



UNITED STATES LUGE ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

January 23, 2025, 5:00 PM ET

Zoom meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/95307839231?pwd=2Xz2cPvkFFoRPRAUhuOyZ4N6aOzAgd.1>

ATTENDING:

Board of Directors	US Luge Association Staff/ Guests
Robert Hughes, President	Scott Riewald, CEO
Ty Danco, Treasurer	Amy Chapin, Director Operations/ Administration
Robert Pokelwaldt, Secretary	Mark Grimmette, Sport Director
Bruce Norman	
Jennifer Wesslehoff	
Jeff Young	
Larry Dolan, Eastern Club Rep	
Summer Britcher, Athlete Rep	
Chris Mazdzer, Athlete Rep	
Zachary DiGregorio, Athlete Rep	
Tucker West, Athlete Rep	

ABSENT:

Michael Thomas* (Scott Riewald followed up after the call)	
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- I. Welcome and Call to Order at 5:02 PM ET** **R Hughes**
Chairperson Robert Hughes opened the meeting and welcomed Board members.
- II. Conflict of Interest Disclosure** **R. Hughes**
The Board was asked if anyone had a conflict of interest related to any of the agenda items. No conflict of interest disclosures were reported.
- III. Approval of November 29, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes** **R. Hughes**

Motion to approve the November 29, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes (C Mazdzer, T West)

Motion was approved unanimously with no discussion or abstentions.

IV. Chairman's Report

R. Hughes

- A 'thank you' was extended to the athletes and the staff for all of the work being done.
- Thanks/ recognition given to Audit and Ethics Committee for the work they have done.
- Recognition of the work being done by B Norman on the technical side.
- Reminder than a major goal for this year is to control the budget and align expenditures with income.
- Athlete report: T West reported overall the season has been going well. Called out accomplishments of the women and the success in women's doubles, in particular. Technology is in large part progressing. Not to say that everything is perfect, but overall things are going well with the team. S Britcher reported that the biggest struggle the team faces is understaffing - Staff is working at unsustainable levels to try to cover all the bases with the team.
- R Hughes will be attending World Championships as well as the FIL Congress.

V. Financial Report

T Danco/ S Riewald

- S Riewald reported that he feels the USLA seem to be managing spending, as it relates to what was projected. It is challenging to track expenditures as we are comparing year-to-date spends against full-year budgets. USLA has a goal to develop not only a full year budget for 2025-26 but also include a timeline of projected month to month expenditures to facilitate tracking. USLA is testing different financial management tools to streamline expense reporting and tracking.
- A review of the budget shows there are areas of savings against what was expected, and there are also areas where costs exceeded projections, but the savings appear to be larger than the overspend. It was reported that the USLA staff are applying increased diligence with respect to spending, especially in regard to budgeting for trips.
- The expectation is that the USLA will still draw \$160,000 from the Foundation to cover operational expenses, but efforts will be taken to limit/ reduce the amount we need to draw from the Foundation.
- A comment was made that many Olympic and Paralympic sports received a cut in the support provided by the USOPC following the 2024 Olympic Games, including some that had successful Games performances. Something to be aware of going forward; there should not be an expectation that funding will stay consistent, but the work on the part of the USLA should be appreciated for the ability to maintain funding when others have dropped.
- In a conversation re: the carryover of debt, it was shared that "current fiscal year funds" may have been used to pay down cost overruns and debt that were incurred in the previous year. Working to make sure we start each year with a balanced budget and the feeling is we were close to that when the USLA entered the current fiscal year.
- A note was made about the Running of the Balls not achieving the projected income goals and the question was asked, "why?" Several past corporate sponsors pulled out this year, and the USLA was not able to replace them. Recommendation was made that the USLA look at the sustainability of the fundraiser, and determine if the ROI is appropriate.
- McSoley McCoy conducted the USLA 2023-24 fiscal year audit and the audit report was reviewed

by the Finance Chair as well as the Audit and Ethics Committee. There were no major findings, and the audit was approved. Auditors are currently working on the USLA Form 990.

- The US Luge Foundation had a meeting in December. T Danco discussed current assets and noted the Foundation is looking to consider potential bylaw revisions to streamline the Foundation Executive Board and put pieces in place to connect with more high-value individuals.

VI. CEO Report

S Riewald

- Lidia O'Kelly started as our accountant in January. Lucy left USA Luge at the end of December. USA Luge is approaching this as a part time position, but is evaluating if it needs to be returned to a fulltime role.
- Milan-Cortina – still difficult to get a read on where things stand. Homologation is a watershed moment – if they are able to host the homologation (in late March) it is highly likely the events will be contested in Italy come February of 2026.
- World Championships are on the horizon and we are looking forward to the opportunities for Team USA in Whistler.

VII. National Team Selection Procedure Review

S Riewald/ M Grimmette

- National Team Committee has developed and brought forward the National Team Selection Procedures for approval by the Board. The effort/ intent of these procedures is to provide transparency around the selection process. Intentional work has gone in to balancing objective criteria with discretion in the selection process.
- Brief discussion of Olympic Selection Procedures. Procedures will need to take into account a potential Plan B Games in Lake Placid. The main challenge will be determining where the Olympic selection races will take place.

**Motion to approve Team Selection Procedures as presented.
(S Britcher, R Pokelwaldt)**

Motion was approved unanimously with no abstentions.

VIII. Natural Track Discussion

S Riewald/ R. Hughes

- A statement of support was presented for consideration that advocates limited support for natural track – essentially continuing the is currently being done.
- Original statement re: natural track was developed in 1995 and revised in 2002. Resources provided to natural track are not extensive, currently.
- The USLA should look more deeply into if/ how natural track can support artificial track.
- The USLA should further investigate the possibility of natural track could serving as a feeder for the Olympic program, and assess where talent in the Olympic program is coming from. Support should be directed appropriately based on the findings of this work.

**Motion to approve Statement of Support for Natural Track
(J Wesslehoff, T Danco)**

IX. New Business

R. Hughes

- No new business
- Next meeting – will aim for late April/ early May. Will circulate a meeting invite and work to set a full year calendar.

X. Adjourn

R Hughes

Without objection, the board meeting was adjourned at 6:15 PM ET.

(C Mazdzer, J Wesselhoff)