



**UNITED STATES CURLING ASSOCIATION
Board of Directors Meeting
April 27-28, 2013
Hilton Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport MOA**

AGENDA

Lunch as a group in MN Valley Ballroom I (Upstairs) 12pm-1pm Saturday, April 27, 2013

Board meeting in Riverside 1pm-6pm Saturday, April 27 & 8am-12pm Sunday, April 28, 2013

1. **Call to order** (Pleasants)
2. **Welcome and introductions** (Pleasants)
A: Introductions
3. **Roll call** (Havercroft)
4. **Appoint parliamentarian** (Pleasants)
5. **Additions/changes to printed agenda** (Pleasants)
6. **Approve Minutes of Previous Board Meetings** (Pleasants)
A. Board of Directors Meeting September 15-16, 2012
7. **Ratify the actions taken by the Executive Committee** (Pleasants)
A. December 12, 2012 C. March 11, 2013
B. February 6, 2013 D. April 18, 2013
8. **Nominating** (Rich)
A. Explanation of Reduction in number of Vice-Presidents (Pleasants)
B. Resolution to delegate management of Member Services to Growth & Development Staff (Pleasants)
9. **Proposed By-Laws Amendment** (Carlson)
10. **Governance Task Force Report and Discussion** (Pleasants)
11. **Finance Committee** (Bernauer)
12. **Treasurer** (Silver)
A. FY 2012 Interim Report
B. Other

13. **Chief Operating Officer** (Patzke)

VP AREA REPORTS:

14. **Competitive Programs** (Beadle)

- A. Report: Committee activities (Elite Programs, Coaching, World Team Preparation, Adaptive Curling & Sports Science).

15. **Marketing and Operations** (Carlson)

- A. Report: Bylaws/Governance (Carlson)
- B. Report: Human Resources (Swandby)
- C. Report: Athlete Curler Recognition (Maskel/Carlson)
- D. Report: Revenue Development (Silver)
 - i. Annual Appeal (Silver)
 - ii. Planned Giving (Silver)
- E. Report: Media (Kolesar)
 - i. Bruce Bennett Media Award

16. **Championships** (Williams)

- A. Report: Committee activities (Format, Awards, Field of Play, Rules & Officiating & Event Site Selection).

17. **Member Services** (Krailo)

- A. Report: Committee activities (College Curling (Maclean), Arena Curling (Havercroft), Training & Instruction (McMakin), Growth & Development (Nawyn)

18. **USOC** (Patzke)

- A. USOC/AAC report (Fenson)

19. **Athletes Advisory Council** (Swishhelm)

20. **World Curling Federation** (Anderson, Hatch, Rich, Swandby, Welling)

21. **USWCA** (Stannard)

22. **Open board action items**

23. **Unfinished business**

- A. Election of Officers

24. **New business**

- A. Budget Meeting Date and Location TBD
- B. Next USCA Board of Directors Meeting Date and Location TBD

25. **Adjourn**

UNITED STATES CURLING ASSOCIATION
Board of Directors Meeting
April 27-28, 2013
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MINUTES

Present: Jim Pleasants, in the Chair; Paul Badgero, Kent Beadle, Craig Brown, Derek Brown, David Carlson, Maureen Clark, Gabrielle Coleman, Pete Fenson, Dave Flippo, Dean Gemmell, Jeff Hannon, Jonathan Havercroft, Cyndee Johnson, Nick Kitinski, Jan Legacie, Rich Lepping, Gwen Krailo Lyons, Gordon Maclean, Sean Silver, Chris Sjue, Jennifer Stannard, Mark Swandby, Ann Swisshelm, Beau Welling, Sam Williams

Also Present: Rick Patzke, COO; Christy Hering, Administrative Assistant; Terry Kolesar, Director of Communications; Dawn Leurquin, Event Services Manager; Kim Nawyn, Growth & Development Manager; Sandy Robinson, Controller; Albert M. Anderson, WCF Director of Finance; Jack Bernauer, Chair of Finance-Audit Committee; Sally MacKenzie, President, GNCC; Dick McCartney, GNCC; Carl Thomas, GNCC; John Benton, Project 2018 Coach-Women; David Staveteig, Head Ice Technician; Kevin Madsen, Assistant Ice Technician; Amelia Young, President, North Dakota Curling Association; Sandra McMakin, Potomac Curling Club; Al Hackner, HPP National Coach; Greg Walsh, President, St. Paul Curling Club

Absent: Board: Nancy Hagenmiller, Peggy Hatch, Allison Pottinger, Leland Rich

- I. **Call to Order** (Pleasants)
- II. **Welcome and introductions** (Pleasants)
 - A. Introductions – During roll call, Directors are invited to indicate their state/region & USCA Committee assignments
- III. **Roll Call** (Havercroft)
 - A. Havercroft takes the roll and reports that we have a quorum.
- IV. **Appoint Parliamentarian** (Pleasants)
 - i. Andy Anderson is appointed parliamentarian.
- V. **Additions/Changes to Printed Agenda** (Pleasants)
 - A. Chris Sjue will report on Nominating committee
 - B. The vote on the Board of Directors meeting minutes is deferred until Sunday.
- VI. **Approve Minutes of Previous Board Meetings** (Pleasants)
 - A. Board of Directors Meeting September 15-16, 2012
- VII. **Ratify the actions taken by the Executive Committee** (Pleasants)
 - A. December 12, 2012 [see appendix]
 - i. Having reviewed a SafeSport draft, the Executive Committee authorizes Nawyn to work with an attorney knowledgeable in the area to finalize the language. The resulting document will be brought to the Executive Committee for final approval.
 1. Each NGB must adopt a SafeSport Policy by December 31, 2013, in order to be in compliance with USOC requirements for NGBs. The USOC provided 80 pages of helpful materials, and Nawyn used our Harassment and Abuse policy, as well as consultation with the Executive Committee and in consultation with an attorney specializing in this field. This is incredibly important not only for the safety of our members and athletes, but for protection of our organization. Once ratified, we will proceed with implementation before December 31. Badgero notes that this is a pro-active, rather than re-active approach. Will this be on our USCA website? Nawyn indicates that it will be distributed, and once the website posting is created

(including a SafeSport report form) it will be. The USOC has on-line training available; all of our certified coaches will be taking this. Badgero: If we approve this today, how much can we take back to our state and regional meetings? Pleasants encourages Directors to take this back to states and regions. Nawyn indicates that coaches, course conductors, officials working with juniors. The GNCC initiated background checks for their junior program coaches and instructors several years ago as well as for their officials at GNCC Junior Championships. The purpose is to ensure that people in a position of power are aware of this issue.

- ii. Coach Code of Conduct was deferred pending further review.
- B. February 6, 2013 [see appendix]
 - i. Based on the recommendation of the HPP, the winners of the Olympic Trials should have the right of first refusal for the USA spots on the Continental Cup Teams in 2014. Pleasants notes that the Olympic Trials are in November; the Continental Cup is in December – it will be good experience and publicity for our Olympic teams.
 - ii. The USCA should purchase 15 new sets of stones and 9 refurbished sets of stones from the WCF stone loan program.
- C. March 12, 2013 [see appendix]
 - i. The USCA Executive Committee Approves the adoption of the USCA Coaches Association Code of Conduct. Pleasants notes that this is a complement to the SafeSport initiative. Nawyn and Higgins worked to ensure that there is consistency between SafeSport and the Coaches Association Code of Conduct.
- D. April 18, 2013 [see appendix]
 - i. The USCA Executive Committee approves the adoption of the SafeSport Policy.
 - ii. The USCA Executive Committee approves an agreement for the USCA to send two teams (if invited) to participate in the 2013 Winter World University Games, in December in Italy. Pleasants notes that we were being asked to sign a contract by 4/25/13. We are using this as an important step within our High Performance Program. We are requesting USOC funding for our participation in WWUGs and we are confident we will receive a reasonable level of funding.

Badgero moves/Coleman seconds ratification of all action items. Motion carries.

