

AWSA Winter Board of Directors Meeting

Saturday, January 31, 2026, 8 a.m. ET

2701 Lake Myrtle Park Rd, Auburndale, FL 33823

1) Meeting was called to order at 8:08am

2) Introduction & Roll Call

Name	Position(s)	Present
Amy Craig	Director - East	X
Bob Harris	Southern Region EVP	X
Brad Hartwell	Director - West	X
Bruce Butterfield	Director - South Central	X
Caleb Farmer	USAWSWS - Compliance Officer	X
Connie Bergmark	Western Region EVP	X
Cynthia Logan	AWSA Treasurer (South)	X
Dale Stevens	VP USAWSWS	X
Dana Garcia	PanAm/IWWF Rep	X
Dane Mechler	AAC AWSA - South	X
Darren Janzig	Midwest Region EVP	X
Delaina Downes	AWSA Secretary (MW)	X
Dennis Downes	HND MW	X
Doug Robbins	AWSA Chairman (East)	X
Faith Dix	USAWSWS Social Media / Content	X
George Lindy	Tow boats	X
James Cawthern	Safety Chair	X
Jeff Smith	IAC	X
Jerry Jackson	Tech Chair	X
Jim Jaquess	Director - South	X
Jim Powell	Director - East, Announcing Chair	X
John Wilkins	Director - East	X
Julie Krueger	South Central Region EVP, J&S	X
Karen Melnik	Bylaws Chair	X
Kelly Koehler	Director - South Central, AWSA Vice President (SC)	X
Kevin Michael	USAWSWS Exec Dir	X
Kirby Whetsel	Director - South	X
Lyman Hardy	Director - South, AWSA President (South)	X
Mark Roske	Director - West	X
Matt Byrne	EVP East	X
Matthew Leach	USAWSWS - Member & Competition Services Manager	X
Mike O'Connor	Director - Midwest	X
Owen Letcher	HND W	X
Peter Dahl	Director - Midwest	X
Richelle Muhltnr	Director - West	X
Roy Surdej	Director - Midwest	X
Shauna Pasanen	VP	X
Wade Cox		X

- 3) Chairman announced Quorum
- 4) USA-WSWS Code of Conduct & Ethics Policy – Conflict of Interest Disclosure was read
– No disclosures were presented from the board.
- 5) Opening Administrative Motions and Housekeeping Matters
- 6) Motion to accept committee reports with action items as a motion with an automatic second. So moved by **Jim Powell, Second by Jim Jaquess.**
- 7) Appointment of Parliamentarian – By Laws Committee Chair Karen Melnik was appointed Parliamentarian.
- 8) Confirmation of Voting Roll – Motion by **Roy Surdej / Second by Brad Hartwell.**
- 9) Review & Adoption of Agenda – Accepted with no changes by the Board.
- 10) Presentation of Service Awards – Karen Melnik was presented certificate of appreciation for her service to the board, and HND status.
- 11) Review & Approval of the August Meeting Minutes – Motion to approve by **Darren Janzig / Brad Hartwell second.**
- 12) Ratification of BOD electronic ballots since last Meeting – Motion to approve by **Matt Byrne / Kelly Koehler second.**
- 13) USAWSWS Executive Director's Report – Kevin Michael
 - a) Dave Allen – 2 yr contract at an end
 - i) Melanie no longer has to enter officials' info manually.
 - ii) Still some issues – Bob and Connie both citing issues still.
 - iii) Downgrades also automatic.
 - iv) Need to get Dave to do a training/demo. ***** Action Item #1 for Dave Allen *****
- 14) AWSA President's Report & Executive Committee Report – Lyman Hardy - See report.
 - a) Lyman also reported fund split being negotiated for Nationals
- 15) USOPC Report – Andrew/Regina – No report
 - a) Kevin Michael reported USA-WSWS is working on follow-up items from 2024 USOPC Audit

- 16) AWSA Treasurer's Report – Cynthia Logan - See report
- a) Change to budget – PanAm games will be funded. (Get amount from Jeff)
Motion to accept 2026 budget with the change from Jeff Smith – Motion by Bob Harris / Second by Roy Surdej – None opposed
 - b) Junior Pan Am Games is a new event for Water Ski.
 - c) Dana asked if there was talk about helping to financially support officials going to these events Paraguay in particular.
 - d) PanAmerican Games (Covered by USOPC?) vs PanAmerican Championships (Good tournament to get started in officiating internationally.) **Motion by Roy Surdej to set up a budget of \$5000 for the PanAm Championships each year for the next 2 years to be divided between appointed officials for their international air travel. Second by Bruce Butterfield.**

***** ACTION ITEM #2 - FOR AWSA TREASURER *****

- 17) Nominating Committee Report – Kate Knafla - See report.

- 18) Pan Am Report – Dana Garcia - See report

- a) April 21-22 @ Jack's EyeTrick training, Donal will be there.
- b) Need US officials at international events, please encourage people.
- c) PanAm Championships would be a good event for US to host.
 - i) 35+ Pan Ams are held in odd years
 - ii) Elite and Junior Pan Ams held in even years.
- d) Athletes needed for upcoming events discussion.
- e) Secretary general position discussion.

