



**Board of Directors | Special Meeting | August 14, 2023
Meeting Minutes**

Location: Meeting conducted fully remotely via Zoom

Present: Shameeka Quallo (Vice Chair), Erin Andica, Mike Choi, Andy Coggins, Mario Dispenza, Tayler Harris, Jenny Schumacher, Sara Soto, Sally Van de Water

Staff Present: Matt Sicchio (CEO)

1. **Call to Order.** SQ called the meeting to order at 5:04pm MT and determined that a quorum exists.
2. **Gender Identity Policy.** MS provided an update on USAW's work to update its Transgender Athlete Policy. The updated version, when approved, will be retitled to Gender Inclusion, Competitive Equity, and Eligibility Policy. The working draft was distributed to the Board in advance of the meeting. MS highlighted USAW's overall approach: continue to be a leader in inclusion in sport, update the policy to be more precise and adjust it to the current sport landscape, specifically articulate how we balance inclusion with competitive equity, and ensure constituents were consulted via USAW's DEI Committee, Medical Committee, Athletes Advisory Council, individual transgender athletes, and external DEI experts. MS also described how the proposed policy aligns with the IWF policy.

Feedback and questions from the Board for the USAW team to address as we make revisions and prepare to finalize the proposed policy:

- Do we need to update the definition of "local event?"
- What is the IWF's process for approving a transgender athlete who applies to compete in an "open" division and how does that impact our selection procedures?
- Does an athlete who qualifies under USAW's policy to change competition category at a national event have enough time to meet the IWF standard?
- This proposal feels largely like a continuation of our existing policy, which is positive.
- Can we better highlight this content from Section 3 of the draft?
 - “This Policy shall not apply to:
 - Youth Athletes. Such athletes competing in Elite or Local events will be allowed to compete in whatever gender category they identify with.
 - Athletes of any age category who participate recreationally in Local Events.
 - Nonbinary individuals who intend to participate in the competition category congruent with their sex assigned at birth.”

3. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest.

- a. Tayler Harris: WSO President, national level referee, married to a contractor who works with the USAW high performance team, club administrator.
- b. Mike Choi: coach, WSO President, club owner, Category 1 ITO, coaching education instructor, about to become a member of the new masters entity.
- c. Mario Dispenza: national coach, Category 1 ITO, level 1 coaching education instructor

- d. Jenny Schumacher: Category 1 ITO, club owner, coach
 - e. Erin Andica: none
 - f. Sally Van de Water: IWF referee, level 1 coach, co-own a gym, married to a club owner, have transgender and non-binary athletes on team, married to a WSO President
 - g. Sara Soto: Category 2 ITO, NY WSO athlete representative
 - h. Andy Coggins: coach, club owner, acting President of GA WSO
 - i. Shameeka Quallo: none
4. **Masters.** MS gave an update on developments since the Board last discussed this topic. This included a meeting held by MS, MC, and JP Nicoletta (USAW team member) with Jerry Dunne who represents the new masters entity as its lawyer. This meeting occurred at USAW's National Championships in Colorado Springs. Other updates from MS:
- a. Masters Nationals announced on 7/26 – to be held March 21-24, 2024 in Reno, NV
 - b. Masters membership is up 2.5% from March 1 to present
 - c. USAW sent a letter to the IMWA asking to start a dialogue about the inclusion of USAW members in IMWA international events.
 - d. USAW Finance & Audit Committee formally requested more information from Michael Cohen and Van Cramer regarding financial records from the USAW Masters Council. The initial response from Mr. Cohen and Mr. Kramer was largely a non-answer so the Finance & Audit Committee will be following up with an additional request.

MS noted that USAW will seat a task force specifically to advise USAW on its service to its Masters members, including asking that task force to conduct a survey of all USAW's Masters members.

JS shared her perspective on the formation of the United Masters Weightlifting Federation by leaders from Oceania, and the international competition opportunities this could provide for USAW's Masters members.

5. **USAW Board Chair.**
- a. SQ shared that NM is resigning his role as the Chair but will remain to serve out his term on the Board.
 - b. Nominations were taken for a new Chair.
 - c. TH nominated JS. No other nominations were made.
 - d. JS shared a brief statement regarding her interest in serving as Chair.
 - e. Motion by MD to enter executive session at 6:14pm MT. Seconded by SV.
 - f. Discussion of new Chair
 - g. Executive session exited at 6:20pm
 - h. Votes cast via email to MS; JS selected unanimously to serve as Chair
6. **Director of Communications.** MS shared that Will Edmonds has accepted the offer to become USAW's new Director of Communications. He comes to us most recently from the Athletics Department at Arizona State University and will be starting with us in September.
7. **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 6:27pm MT.