VIII. Nominating (Sjue)

A. Explanation of Reduction in number of Vice-Presidents (Pleasants)

Pleasants reviews the history of the role and duties of vice presidents in the organization: Elite Programs, Member Services, Championships, and Marketing & Operations. After the Board passed a resolution that put staff in charge of the High Performance Program, the Board concluded that there was no longer a need for an Elite Programs VP. However, our by-laws require that the Board of Review be chaired by the chair of the Elite Programs Committee. Pleasants has asked Beadle to serve as chair of Elite Programs. For the past year-and-a-half we have had a Growth & Development Manager, and those responsibilities overlap Member Services. The question is: should the USCA pass a resolution somewhat similar to the one made related to the High Performance Program? The Growth & Development Manager position is not an autonomous position, however, we would like to move in the direction of giving authority to the Growth & Development Manager. Staff leaves the room, except for Rick. Non-directors were given the opportunity to remain and listen to the discussion. This is a continuation of the on-going discussion about a staff-driven, board supervised organization. Resolution by Carlson seconded by Johnson to delegate growth and development as well as member services to staff. Pleasants – delegating this responsibility to staff would not have been possible without a full-time Growth and Development person and she has moved into the role aggressively. In discussions with Kim and Gwen we concluded it was time for the

transition. Gwen will serve as her advisor. Patzke – Nawyn was hired specifically for Growth and Development which is separate from Member Services. The intern helps with Member Services allowing Nawyn to concentrate on the bigger picture. In response to a question from Carlson Pleasants stated there is no intention to give Nawyn autonomy. She will report to Patzke. Nawyn will determine committees necessary to assist her and staff accordingly. Nawyn has a 10-hour intern to assist her but will need various committees as well. After prolonged discussion about newness of position, need for board oversight, and reasons for maintaining the position VP –Member Services, it was determined to eliminate the position. Staff is asked to return, 2:19 p.m.

Meeting Break: 2:20 p.m.

Meeting Reconvenes

- B.** Resolution to delegate management of Member Services to Growth & Development Staff (Pleasants). Staff is asked to leave the meeting, after which there is discussion. **Carlson moves / xxx seconds: Resolved to delegate authority to the COO and to Growth & Development Manager, as delegated by the COO, for the management and execution of the Growth & Development and Member Services areas of responsibilities. Motion carries.** Staff returns to the meeting.
- C.** Sjue reports nominations brought forward by the Nominating Committee. Leland Rich, chairs the committee, plus Chris Sjue, AAC Maureen Clark, Jon Mielke and Bill Forsythe.
- i. President – 1 –year term starting 1 May – James Pleasants. Sjue calls for nominations three times. None.
 - ii. VP – 1-year terms starting 1 May – David Carlson and Sam Williams. Sjue calls for nominations three times. None. Nominations are closed
 - iii. Treasurer – 1-year term starting 1 May – Sean Silver. Sjue calls for nominations three times. None. Nominations are closed.
 - iv. Secretary – 1-year term starting 1 May – Gwen Krailo-Lyons. Sjue calls for nominations three times. None. Nominations are closed.
 - v. Board-Elected Director – 1-year term starting 1 May – Beau Welling. Sjue calls for nominations three times. None. Nominations are closed.
 - vi. Nominating committee term – 2-year term – Jon Mielke. Sjue calls for nominations three times. None. Nominations are closed.
 - vii. World Curling Federation – 3-year term beginning 1 May – Mark Swandby. Sjue calls for nominations three times. None. Nominations are closed.

Lepping moves/Swisshelm seconds a vote by acclamation for the nominees listed above. Motion carries.

IX. Proposed By-Laws Amendment (Carlson)

- A. Pleasants notes that this was covered in the Members' Meeting (motion carried)

X. Governance Task Force Report and Discussion (Pleasants)

- A. Pleasants invites both Directors and Members to be part of the discussion of the Vision Statement. In September there was a vote in support of principles:
- i. NGB of curling
 - ii. HPP run by professionals
 - iii. Move to being a Policy-setting board (reviewing the budget, overseeing the COO (hiring/firing/compensating
 - iv. Reduce the size of the Board.
 - v. Day-to-day authority for managing the operations and carry out the policies set by the board will be delegated to staff.
 - vi. ... [reference Pleasants' document. **See appendix**]
- B. The GTF spent a great deal of time discussing the composition and population of the Board. There is divided opinion whether Board should be nationally or regionally elected. The compromise that was approved in principle is that the board would be composed of a

combination of national and regional. USOC recommends a smaller board size as being more effective for policy-setting boards.

- i. Regional Directors – 11 – proportionality goal of 1 director/1,000 curlers – with cap of 2.
 1. Wisconsin: 2
 2. GNCC: 2
 3. Minnesota: 2
 4. GLCA including Illinois: 1
 5. MoPac: 1
 6. North Dakota (includes S.D.): 1
 7. Northwest (Washington combined with Alaska): 1
 8. Mid-South (Colorado / Nebraska / At-large) – 1
 - ii. The remainder of the Board would be non-regional – 20 – composed of:
 1. Athletes (voted in by the AAC: 4
 2. USWCA Rep: 1
 3. Nationally-elected (voted for by the Board of Directors) – 4
 - iii. Independent Directors will have preference for the Nationally-elected directors. An independent Director is someone who has success in some endeavor other than curling. USOC recommends 20% of a Board be independent directors. They bring ideas and connections for raising funds; they bring in new perspectives and connections. As an NGB for an Olympic sport, we have untapped resources and opportunities for building our organization.
- C. The GTF spent a good deal of time discussing the composition of committees. Given the board will be a policy-setting board, who will handle the work done by volunteers?
Solution: use the Members Assembly to develop volunteers. Operational committees will be under direction of staff (CEO). Five non-operation, standing committees will report to the board: Finance-Audit, Judicial, Ethics, Human Resources, Nominating committees. These five committees are intentionally not under the direction for the CEO.
- D. Pleasants reviews an “organizational make-up” chart.
 - i. Treasurer and Secretary of the organization will be under the direction of the CEO. They could be volunteers.
 - ii. Staff will have advisors, and they could be members (as well as Directors).
- E. Pleasants reviews the Organization Chart.
 - i. COO will be a CEO.
 - ii. Members will be most involved in the Growth & Development side.
 - iii. Three executive Chairs: Organizational Development, Member Development, Grassroots Competitions. High Performance will be more involved in the championships leading to World and Olympic competitions.
- F. Pleasants reviews the role of the Members Assembly. It will be a place where people can request to serve as volunteers. There will be committee meetings. There will be educational opportunities that we hope will be attractive to members. The Members Assembly will continue to be the final authority on by-laws amendments. It is anticipated the members’ assembly will rotate around the country to encourage more participation. Individual clubs could come and participate however that would reduce the state or region vote by their number
- G.** Discussion: **Lepping moves to accept the vision statement as written and proposed by the Governance Task Force. Johnson seconds.** Lepping notes that this is a unanimous GTF recommendation. Silver thanks the GTF for the work, time, and effort that they have made. Silver notes that he does not think the vision statement is not consistent with best practice, but Silver does not support creating an Illinois/Great Lakes because it is convoluted... Silver moves to amend the vision statement to provide that each member

association that currently has a director, will initially retain at least one director on the board with a long-term goal of developing a comprehensive solution that reflects the governance best practices to reduce the overall number of directors of the board. Sjue seconds. Discussion: The board would then have 23 directors. Carlson continues to prefer to reduce the size of the board, but as a pragmatist, good practice for the organization to continue to recognize the legal separateness of the regional organizations. It also provides for seats at the table for all existing States and Regions. Carlson supports the motion. Thomas opposes the amendment, noting that the larger regions agreed to drop the number of directors to accommodate the leveling of the number of directors. Thomas – unfair to those larger regions who drop from 3 – 2 or 2 – 1 if you are not combining the smaller regions like Great Lakes and Illinois. Carlson – combining IL and GLCC will affect the by-laws and governance of those organizations. At large clubs are totally unaffiliated and will have to be combined. He would not support adding directors to smaller regions that were to be combined. Sjue supports the amendment with the recognition of the wording that the long-range goal is to reduce the size of the board. Dean Gemmell indicates that the AAC is cautiously optimistic about the new by-laws, and is willing to accept things that we don't entirely like. Gemmell reinforces the value of AAC. AAC supports the amendment. Silver: It is not the reduction in numbers that is the issue, it is the technical challenge of how the legal entities that are being combined will accomplish selection of directors. Havercroft: under existing by-laws, 300 members are required to have a director – and those below this threshold are combined. It is difficult. Swandby: the GTF has thought this through carefully, and with compromise – does not support amendment. Call the vote on the amendment – Aye: 13/ Opposed: 9. The motion to amend is approved. Vote on the vision statement as amended. Pleasants urges everyone to vote for the vision statement as amended. We really do need to move forward. Anderson: this amendment affects three numbers in the document – but the rest of the document doesn't change. It includes the proviso that best governance is still part of the vision. Silver indicates that he made a proposal that increased numbers, and he wants to make it clear that he supports the principle of reducing the board – but wants additional time for development of a solution to a technical problem. Gemmell indicates he accepts the amendment as tactical. Hannon: the only way to eliminate directors is to eliminate directors from all regions. Pleasants indicated that this did not pass. Lepping calls the question. Aye: 22/ Opposed: 1. Motion to call the question is approved. Vote on the main motion as amended: Aye: 19 / No: 2 / Abstain: 1. Motion carries.

Pleasants recesses the BoD meeting. 3:58 p.m. Reconvenes 4:08 p.m.