- 19) Standing Committee Reports

- a) Announcers Committee – Jim Powell – Verbal
 - i) Acknowledge John Horton for Nationals under hard conditions.
 - ii) Need better coordination for proper announcing.
 - iii) Would like to work with TWBC for better coordination.
- b) Athlete Advisory Council Report - Alex Lauretano, Chair
 - i) Dane thinks it could be good to do some revamping of the committee.
***** Action Item #3 for AWSA AAC *****
- c) Awards Committee – Lori Covington - See report
- d) Bylaws Committee – Karen Melnik - See report
 - i) Action item from AWSA Bylaws Committee voted to recommend removal of Article VIII (A)(4) from the Bylaws and removal of the highlighted language in Article VIII (B) to make it consistent with AWSA Policy & Procedures 3.3 regarding alternate Director representation on the USA-WSWS Board.
 - (1) Discussion ensued. Jim Jaquess – Call the question **15 in favor / 3 opposed**
Motion passed.

- ii) **Motion to have 2026 summer board meeting in a totally virtual setting by Jim Powell / Second by Bruce Butterfield – Motion Passed.**
- iii) **Motion to combine the 2026 summer general membership meeting and summer board meeting with appropriate management of questions and comments. Motion by Jim Jaquess / Second by Bruce Butterfield. Motion Passed.**

***** Action Items 4 and 5 for COB / President *****

- e) Drivers Committee – Chris Eller - See report
 - i) **Board action Item from committee report. The Drivers Committee approved Senior Slalom Emeritus for Greg Davis. Motion passed.**
 - ii) Board requested Will Bush put out an explanation of how Sure Path data is delivered. *****Action Item #6 – Will Bush / Drivers Committee*****
- f) International Activities Committee – Jeff Smith - See report
 - i) Jeff announced he has stepped down as IAC Chair. Kerri Lee is taking over as chair of the IAC and Jeff hopes to remain as a regional representative.
 - ii) IWWF in discussion with USOPC over Lima 2027
 - iii) The AWSA Board thanked Jeff for his many years of service on IAC!
- g) Judges & Scorers Committee – Julie Krueger - See report
 - i) Darren presented a new officials clinic model.
- h) Junior Development Committee – Allison Blair, Lauren Malitz, Chairs - See report
 - i) Age division discussion **Motion by Bruce Butterfield to return the number of kids divisions back to 3. Second by Mark Roske. Motion failed.**
 - ii) **Motion by Richelle Muhlitner to recommend the Junior Development Committee reduce the number of Junior divisions. Second by Kelly Koehler. Motion passed.**

***** Action Item #7 – Junior Development Committee*****

- i) Technical Committee – Jerry Jackson - See report
 - i) Phillipa Shedd's record is not approved based on rule 1.13. **Motion by Jim Powell to support Tech Committee's decision. Second by Jim Jaquess. Motion Passed.**
 - ii) **AWSA BOD discussion supported TC recommendation to Rules Committee to change the verbiage of 1.13 and 1.14 for clarification. Motion by Mark Roske. Second by Roy Surdej. Motion passed.**
 - iii) **Action Item for Board on AWSA RULE 14.01C. AWSA NATIONAL JUMP RECORD – Passed**
 - iv) **Action Item for Board for TOM DUSIN request for an Ambassador TC Rating. – Passed**
 - v) TC Clinic in March
- j) Rules Committee – Richelle Muhlitner - See report
 - i) **Proposal 1 – None opposed**
 - ii) **Proposal 1A - None opposed**

- iii) **Proposal 2 – None opposed**
- iv) **Proposal 5 – Roy Surdej warned that we may have issues in older Mens divisions.**
- v) **Proposal 6 – Passed**
- vi) **Proposal 7 – None opposed**
- vii) **Proposal 8 – None opposed**
- viii) **Proposal 9 – None opposed**
- ix) **Proposal 10 - Passed**
- k) Safety Committee – James Cawthorn - See report
 - i) Recommendation for the Safety Manual 5.05 is not going to move forward due to discussion.
- l) Seeding Committee – See report.
- m) Skier's Qualification – Kirby Whetsel - See report
 - i) **Board Action item 1 – None opposed**
 - ii) **Board Action item 2 – None opposed**
 - iii) FAQs are being updated.
- n) AWSA Social Media– Kate Knafla - See report
- o) Towboat Committee – Will Bush / George Lindy - See report
 - i) **Board Action Item for proposed policy change – None opposed**

