefully should be less in the next fiscal year. Mr. Leahy also emphasized that we have a lot of work to do, and we must be very cognizant of our future spendings with regard to our revenue streams. He did state that the current spending may not be sustainable without a significant increase in revenue.

- **Governance / USOPC Audit & Compliance**

Mr. Leahy expressed that two policies (Conflict of Interest and Whistleblower & Anti-Retaliation Policy) need board approval. These two policies were sent out to the board members prior to the meeting for review.

Mr. Leahy asked for any comments or questions on the Conflict of Interest document. With none, Ms. Warren asked for a motion to approve.

Motion to approve was moved by Mr. Hughes, seconded Mr. Simkin. Motion and new policy PASSED.

Mr. Leahy asked for any comments or questions on the Whistleblower & Anti-Retaliation Policy document. With none, Ms. Warren asked for a motion to approve.

Motion to approve was moved by Mr. Mazdzer, seconded by Mr. West. Motion and new policy PASSED.

Ms. Beaulieu added that the newly approved Conflict of Interest will be loaded into everyone's Sport:80 profiles. All board members and committee members will have to sign and complete the Conflict of Interest on Sport:80.

Mr. Leahy showed the USOPC Audit and Compliance Report and reminded everyone of the BoardSpan training.

- **Season Update**

Mr. Grimmette reported that the National Team had a very successful season. They won 14 medals including two at World Championships. The highlights are the silver medal

performance from the Team Relay and Chevonne Forgan/Sophia Kirkby's bronze medal at World Championships. The team posted thirteen 4<sup>th</sup> place finishes showing a lot of potential for future success. Eleven athletes contributed to five Team Relay medals earned last season. This season's results point to increased depth within the team.

Mr. Grimmette also reported the Junior National Team had a very successful season. The highlights were Marcus Mueller/Ansel Haugsjaa winning Junior Worlds, and Matt Greiner finishing 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Team Relay also posted a 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish.

- **USOPC Games Update 2026, 2030, 2034**

Mr. Leahy went into a discussion on what he learned from attending the last World Cup race in Sigulda. He spelled out a couple of scenarios of what may occur as the FIL and IBSF look for a March 2025 homologation. He also gave an update on France's bid for 2030 which will include La Plagne track for the sliding sports.

He also addressed the upcoming IOC Evaluation Committee's site visit with the Salt Lake City Organizing Committee (SLCOC). The SLCOC is in targeted dialogue with the IOC and a vote for their bid to host in 2034 will take place this summer at the 2024 Paris Games.

## **Staff Report**

- **Technology Report**

Mr. Grimmette reported that he, along with the coaches and Mr. West, just returned from their annual meeting with Dow. They reviewed sled projects from the previous year and discussed planning for new projects for next season. Mr. Grimmette reported that they conveyed a sense of urgency to Dow via the sled projects because our team has a lot of opportunities for future success given the fact that we had thirteen 4<sup>th</sup> place finishes this past season.

Mr. Grimmette also reported that the Steel Friction Group was going to have an in-person meeting in Lake Placid in late April to review progress made over the past year and to plan for more steel testing for the coming year.

Mr. Norman reported that the Wolfpak project is moving along. Fifty units have been completed and another fifty units are in production. This is year two of the project launch and the project is in the manufacturing stage. Year three will be working on analytics and data collection.

Mr. Grimmette stated that he will work with the National Team athletes and coaches to produce more sled working and sled measuring tools that we became more knowledgeable about this past season.

- **Marketing / Revenue**

Mr. Leahy reported that Massey Ferguson / Eklund Farm Machinery signed a sponsorship agreement with USA Luge. Their sponsorship brings in \$50,000 per agreement year. Mr. Leahy also added that DOW committed to bringing in more Value-in Kind (VIK) donations to USA Luge, and possibly cash sponsorship that will gear towards the development of sleds.

### **Athlete Report**

Mr. West indicated that there is not a whole lot to report. He stated that Mr. Eggert's departure is a loss to the team. The athletes want to be involved in the hiring of Mr. Eggert's replacement.

### **Club Report**

Mr. Simkin stated that the Adirondack Luge Club had unfavorable sessions this year. This is because they only had one session a week, and those sessions were on Friday nights, which created travel issues for those members outside the area.

Ms. Warren indicated that with Mr. Yonemura not in attendance, there is no report from the Wasatch Luge Club.

### **New Business**

Mr. Leahy gave a brief update on the release of the Congressional Commission Final Report on the state of the USOPC.

With no other new business to discuss, Ms. Warren asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion to Adjourn at 5:12PM by Mr. Simkin, seconded by Mr. West. Approved.