XI. Finance Committee (Bernauer)

- A. The Committee approved adding a second signer. Before the second signer will sign a check – Controller will provide Rick with documentation for approval before signing. Christy Hering was approved as a second signer.
- B. Final Audited results for 2011-12 were somewhat better than preliminary reports. Silver will report.
- C. Reviewed operations of current year. Silver will report.
- D. World Curling Federation Stone Loan Program. We have 3 sets of 2010 stones. We will be purchasing 24 sets, but by the time we get them, all new sets will be spoken for, per Nawyn but not all of the refurbished sets.
- E. World Curling Federation construction loan program. The Evergreen Club was able to fund the entire operation by themselves, without a WCF loan. Coyotes and Denver have approached the USCA, but we do not have a formal request from either club to date.

- F. Dues increase. Last year the Finance-Audit Committee recommended a \$1 dues increase. The Budget Committee deferred the increase. The Finance-Audit Committee again recommends a \$1 dues increase across all membership categories.
- G. Our finances are in good shape.
- H. **Treasurer** (Silver)
- I. 2011-12 Audited Financial Statement and auditor letters are in DropBox.
 - i. Audit was very clean.
 - ii. Deficiencies noted are similar to any organization of our size. Dues were below budget with less than anticipated growth in curling.
 - iii. Positive net income of \$48,000.
 - iv. Cash on hand \$334,176
 - v. Equity \$353,967
 - vi. Consistent with financial report provided at the last meeting.
 - vii. Shortfall in dues was offset by positives – USOC Challenge Grant, Philadelphia Nationals income (\$9000) and some reduced expenses.
 - viii. USCA was in sound financial position
- J. Recap of budgeting for this fiscal year
 - i. Major focus on funding important strategic initiatives.
 - 1. Growth & Development
 - 2. Refreshing communications channels including new Curling News format
 - 3. Expanded funding for 2018 Program
 - ii. We did not increase the dues
 - iii. The original budget reflected not signing the USOC Digital Media Agreement, but did ultimately reach agreement acceptable to USCA
 - iv. Did not receive \$25,000 anticipated from NHL event.
 - v. Reallocation of travel stipends to more strategic needs.
 - vi. In order to fund the strategic priorities going into an Olympic year – we approved a deficit budget, understanding that this is not sustainable long-term
- K. Budget perspective
 - i. We generate sponsorship and USOC dollars that we can use to support Growth & Development and Member Services. The USOC is our largest sponsor, and dues from member curlers are second. The revenue from the USOC – overhead support for staff salaries, Challenge Grant – direct and indirect funding related to our affiliation with the Olympics is probably 70% of our budget.
- L. Best estimate of year-end numbers. It appears we’re behind on entry fees, but we should be on track when we get to year-end and all entries are posted.
- M. Revenue projections appear to be on track. Shortfalls appear to be offset by positive variances. Thanks to new clubs and clubs that have increased – dues are \$20,000 greater than budget. We anticipate receiving all \$35,000 of the Challenge Grant this year.
- N. We don’t anticipate any expenses that will be significantly off budget.
- O. Budget challenges.
 - i. We cannot budget for a loss long-term
 - ii. Uncertainty in the level of USOC support.
 - iii. Significant internal resource constraints and strategic opportunities going into the Olympic years.
 - iv. We have a target of retaining cash reserves equal to six months of our expenses, which would be about \$475,000. We’re not there. As we’re spending more money on significant initiatives, we also need to build our cash reserves to 6 months of operating expenses.
 - v. COO and staff will bring a budget proposal to the Budget Committee meeting in June.
 - vi. Rationale for dues increase – goals:

1. A dues increase is about \$16,000, but that money could be important to running a specific project next year, as we're focused on the Olympic year.
2. In prior years we've had every-other-year dues increases. The Committee is not recommending a routine approach to dues increase, but will be tying increases to strategic initiatives.
3. Have not had a dues increase in three years.
4. Provide flexibility to expand resources to support USCA strategic priorities including Growth and Development, Fundraising and Administrative accounting activities.

Silver moves/Sjue seconds a \$1.00 dues increase for all dues categories, to be implemented in 2013-14. This recommendation is being made now so that regions have adequate time. Beadle notes that the small, regular increases were implemented so that members can plan. Doesn't that approach still have some value? Silver responds that the motion doesn't include the recommendation of the Finance-Audit committee about aligning dues increases with initiatives. Swandby notes that increases for inflation is easier for members to accept and understand and may not be annually. Craig Brown requests that members be reminded that 70% of our income is related to our Olympic affiliation, and that their dues increases will be used to support growth and development. Flippo: Are we asking for too little? Silver: Finance-Audit also discussed this. If we are going to have a significant dues increase, we need to have a rationale – and we haven't seen the budget recommendations from staff. We know we'll have more needs than dollars, and a \$1.00 increase seemed the best solution. Beadle points out that in the three years since we last had a dues increase, overhead has increased more than the \$16,000 that this \$1.00 dues increase will cover. Directors should be given information about the cost increases over three years, and refer to the deficit budget. Silver responds that our budget forced us to move dollars from some areas into G&D. **Motion carries.**

XII. Chief Operating Officer (Patzke)

- A. Reaching a Digital Media Agreement with the USOC is a favorable outcome for the USCA. We face a deadline from the USOC of June 1 to begin our transition to their website. We are in the \$50,000 tier this year, and we will receive substantial support for support for broadcasting events. There will be live coverage of the Trials – with preference to the Women's teams as having already qualified for the Olympics. We have asked permission to web stream the trials up to the point TV coverage kicks in. There may be additional coverage for the Füssen event if our Men's team is in the playoffs.
- B. Continental Cup ticket and accommodation sales are off to a very good start. USOC "Road to Sochi" traveling exhibit will be at the Trials. There are plans for a send-off celebration for our Olympic teams. Coverage will be on NBC Sports Network.
- C. Hawaii event – NHL model without the NHL. A 5-sheet club is being established, and is purchasing curling stones through the USCA-WCF stone program. The goal is to raise \$75,000 for a children's hospital / \$25,000 for the USCA.
- D. The USCA has loyal sponsors, for which we are grateful.
- E. There is discussion about broadcasting rights and sophistication of coverage.
- F. There is discussion about which media rights are controlled and how. Discussion about controlling sponsors on home page. Patzke describes how we will address providing our sponsors with visibility. We own production and broadcast rights to events.
- G. Staff
 - i. Nawyn's G&D report is in DropBox.
 - ii. Kolesar – Curling News. Positive response from curlers and advertisers.
 - iii. Hering & Leurquin – site selection. Leurquin playdown registration is more and more efficient.
 - iv. Robinson – Controller

- v. Derek Brown and Al Hackner. Derek Brown / Patzke / Fenson / Pleasants will be presenting HPP to the USOC on Monday.
- H. Patzke describes proposal to use the 5th sheet at Fargo Nationals to make members a visible part of the event and used for Corporate events. (Only 4 sheets required for event.) Registered members' names are under the ice – “You (members) are a part of the Olympic experience.” Patzke has conferred with Head Ice Technician Staveteig, and that would be possible. How do we get people who are engaged in curling – what can we give them that doesn't cost us money. Different ways to interact and engage. Patzke invites everyone to submit ideas. Could see limited number of spots on the button.
- I. Directors' Survey. Was not designed to be a scientific survey. We're looking for feedback to prioritize our work. It became fairly clear that we won't be able to lop much off of our work list. Patzke invites comments.
- J. Marketing
 - i. RJM Licensing – soon everyone will be able to purchase Simpson's Curling merchandise. This is a royalty arrangements.
 - ii. Credit card affinity deal - \$50 for every application. It would be a USA Curling debit card that we could use as well (e.g., for athlete per diems).
 - iii. Ludis Tours is our partner in hospitality areas. They work with other Olympic NGBs, including the CCA. They will be a benefit to families once our Olympic teams are known – provide assistance to them when making arrangements for housing and transportation. We will receive some benefit, including accommodations for our VIP Team leader. \$5,000 - \$7,000 cost to the USCA. Last Olympics we raised \$20,000 via a last-minute contest.

Meeting recesses at 5:06 p.m.

President Pleasants reconvenes the meeting on 4/28/13 at 8:07 a.m.

Anderson makes parliamentary statement – points out that persons adding to discussion who are not Directors / Members should not be participating in the debate.

Secretary Havercroft calls the roll, and confirms a quorum is present.

Ratification of meeting minutes from September:

Swisshelm moves/Beadle seconds approval of the September board meeting minutes as written. Motion carries.