20) Regional Recommendations

- a) Eastern Region – Matt Byrne – NONE
- b) Midwest Region – Darren Janzig
 - i) HQ to make USA-WSWS website easier to use for newbies. *****Action Item #8 for USA/WSWS HQ.*****
 - ii) AWSA to form a committee to make an incentive program for members to recruit new members. ***** Action Item #9 for AWSA President *****
 - iii) US team members should be skiing at Nationals and interacting with the juniors.
 - (1) Dana Garcia recommends making sure they know who their drivers and boats are.
- c) Southern Region – Bob Harris
 - i) I stated first that, as Doug said more than once, we're a committee driven organization.
 - ii) I stated that regional recommendations should first go through a committee and then be presented to the board (if committee approves) at the meeting. I mentioned rules changes that have to go through Rules Committee, which is the required process. That should be the standard way.
 - iii) If it's something that doesn't fit with a particular committee, bring it up at the meeting in New Business as a motion. I didn't state this, but if it fits in this category, it really should be an agenda item for new business and it should

be in the board packet.

d) South Central Region – Julie Krueger

- i) Recommendation that Junior Development returns to 3 age divisions per gender.
- ii) Recommendation for USA-WSWS to define a process for when athletes of multiple IWWF federations change country code / affiliation. IWWF requires both federations to agree. In USA-WSWS case this could effect multiple sport disciplines (AWSA and NCWSA for example). USA-WSWS needs to define the process so USA-WSWS leadership and SD leadership are notified and engaged in the process. ***** Action Item #10 for USA-WSWS & AWSA Leadership *****

e) Western Region – Connie Bergmark - NONE but reiterate that college kids are our future.

21) Old Business –

- a) Competition Task force – No Update

22) New Business –

a) TWBC –

- i) 2024 Nationals had over 6200 views
- ii) Ask each region for \$1000 ***** Action Item #11 for EVP's *****
(1) SC already has committed \$700
- iii) Ask TWBC how to make us grow ***** Action Item #12 for AWSA President *****
- iv) Negotiate what we think we can raise is what our deposit on April 1
- v) Have Kevin figure out how to get more exposure with boat companies.
***** Action Item #13 for AWSA President, Towboat Committee, and Kevin Michael *****
- vi) Have Kevin Michael pump the AWSA Nationals webcast on USA-WSWS social media channels. ***** Action Item #14 for USA-WSWS ED *****

b) Regionals and Sr Worlds causing a hardship for family in East, wants to give an exception and wants to make sure they follow protocol which is that the EVP has to power to excuse.

c) Is having the meeting virtual going to cause hardship for people traveling. Going to go with it this year and see how it goes.

d) Rules/Qualification issue – People skiing in Masters divisions to not ski in their age division needs resolved.

***** Action Item for Rules Committee / Nationals Qualifications Judge *****

23) Time & Date of Next Meeting

a) Saturday, August 8th – 8:30am. Center City, MN

24) Motion to Adjourn by Lyman Hardy. Second by Richelle Muhlitner. None Opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

Action Items – 2026 AWSA Winter BOD Meeting

- 1) FOR DAVE ALLEN - Need to get Dave Allen to do a training/demo on the officials data from WSTIMS and into member dashboard for EVP's and appropriate committee(s) and chair(s).
- 2) FOR AWSA TREASURER – Budget up to \$5,000.00 annually for the next two years to be divided between U.S. appointed officials for the Pan Am Championships for reimbursement and/or offset of their international air travel expense.
- 3) FOR AWSA AAC - Dane Mechler thinks it would be good to do some revamping of the AAC.
- 4) FOR AWSA PRESIDENT & COB - Passed motion for totally virtual AWSA BOD summer meeting.
- 5) FOR AWSA PRESIDENT & COB - Passed motion to combine the 2026 general membership meeting and summer BOD meeting.
- 6) FOR WILL BUSH / DRIVERS COMMITTEE: Have Will Bush put out how Sure Path data is gathered and shared.
- 7) FOR AWSA JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – Reduce the number of Junior divisions.
- 8) FOR USA-WSWS ED / HQ – Make USA-WSWS and AWSA web site easier to use for new members.
- 9) FOR AWSA PRESIDENT - Lyman to appoint a committee to grow membership and create incentives and programs for members to recruit new members.
- 10) FOR USA-WSWS ED, USA-WSWS PRESIDENT & AWSA PRESIDENT & LEADERSHIP - Define a process for when athletes of multiple IWWF federations change country code / affiliation. IWWF requires both federations to agree. In USA-WSWS case this could effect multiple sport disciplines (AWSA and NCWSA for example). USA-WSWS needs to define the process so USA-WSWS leadership and SD leadership are notified and engaged in the process.
- 11) FOR ALL EVP's - Ask each region to donate \$1,000 to TWBC webcast of 2026 Nationals.
- 12) FOR AWSA PRESIDENT - Lyman to Ask TWBC how to help grow / market the Nationals.
- 13) FOR AWSA PRESIDENT / TOWBOAT COMMITTEE / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - Lyman, Will Bush, and Kevin Michael to explore how to get more exposure for boat companies with TWBC.
- 14) FOR USA-WSWS ED - Kevin Michael to pump the AWSA Nationals webcast on USA-WSWS social media channels.
- 15) FOR AWSA RULES COMMITTEE & NATIONALS QUALIFICATIONS JUDGE – People skiing in Masters divisions to not ski in their age division needs resolved.