VP AREA REPORTS:

XIII. Competitive Programs (Beadle)

- A. Beadle reiterates that we are in transition of transferring of authority to staff. Beadle continues in role of liaison as chair of Elite Programs and will report to the Board in that capacity.
- B. Beadle reports on a grievance during the 2012-13 season. The result of the grievance was issued and was forwarded to outlets and public media by the grievant, so it is public and Beadle will inform the board of this. A young man, Steven Roberts, wanted to compete in the able-bodied junior playdowns, in a wheelchair, delivering with his feet. We received a right-to-compete grievance a week before the event was to begin. The Board of Review worked to provide a response in time. They found that he had a right to compete, he was eligible to compete, but his delivery was not legal under the rules of curling. Therefore he was ineligible to compete using that delivery in our national championships; and we were

advised by the WCF that he could compete, but any rocks delivered by foot would be ineligible. Everyone on the committee had a great deal of respect for the young man and his desire to compete, but ultimately we had to find that his delivery was illegal. Question: has there been any response? They had said they were going to appeal to the Court of Arbitration of Sport, but there has been no activity. Discussion: Johnson, who teaches adaptive physical education, that we may face similar situations in the future. Beadle indicates that the committee looked at rulings in other cases so that they could determine where he fell within the ADA, and determined that his delivery would fundamentally change the sport. Beadle also notes that the young man was not eligible for competing as a wheelchair curler.

C. HPP [see appendix]. Beadle reviewed the numbers of athletes and teams who received travel-training funding. 17 individuals on the adult side, 19 in U-18, and 16 in junior programs. He notes the camps/clinics that were held. Beadle introduces Al Hackner, who was added to our HPP staff (H McCormick / C Potter). Baird continued to work with adult teams. Drobnick/Benton

- i. Results:
- ii. Project 2018 adults: 3 were runners-up
- iii. Project 2018 juniors: Solem team and Dropkin team both won Junior Nationals. At World Championships both teams finished 7th.
- iv. Erika Brown rink – 19th in World OOM.
- v. Tyler George – 34th / Fenson 36th. Fenson won Great Lakes Curling Tour. Erika Brown and Becca Hamilton tied for 1st at Great Lakes CT
- vi. Women's finished 4th at Worlds – qualifying for the Olympics
- vii. Men's team – not a funded team -- finished 9th – as a result, our men's team did not qualify for the Olympics and will be competing with up to 8 teams for one of two Olympic spots, in Fussen, December 2013. Beadle expresses confidence in our HP staff and team in preparing for that event.
- viii. HPP Plan presenting to the USOC includes:
 1. Support for WWUGs and Junior program
 2. Funding for Sports Education position
 3. Additional travel-training stipends for the Trials Teams
 4. Support for our Olympic delegation
 5. Support for the Great Lakes Curling Tour, along the lines of sponsoring participation of some of the highly ranked world teams at our events so that our event can be ranked higher in the World OOM. This gives us an opportunity to get higher OOM points, which gets us into the Grand Slam – which is the best training for our teams.
 6. Maintenance of our Coaching Development program.
 7. International competitive analysis.
- ix. HPP advisory committee tasked with naming one additional Men's and one Women's teams to the Trials. Work continues. Announcement will be made by May 15.
- x. World Team Preparation – We worked on making sure that we have people to run the team meetings to non-HPP events, and discussed providing assistance to families who want to go to events.

D. Report: Committee activities (Elite Programs, Coaching, World Team Preparation, Adaptive Curling & Sports Science).

XIV. **Marketing and Operations** (Carlson) [see appendix]

A. Report: Bylaws/Governance (Carlson). Carlson indicates there is no further discussion.

B. Report: Human Resources (Swandby)

- i. Swandby notes that the primary focus is non-HP staff.
 1. Effect of FMLA on the USCA.

2. Update Employment Handbook
 3. Evaluate the COO annually
 - ii. Swandby references the survey from Patzke when noting the heavy workload of staff. Swandby commends the staff, noting financial restraints.
- C. Report: Athlete Curler Recognition (Maskel/Carlson)
- i. Met by teleconference on Monday afternoon. The committee would like to recommend following:
 1. 2013 Male AoY: Brady Clark, skip of Men's 2013 Championship team
 2. 2013 Female AoY: Erika Brown
 3. 2013 Team of Year: Erika Brown – Women's 2013 Championship team
 - ii. Requires a motion and a second to affirm these awards. **Swandby/Brown moves to affirm these nominations. Swandby notes that the committee does consider a variety of candidates and found these candidates very worthy. Motion carries, with one abstention (Swisshelm).** Carlson asks that this information remain confidential until Maskel contacts the awardees and makes the formal announcement.
- D. Report: Revenue Development (Silver)
- i. USOC Martha Johnson, Assistant Director of . . . , via teleconference. Building a long-term, sustainable fund-raising program needs to be strategic. Being a good steward of and attentive to our donors. 15 of 47 NGBs have full-time fundraisers on staff. Field Hockey was most recent to add a staff person, and anticipate that that person will cover her salary the first year, and double it the second. Two types of fund-raiser personnel: creators and implementers. Implementers take an NGBs existing program and work with that. Creators would expand our fundraising base. An implementer \$40-\$55K; creator \$55-\$60K salary. The challenge is to find the right person. Johnson commented that one of the tasks of a fundraiser is to expand the donor base. Johnson was not aware of NGB that has added a part-time fundraiser. From a strategic standpoint, this is a budget issue we will be addressing at the budget committee meeting.
 - ii. Media Sauce. Lepping reports on December 3-4 meeting with Taco Bell, where Media Sauce and USCA made a pitch. Taco Bell has confirmed that we will be in their media plan and advertising budget. There may not be direct monetary support, but there will be exposure for curling. Should have more information in June.
 1. Media Sauce had created a PowerPoint program that was dynamite. Lepping proposes that we reconfigure the presentation so that it can be used by local clubs and state/regional organizations. We'll have that prepared in Fall.
 - iii. Annual Appeal. Silver notes that the discussion with Martha Johnson was very helpful. Typically over 80% of NGB funds raised via fundraising is via individual curler support. Our Annual Appeal, a volunteer-driven system with support from current staff is limited. If we want to expand our program to effectively communicate with our curling community, we need to ask if it's worth the investment to hire a professional. Two investments to launch a more professional fundraising effort: in a staff person, in a platform for tracking donors. Silver notes that Patzke has been asked to make recommendations during budget development. Silver notes that we will probably not reach our Annual Appeal goal in 2012-13. He reviews the process used and steps taken in 2011-12, and notes that we have had fewer steps this year and will do one additional email this year. Our response to this fall's mailing was greater than the comparable mailing the year before. One of our goals is to have full Director support for the USCA. For this fiscal year, 15 of 28 directors have provided a donation. Martha noted that it is key that directors support their organization. Silver makes an appeal for 100% director support by fiscal year end. Lepping notes that we have about \$1,300 remaining to complete our \$35K matching grant. He also notes

that only about ½ of Directors responded to the COO survey, and asks that all board members respond to such requests for information. Silver noted the pin program peaked at \$90,000 with a smaller curling population.

- iv. USOC Matching Grant. \$35,000 goal for 2013 will be met this fiscal year. This is due to other fundraising efforts that Patzke has been involved with.
- v. Reminder: Hall of Fame nominations are due to the USCA by the end of June. Nominations for Volunteer of the Year are coming up as well. Some clubs have confusion about these two awards. HoF requires national/regional exposure to qualify for HoF. Nominations are due to Richard Maskel by end of June. VoY recognizes outstanding volunteerism for a particular year.
- vi. Bruce Bennett Media Award. Kolesar presents the award. Candidate is from the Philadelphia area [see appendix] and did a lot of work prior to the 2012 National Championship. The candidate is already working on the 2014 National Championships. Kolesar distributes ballots.

XV. **Championships** (Williams)

- A. Williams noted that Rules and Officiating had a separate meeting.
 - i. Chief Umpire for the Olympic Trials. Athletes weighed in on the available candidates. Ken McPartlin is approved by the Championships Committee as Head Official for the Trials.
 - ii. Subcommittee: Krailo-Lyons / Nawyn / Kupchik / Statzell. Reviewed and rewrote the criteria for Level I, II, and III officials (officiating crew, not head officials). Requires documentation and follow-up for officiating crew. The goal is to populate officiating roles with experienced people. With regard to the Trials, the committee recommended that officials with certification and experience be selected to be the timers and on-ice supervisors over inexperienced officials and local volunteers. Timers are most critical. Williams spoke with Amelia Young, who will be responsible for recruitment for the Trials. Beadle notes that we have many events. What records do we have to determine whom to select? Krailo-Lyons responds: we have a fairly good database which enables us to know who has experience in the past 5-10 years, with some information about quality. New criteria – not yet approved – that are more stringent. For the Olympic Trials we’re recommending we use people who have experience over the past five years. She notes that we’re asking our Chief and Deputy Chief Umpires to continue to provide evaluations of the officiating crew.
 - iii. Williams notes that the form so that players can provide feedback about officiating will be posted online so that players are better able to respond. The feedback is very helpful, but had been dropping in quantity.
 - iv. Format. There are some Olympic Trials format issues that will be addressed by Williams and DHP Derek Brown.
 - v. 5th player rule. Williams notes that our 5th player rule is restrictive, and the recommendation is that teams select their 5th players as late as possible. This includes some teams that have qualified for our Olympic Trials. It is awkward to change the rules after teams have been selected – but our 2013-14 rules haven’t been written. Our Olympic Team Selection process has been approved by the USOC, and references our Rules. Our World Teams, once selected, are able to replace their 5th player. The rules for our Olympic teams do not include that option. However, we are going to add a 5th player hardship exception to the rules for 2013-14.
 - 1. Challenge Rounds. Format will not change in 2013-14 and will use triple knockout.
 - 2. National Championships. Changes are to better align our rules with the WCF’s, which our Director of High Performance supports. Example: 2012-13 - In the case of a 3-way tie, we used a single elimination. In 2013-14, the draw-shot challenge

(DSC) provides an average that is used in tie-breakers, which is consistent with how the WCF handles tie-breakers.

3. Junior Nationals. Williams notes that this event involves regional representation, but has some teams with athletes from different regions. Some regions do not qualify junior teams so regions with larger participation are tapped for fill teams. DHP proposed we split the country in East and West; Chris Banino (GNCC) proposed we split the country into 4 regions; Craig Brown also has a proposal. [see appendix for proposals]. Williams doesn't anticipate that we'll change the Junior Nationals this year, except with regard to alignment with WCF rules. Sjue question: This issue is going to generate much discussion within regions. Who can people contact if regions have questions or want input? Williams indicates he would like advice about how to handle communication. Gemmell: Challenge is that there is no solution that will satisfy everyone. But we can at least present the issue more widely. Williams: we have at least three possible solutions, and we can describe the current situation – what works well / what doesn't work well. Could be a document that will also include the three proposals for what would be a radical change from what we're doing now. Derek Brown responds to questions about how the issue arose: How can we find an equitable solution to identifying the best teams. According to Derek the current system is unfair because some areas have strong teams that do not make it to Nationals because they cannot get out of their region while much weaker teams qualify from another region. Williams will take responsibility for preparing information. Swisshelm: We need to succinctly say what the goals for the event, and describe our current format – and ask: Do you agree with our goals? Do you think the current format meets these goals? As a Board, we find a solution that meets the needs. Williams indicates: We can list our concerns – we have concerns about location and travel costs, that talented athletes don't compete because they aren't from the same region – and solutions – rather than listing the format. Swisshelm: we can get more information, and educate people of our decision. Coleman: It is reasonable to inform people, and then put out the nuts and bolts for comment. Swisshelm: It's the job of the BoD to determine the goals of the event. Coleman: Perhaps we're just hearing from a population of unhappy people – and it may be small population.
4. College Curling. [see appendix]. Maclean asks the question: is College Curling a good fit for Championships? Is Championships a good fit for College Curling. Immediate concern is in terms of liability. Without the umbrella of the USCA for the event, he is concerned about where it falls. One option would be to create a non-profit corporation for College Curling.
5. Site Selection. Williams notes that the staff has done very well with this area, particularly in securing sites for events. We have only two event sites undetermined. Staff has suggested that we have three deadlines – fall, spring, sometime in the summer. Staff will inform sites of the deadlines, and indicate that the sooner the bids are in, the better. Williams notes that the interest in hosting events is improving with the development of new clubs. Committee approved Mixed Doubles at Medford, Wis., contingent upon our providing ice-making help. Staveteig indicates that help would be available. Club Nationals – Two Harbors, Minn. SR Men Portage / SR Women Eau Claire and Women's Challenge - Grafton. Men's Challenge and Mixed Nationals sites are still open.
6. Format for Mixed Doubles and Seniors. Have about the same number of teams which puts them in a split pool round robin. Double knock-out provision has been problematic. Williams proposed eliminating the double knock-out provision in keeping with Worlds' procedures. Also discussed triple-knockouts, because that

eliminates the problems of a split division. We are considering a triple knockout, when we have more than 24 teams. Committee will do a survey, and then meet mid-summer meeting and then make a decision.

7. Committee did not discuss Club and Mixed Nationals, but will discuss these events during a summer meeting.
8. Williams reported that seeding at the Junior and Men's and Women's Nationals will be done randomly. The intent is that seeding will be done this way for all of our full round-robin events. Swandby notes that it will be important to ensure that this issue is addressed in all areas of the rules.

Kolesar announces that the result of the ballot voting is unanimous approval of the winner of the Bruce Bennett Media Award.

Short break until 9:58

XVI. Member Services (Krailo-Lyons)

- A. Krailo-Lyons refers to Nawyn report [see appendix]
- B. Membership. 3% membership increase. Norfolk Curling Club whose facility burned down due to arson has continued to pay dues and is in the process of rebuilding.
- C. Training & Instruction. McMakin reports that the T&I group has met via 21 conference calls to date. Big surge in influx of new members resulting from Olympic exposure results in a big decrease in skill level at clubs. The focus of T&I has been on teaching people how best to teach new people, and to controls risks. We are training Course Conductors to train our Instructors. 20 people will be participating in a clinic in May to train coordinators. McMakin commends Nawyn for her work on ensuring that we have a uniform USCA training program. Silver notes that this is one of the important strategic initiatives that our budget for this year has funded. Nawyn notes that there was a focus on regions where there were not instructors available. Nawyn addresses the "black hole" issue. One means to address is on-line registration.
- D. Officiating training. Conducted four level I and one level II officiating clinics. We are looking for regional course conductors to ensure consistency under guidance of a National Course Conductor. We are increasing the number of requirements for each level. Officiating training needs to undergo a complete revision to create standardization across the US.
- E. Ice making instruction for arena and for dedicated ice. Work in progress.
- F. Stone purchase program. 7 clubs have completed the purchase. All clubs are current with payments. We have signed an agreement with the WCF for 24 additional sets – 19 new stone sets with double-sided inserts; 9 refurbished with single-sided inserts. Many of the new stone sets are already spoken for.
- G. Club insurance program. Premiums were increased for the first time in several years by \$1.00. We are reviewing options for other carriers. We are working to be able to provide premium information to clubs sooner than we have been able to do.
- H. Arena Championship. July 31. 12 women's / 20 men's teams. We are seeking bids for a 2014 event. Ft. Wayne is willing to host it again, but our hope is to move the event to new venues.
- I. Growth & Development Survey. 65% response – a snapshot of curling in the U.S. at this moment. There will be follow-up with smaller surveys. Nawyn reports. 65% of all eligible clubs responded. 91 surveys (didn't include paper clubs or clubs where curlers curled at another club). Survey results were to be used to develop long-term and short-term goals that are based on data. The survey is extensive, and includes questions related to what clubs expect from the USCA as the national organization. Nawyn notes that

Krailo-Lyons will continue to be involved in this goal setting. Nawyn has been asked to speak at the first WCF Business of Curling Seminar, leading a session related to this survey. Silver: do the results go back to all of the clubs that participated? Nawyn: Once it has been edited, we will distribute. Silver: based on the results, what are the areas that you feel we need to focus on based on this feedback. Nawyn: Clubs want programming. There is a lot of need across the board, and at times it's different depending on whether the club is dedicated or arena ice. Swandby: Spectacular survey – thank you to Nawyn. Silver notes that this is a G&D benefit. Krailo-Lyons notes that the WCF indicated no other country has done a survey so comprehensive.

- J. Volunteer of the Year Award. We received 10 applications. An anonymous committee makes the selection. The committee thanked Jerome Larson for donating 5 years' worth of awards. The nomination form has been revised to avoid confusion noted in 2011-12. The new application has been sent to all clubs. Krailo-Lyons noted the importance of submitting complete applications. Nawyn notes that if incomplete applications come in before the deadline, she will alert the person who submitted it. June 14, 5:00 p.m. CST.
- K. SafeSport. Nawyn notes that it was discussed yesterday, and invites questions. There were none.
- L. Communications. Nawyn has a column – The Warming Room. Krailo-Lyons heard many compliments for the new format of the Curling News when she attended a USWCA meeting. Kolesar indicates that the final print issue will be in mailboxes in mid-May. She notes that the two digital-only editions go to 11,000 people for whom we have email addresses. Nawyn indicates she will be contacting clubs that haven't provided email addresses to urge them to provide those so that their members won't miss out on the digital editions.
- M. Facilities Development Group – Nawyn reports that the committee will be developing case study models from a variety of perspectives, to provide to parties interested in forming a club.
- N. College Curling. Maclean. 36 colleges. 11 college bonspiels. 200 college curlers participating. University of Minnesota were national champions. Maclean thanks board members who contributed to the online fundraising efforts. Next year's event will be at Four Seasons CC.
- O. Dar Curtis Grant Program. Nawyn reports that 2013-14 will be the second year that member clubs with 501(c)(3) status are eligible to submit grant proposals. \$20,000 in competitive grants in two categories. Nawyn expresses appreciation to the committee that determined the grant proposal awards. This is a 3-year trial program that we're working with the Chicago Community Trust. After three years, the Trust will evaluate the success of the program. Silver lists the 6 clubs who received grant awards for 2012-13. He notes that this is a member service to our clubs across the country. Beadle asks: is it necessary for the club to be a 501(c)(3) as a requirement of the Chicago Community Trust? Nawyn: Yes.
- P. Stannard: Are we going to be offering 5 Elements of Curling clinics, similar to the very successful clinic held in Nutmeg Curling Club in 2012-13? Beadle responds: He has been in discussions related to offering more 5 Elements clinic, or Hot Shot Clinics. He notes that it would be great to involve our HP staff – but we need to manage that goal and balance it within our organizational goals to win medals. Sport Education is a significant issue, and we don't want to lose momentum.
- Q. Gemmell: Were there any surprises in the survey results in terms of needs and requests? Krailo-Lyons response: need for instruction was more strongly emphasized than we might have anticipated. Nawyn: Arena clubs were more likely to request information about plans for growth. Interesting facts: 3 clubs in the Midwest include beverages in the dues.

Krailo-Lyons: arena clubs are interested in dedicated ice in order to improve the social aspect of the games, to be able to offer more programs, to have better ice.

- R. Silver: best Member Services and G&D report that he's ever heard.
- S. Krailo-Lyons thanks all of the staff in Stevens Point, and notes in particular Nawyn's dedication to the project.

Pleasants notes that an email has just gone out with a link to make a donation to the Annual Appeal.

XVII. USOC (Patzke)

- A. Patzke reports that the USCA will be presenting a HPP request for 2013-14 tomorrow in Colorado Springs. The USCA falls in the USOC's second category (potential medal winner). The first category is consistently wins medals and the third category is considered developmental.
- B. Stewardship report from the USOC. In their long-range fundraising goal \$100 million every year so that they can fully fund all NGBs high performance programs.
- C. USOC/AAC report (Fenson). Nothing to report.

XVIII. Athletes Advisory Council (Swishhelm)

- A. Swishhelm reports that the vote related to the right for voice and vote of the athletes is very significant. Thank you. Encourages the group to continue working on governance reform.
- B. Welcomes our new USOC/AAC representatives. Pete Fenson – Rep / Maureen Clark – Alternate Rep. It is a 4-year commitment. They report the perspective of all of our athletes to the AAC.
- C. AAC restructured their bylaws. Swishhelm notes that the AAC has difficulty getting commitments from athletes to participate at the AAC level with their travel and competition schedules. They will continue to work to encourage increased participation.
- D. Swishhelm is proud to announce that the new chair of the AAC is Maureen Clark. Dean Gemmell will continue as vice chair.
- E. Swishhelm reports that she has received a communication from someone who is responding to reports from someone on the Board who has disseminated information about the discussion related to Junior Nationals before a decision

XIX. World Curling Federation (Swandby, Welling) [see appendix]

- A. 2014 Men's – Beijing China
- B. 2014 Women's – St. John, NB
- C. WCF has extended its hosting agreement with Canadian Sponsor through 2018.
- D. 2014 Continental Cup is in Las Vegas.
- E. WCF is starting a Rules Commission and an Athletes Commission. Ann was nominated to the Athletes' Commission and has been accepted. Swandby applied for Rules Commission, and has been accepted.
- F. WCF added development officers to their staff. It is a feather in the USCA's cap that G&D Manager Nawyn has been invited to present at the 1st WCF Business of Curling Seminar in Prague.
- G. 2015 World Juniors, Seniors, Mixed Doubles – WCF is seeking bids.
- H. WCF Governance Commission. Welling reports that the main issue that affects us is related to voting power. Anderson's position is eliminated.
- I. WCF meeting in Reno/Tahoe /Las Vegas.
- J. Anderson reports on establishment of WCF commissions. Finance-Audit Commission – USA / Japan / Germany. Constitutional revision – main issue is that there are now over 50 countries, ranging from countries with many curlers and countries with few. Under the current constitution, Canada, Scotland, U.S. each has a spot on the Executive Board. Under the proposed constitution, there will no longer be a director of finance – there will

be three VPs – Americas, Europe, Asia. Governance Commission met in Victoria at Men’s Worlds. U.S. will be giving up our automatic seat. 98.9% of curling population are in Canada, U.S. and Scotland. The proposal that was just set out, provides for a voting situation that keeps the same percentage of voting power in each country’s hands. In this proposal, the large countries will need a few small countries’ support. Nor could small countries make decisions alone. Anderson provides information about the tenure schedule for WCF officers. Anderson notes that the USCA is the largest customer of WCF stones. Anderson anticipates that the constitutional revision will pass. Continental Cup was created 10 years ago to be a major television event with Ryder Cup format. It is a good competition. Financially it has not been a good event. The WCF and Canadians share the costs for the event. The USCA was invited to be an investor in the event and declined. The event is being restructured so that the host committee will bear the risk. The CCA will provide resources; TSN will provide broadcasting coverage. Continental Cup is being held in Las Vegas with local organizing committee underwriting the event. Anderson discusses the rationale of splitting the Men’s and Women’s events due to size. Anderson commends Patzke for his good work on the Las Vegas Continental Cup.

- K. Questions: Thomas – Do you anticipate an increase of the WCF per sheet funding. Anderson: the current loan level is \$50,000 per sheet up from \$20,000 per sheet a few years ago. He can’t predict a change – but doesn’t think there will be a change. The WCF doesn’t want to pay the full facility costs. He notes the WCF loan is to the NGB not the individual club.

XX. **USWCA (Stannard) [see appendix]**

- A. Shelly Dropkin will be the president as of May 1.
- B. Jim Pleasants attended the annual meeting banquet. Pleasants met with Stannard, Matzke, Dropkin to discuss how our organizations can best work together.
- C. Stannard reports on USWCA events.
- D. The USWCA has a development fund specifically for helping female athletes, to help cover travel expenses, training expenses. If a club is a USWCA-member club, athletes can take advantage of that funding.
- E. The USWCA will have a merchandise table at the Arena Championship, and has offered assistance at the event.
- F. September 20-22, 2013 in Boston Mass – Fall meeting.
- G. November 20-24 – Senior Women’s in Itasca, Minn.
- H. Women’s National Bonspiel in Boston in February

XXI. **Open board action items - none**

XXII. **Unfinished business**

- A. Election of Officers [see Nominating Committee date – all approved as nominated – 3 calls for nominations from the floor for each.] All nominations were made by the nominating committee (no second needed) – with no other nominations from the floor, nominations were considered approved.

XXIII. **New business**

- A. Budget Meeting Date and Location TBD. Will determine a date off-line.
- B. Next USCA Board of Directors Meeting Date and Location TBD. **August 2-3-4, 2013** offers a weekend that AAC reps can attend. Johnson: will it be possible to set dates a year in advance? Swisshelm concurs. Question: what will we have to discuss? Response: Budget, Governance that includes a special members’ meeting with a vote on a bylaws change.

Recess to Members’ Meeting. 11:17

Reconvene 11:18

Pleasants thanks Havercroft for his service – as well as Beadle and Krailo-Lyons

XXIV. Adjourn Krailo-Lyons /Beadle move adjournment. Motion carries. 11:19 a.m.

Appendix

UNITED STATES CURLING ASSOCIATION
Executive Committee meeting by teleconference
December 12, 2012

Roll call at 4:04 p.m. (*Patzke took roll in Havercroft's absence.*)

Present: Ann Swisshelm, Beau Welling, Dean Gemmill, Gwen Krailo-Lyons (joined at 4:08 p.m.), James Pleasants, Jennifer Stannard, Kent Beadle, Sam Williams, Sean Silver, Chris Sjue (joined at 4:08 p.m.).

Absent: Jonathan Havercroft, Richard Maskel.

Also present: Leland Rich, Kim Nawyn, Rick Patzke.

Agenda items: SafeSport Policy, USCA Donor Platform, Coaches Code of Conduct.

1. Safe Sport initiative

Pleasants gave background, thanked Kim for all of her work on this, and turned it over to Kim for further background.

Nawyn: Late 2011 USOC presented a SafeSport Training Program and asked that all NGBs create a policy. Kim looked at USCA existing policies for abuse, harassment, guidelines. Looked at what USOC and some other sports, including gymnastics and hockey. Also drew upon own background in domestic violence studies and work. Asked for questions.

Pleasants asked about liability to USCA. Wanted to make sure that we are not implying that coaches or anyone are becoming agents of USCA, if the USCA certifies them for some program, and has them go through a background screening.

Krailo-Lyons: GNCC requires background checks for anyone working with juniors, and also encourages clubs to do the same.

Silver: Curious where the framework for the policy came from.

Nawyn: Most of it came from the USOC. Also wanted to make sure it was consistent with the online SafeSport training program created by the USOC.

Discussion about logistics of instigating background screening, checking up on who has or hasn't undergone the screening, etc. USCA uses National Center for Safety Initiatives, which is the same screening company the USOC uses.

Pleasants: Logistical question about what triggers someone signing up for and completing background screening, the steps taken when someone is flagged as "red light" in background screening.

Silver: Since this document has legal ramifications, it seems like it should be reviewed by an attorney.

Nawyn: Agreed, but said we need a document forwarded by Exec that should be reviewed by an attorney.

Pleasants: Asked for specific input on areas of concern, that

Swisshelm: Is this for juniors only?

Nawyn: Made note of Ann's comments, particularly in relation to travel policies.

Stannard: Noted needs a specific reference to genitalia (not just references to women). Also, in locker room language, need to also specify no photographs.

Pleasants: Are we in a position to say, in principle, we should go forward with this policy and do additional review before finalizing? Is it the sense of the group that, in principle, this is something we want to move forward with?

Pleasants recommendation: Having reviewed what Kim has drafted, we authorize her to go forth with finalization of the language in consultation with an attorney knowledgeable in this area. It would then be brought to the Exec for final review and approval.

Kim asked that anyone with input send her their comments by Sunday, Dec. 16, so that she could keep the process moving to try to complete this by the end of this year.

2. Donation platform

Patzke gave brief overview of background previously supplied to the Executive Committee.

Silver: We don't have a comprehensive donation program effort. There needs to be a lot more time spent on this effort. We clearly need the right platform and donor database. Leland has created a system useable for now, but we are not even updating that at the moment. Until we have a real strategy and plan in place, from my perspective this may not be the right time to invest in any platform.

Rich: Agree with a lot that Sean has said. What we have as a donor platform right now is really like a bicycle. The Salsa program would get us into a car, and the 2Dialog program is a lot nicer than that. We don't have a driver, though. We need either a staff member or volunteer who can drive this, no matter what level. We don't have a plan to do this at the moment.

Silver: Gave update on current fundraising levels, comparing this fiscal year to last, at the same time in the year. We appear to be ahead of the game vs. last year. The opportunity is that there are 14 USCA directors who still have not made a donation this fiscal year, so there is some upside.

Patzke: Summarized option of hiring a part-time admin assistant, and devoting 25% of a current staff person's time to fundraising.

Silver: Examples of what we could be doing, and what we're not doing. Made direct appeal to members and directors. Some success. Opportunity is that, if you know everyone who has donated last several years, and hasn't donated this year, you can coordinate this and cultivate people better. Also can better reach out and just say thank you, not just always about asking for money. Have to rely on staff for some aspects.

Discussion continued about what we aren't doing, opportunities being missed, what we could be doing.

Sjue: Asked if we need to further develop strategy and plan before we go ahead and select a donation platform.

Pleasants: agreed.

Silver: said we need more help and support with our small group (Sean, Peggy, Leland plus staff) on getting this figured out.

Pleasants: Plan on having a teleconference in near future to include those who have been working on this previously plus others with interest to further develop the strategy. (Chris and Jennifer volunteered to be part of this, as did Jim.)

Silver: We need a group involved similarly to that invested in championships. Before we decide to spend some money, let's make sure we have the people involved and motivated to do this. Maybe also a communication out to the board or others who aren't on the board who have expertise in this area who might be interested.

Action item: Follow up with current group, reach out to current group with outline. Sean will draft letter to directors to seek their involvement.

Coach Code of Conduct deferred to more review.

Meeting adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

UNITED STATES CURLING ASSOCIATION
Executive Committee Meeting (By teleconference)
February 6, 2013

Attendance: Jim Pleasants, Rick Patzke, Ann Swisshelm, Chris Sjue, David Carlson, Gwen Krailo-Lyons, Dean Gemmell, Jonathan Havercroft, Jennifer Stannard, Kent Beadle, Pete Fenson, Sam Williams, Sean Silver, Kym Nawyn, Beau Welling

Meeting Called to Order at 4:03pm

1. Continental Cup

Jim Pleasants: The High Performance Program has decided that the Olympic Teams will have the right of first refusal to represent the USA at the Continental Cup. In the past the berths have been awarded to the Nationals winners, however the High Performance Director felt that this was an excellent opportunity to prepare for the Olympics. This will be announced at the team meeting.

Ann Swisshelm: Teams may opt not to participate and may want to choose other pre-Olympic competitive options. Swisshelm believes that athletes feel that this is a sensible path to follow. She recommends that this announcement be made through a direct communication to athletes from Derek Brown.

Motion: Based on the recommendation of the HPP the winners of the Olympic Trials should have the right of first refusal for the USA spots on the Continental Cup team in 2014.

Moved by James Pleasants 2nd Sam Williams. Motion carried unanimously.

2. WCF Request for Ruling

Robert Stevens, a junior curler in Washington, has developed a special wheelchair based delivery using his feet. This delivery is not permitted under the current rules. The USCA is interpreting a WCF rule for the Junior Nationals. It would be more authoritative if the WCF endorsed the USCA's interpretation that this delivery is not permitted in the rules.

Williams: Why are we addressing this now?

Pleasants: There are concerns about a potential lawsuit and so there are concerns about what the USCA should do. Jim has been in communication about whether the WCF can offer an interpretation of the rule.

Sjue: Will this end the issue?

Swisshelm: Or will it go to the IOC or the ICAFS?

Pleasant: It is unclear how they would appeal to those bodies.

Sjue: If we don't take it to the WCF then is there anywhere else they can take it? If we don't take it anywhere, then do they not have any course of appeal?

Carlson: Asking for a ruling implies that it demonstrates our own doubt about our own ruling. We are also giving them a second forum in which to seek redress.

Beadle: The WCF has not given any indication that they will rule differently than how we ruled on the matter. We might be able to put this to bed by saying that we have done all that we can do. Currently the family feels that there is a contradiction because we are ruling on the eligibility for our own events.

Pleasants: We strengthen our position by asking the WCF because if the athlete is ultimately not able to compete in a world event, then we cannot permit them to compete in the nationals that lead to that event.

Swishhelm: This does not violate this athlete's rights. He has made an appeal and we have made a ruling.

Carlson: We should stand by our ruling.

Gemmell: It is up to the athlete to pursue the other appeals.

Pleasants: The athlete cannot appeal to the WCF; only the USCA can appeal.

Welling: We have had an open process and the athlete did not win. Three members of the appeal board have reviewed this case. It is difficult because this delivery is not acceptable under curling rules. It is not clear why he is not able to curl under the rules of wheel chair curling.

Pleasants: After hearing from the executive committee, Pleasants decides to not make a motion to bring this to the USCA.

3. Stones:

Pleasant: We only have two refurbished sets of stones from the WCF stone loan program. There is about a four month delay in receiving stones. We have a good history on turning over sets of stones every Olympic Cycle.

Nawyn: We have had this program for a long while. Many dedicated ice clubs are not aware that they are eligible. Clubs with about 30 sheets of ice (total) expressed interested in stones over the next three years. Schenectady and Denver have confirmed that they want stones. We do not know what interest in new stones will

be like after the next Olympics. We are recommending the purchase of 15 new sets on stones and 9 refurbished stones.

Silver: The risk is that we will be obliged to make loan payments on any sets of stones that are not purchased by other clubs. But this risk is minimal given past history and so I am supportive of this purchase.

Motion: The USCA should purchase 15 new sets of stones and 9 refurbished stones from the WCF stone loan program. Moved by Sjue. 2nd by Williams.

Welling: Are the stones insured while in inventory?

Silver: We should confirm this.

Welling: Can we find a way to find insurance for these stones for new clubs?

Vote: Motion carries unanimously.

3. Safe Sport Policy/Coaches Code of Conduct

Pleasants: At last executive meeting there were concerns about who the Coaches Code of Conduct applied to and we decided to have an attorney review the code. The USCA has had an attorney review the code and he made some revisions.

Nawyn: The changes were minor and mostly focused on wording. The attorney kept adult and child sexual abuse in the same category. The attorney also clarified a few matters in the reporting process and the group that the USCA would create to handle coaching misconduct. Also, every athlete would have the right of an outside authority to review any decision. The individual asking for review would need to cover 50% of the cost of the external review.

Carlson: The 50% arbitration fee should be paid in advance. Otherwise, you will never get paid.

Swisshelm: The independent authority to review USCA decisions cannot be chosen by the USCA (p.15 of the coaching conduct policy). Can we tie this review board to existing review processes such as the "right to compete" process.

Pleasants: It is a good idea to use the already existing appeal process.

Carlson: Why are coaches required to notify the head of sports education of previous criminal charges instead of a different member of the USCA?

Nawyn: Because the director of sports education is the head of the coaching background checks.

Swishhelm: Our coaches should not be allowed to have physical and sexual relationships with their athletes.

Nawyn: The handbook prohibits coaches from beginning sexual relationships with their athletes while they are coaching. This follows USOC policy.

Sjue: Is it possible for a coach to not be a member of the USCA? For instance if they are a level 4 coach from a different country?

Pleasants: The language of membership of the USCA should come out.

Carlson: What is the “coaches association” that the handbook refers to.

Pleasants: This is a voluntary association that USCA certified coaches can join.

Carlson: This reads as if the coaches association is a separate and distinct organization from the USCA.

Patzke: The USCA board has the power to review this document.

Nawyn: There is already interest in the USCA coaches association and many individuals are interested in joining.

Pleasants : Next year junior coaches will be required to join this association.

Nawyn: It is to be an organization within the USCA to professionalize coaching. Partially this involves background checks and helping curling coaches feel like they are bigger than something. The group will offer support to curling coaches.

Patzke: These are recommendations that came from the coaching certification working group. These recommendations were recommended at the board meeting in fall 2012.

Swishhelm: Who is responsible for maintaining the Coaches Association?

Patzke: The USCA.

Pleasants: The document does not say who will review and make changes to this document.

Sjue: The penalty is normally not in a code of ethics. Do penalties normally reside in the coaching code of ethics?

Pleasants: Part c does not belong in this section. The penalties belong in the USCA rules not the code of conduct. We should have a cross reference for the penalties in the code of conduct. (p. 4. section 7 c in the code of ethics).

Carlson: A question on the section on discrimination (p. 3 paragraph 1). This section goes far beyond what a lawyer would deem as illegal discrimination. Our age criteria already involve discrimination (i.e. juniors and seniors), socio-economic discrimination could create a requirement that the coach pay the costs of students from underprivileged backgrounds.

Pleasants: We will make the suggested changes and then seek final approval via email? People who have suggestions about potential changes should send them to Scott Higgins.

Carlson: In the SafeSport Handbook we need to clarify our arbitration process and the cost of paying for this process.

Nawyn: Will consult with the USOC about potential changes on the USOC payment process.

Pleasants: We will not vote today, but will make changes based upon discussion today and vote via email.

Chris and Sean motion to adjourn at 5:30pm

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE EMAIL MEETING
MARCH 12 – 14, 2013**

Pursuant to USCA By-Laws, President James Pleasants convened an Executive Committee Meeting via E-Mail to approve the following agenda items:

1. USCA Coaches Association Code of Conduct

Note: Votes were to be submitted no later than noon Central Time April 24th, 2013.

1. **Motion:** The USCA Executive Committee Approves the adoption of the USCA Coaches Association Code of Conduct.

Votes of approval were received from: Ann Swisshelm, Jonathan Havercroft, Gwen Krailo-Lyons, Kent Beadle, Beau Welling, Chris Sjue, James Pleasants, Jennifer Stannard, Dean Gemmel, and Dave Carlson.

There was no response from: Sam Williams, Sean Silver and Pete Fenson.

By a vote of 10 for approval and 3 not responding, the motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan Havercroft
USCA Secretary

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE EMAIL MEETING
APRIL 18 – 24, 2013**

Pursuant to USCA By-Laws, President James Pleasants convened an Executive Committee Meeting via E-Mail to approve the following agenda items:

1. Safe Sport Policy (see attached appendix of USCA Safe Sport Policy).
2. Winter World University Games Agreement

Note: Votes were to be submitted no later than noon Central Time April 24th, 2013.

1. Motion: The USCA Executive Committee Approves the adoption of the SafeSport Policy.

Votes of approval were received from: Jonathan Havercroft, Gwen Krailo-Lyons, Kent Beadle, Beau Welling, Sam Williams, Sean Silver, Chris Sjue, James Pleasants, Jennifer Stannard, Dean Gemmel, Dave Carlson.

There was no response from: Ann Swisshelm and Pete Fenson

By a vote of 11 for approval, 2 not responding, the motion carried.

2. Motion: The USCA Executive committee approves an agreement for the USCA to send two teams (if invited) to participate in the 2013 Winter World University Games, in December in Italy.

N.B. While funding for this event is being included in the High Performance Plan and the resource allocation request is to be presented to the USOC later this month, the USCA is still committing to funding this program whether the USOC dollars are approved or not. Note that the agreement does contain language that will negate the USCA's financial obligations if either or both the men's and women's teams are not invited to participate in this competition. The stated deadline for the USCA to sign this agreement is April 25, hence the reason the Executive Committee was asked to vote on this agreement by April 24th.

Votes of approval were received from: Beau Welling, Chris Sjue, Kent Beadle, Sam Williams, Jonathan Havercroft, Gwen Krailo-Lyons, Dave Carlson, Dean Gemmel, James Pleasants, and Jennifer Stannard.

A vote of No was received from: Sean Silver

There was no response from: Ann Swisshelm and Pete Fenson

By a vote of 10 for approval, 1 vote against approval, and 2 not responding, the motion carried.

VISION STATEMENT OF THE GOVERNANCE TASK FORCE

Purpose

The purpose of vision statement is to set out in some detail the recommendations of the Governance Task Force for changes to our governance structure. At the Spring Board meeting we will be asking both the Board of Directors and the Members to review these recommendations and to tell us whether you are ready to have us move on to the final step of drafting a set of by-laws based on this Statement. Our vision for a more effective USCA is a work in progress, but we are nearing the end of the process, where by-laws can be presented to the Board and the Members for ratification. We hope this vision statement will help our Members and Directors picture how the new structure will operate, and to explain why we believe it will help us move forward. The goal remains to grow the sport, and to have results in world competitions that make us proud. We want to be sure that our structure helps rather than hinders us in achieving these goals. We ask the Directors and the Members to review this statement prior to the Spring Meeting, and to be prepared to provide input, with the goal of having a working blueprint coming out of the spring meeting of how we want our organization to look in the future. That will guide us as we prepare a set of amended by-laws this summer, to be voted on in the fall by the Directors, followed by a vote by the Members.

Background

At the fall Board meeting, the Directors unanimously approved a set of general principles to guide us moving forward with our governance re-structuring. This vision statement takes it a step further by addressing specifics of how the USCA would function under the new governance procedures. The Governance Task Force is made up of 15 curlers drawn from across the curling community, including some whose states and regions opposed the previously proposed by-laws amendments.

What is the overall goal of restructuring?

To define the duties and authority of each part of our organization so that the USCA functions more effectively as a leader for growth of the sport and as the National Governing Body (NGB) for our high performance program. The new bylaws will need to address the role of: The Members Assembly; the Board of Directors; and the Staff. Athlete representation on all applicable governing bodies and committees must be assured. Each of these bodies relies on and needs to help direct and motivate dedicated volunteers and committee members. Finally, our structure must comply with federal law governing NGBs, and meet the significant responsibilities that come with designation as an NGB.

Summary of Recommended New Structure

The **Members Assembly** will have a far more active role in organizing volunteers and committees to work with and advise the staff to carry out the essential operational tasks of serving the needs of our member clubs and conducting championships. It will also change to

include 20% **athlete** representatives, a legal requirement under the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act. The annual Members Meeting will include opportunities to communicate with the staff and directors about the needs of the clubs, to volunteer to serve on important committees, and to participate in clinics about the nuts and bolts of curling. This will be both a celebration of the year just completed and a time to get organized for the year ahead.

The **Board of Directors** will be the policy setting body for curling, but will relinquish day to day operational decisions to the Members and Staff. We will be Board governed, but staff managed. The Board will focus on strategic planning, setting overall policy, budget review, evaluation and tenure of the CEO, and fund raising. Its focus will be national and long term. It will also include a minimum of 20% **athlete** voting representation

The **Staff** will have clear authority for making day to day decisions to carry out the policies set by the Board. The CEO will be responsible for staffing decisions and office operations. The Staff will work closely with the Members Assembly to select operational committees, and will direct those committees to help accomplish the USCA's operational goals. It will submit a proposed budget to the board of directors. The Staff will have a high degree of autonomy in directing the high performance program. The path to success in curling at the world level lies in hiring an HP director and coaches who know how to identify and train our most talented athletes, and giving that Staff the authority to carry out their program, consulting with others, but being ultimately accountable for the execution and the results.

Our new structure will satisfy the requirements of the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, comply with USOC By-Laws, and move us significantly in the direction of the USOC Guidelines for Good Governance. (Copy available on the USCA website).

The Members Association and Members Assembly

In the past, our Members Association has met once a year in conjunction with the Spring Directors' meeting, with one representative from each region. Typically they have carried out only perfunctory duties like admitting new member clubs. Occasionally they have had a role in by-laws amendments. The new Members Assembly will become a significant actor in the organization and an important conduit between the USCA and the member Clubs and Regions.

The operational committees that are currently organized by the Board of Directors (e.g. Championships and Member Services) will migrate to the Members Assembly. Committee members will be drawn from the Members Assembly and general membership, no longer primarily from the Board of Directors. Committee chairs and other committee members will be under the direction of and work with a designated staff member or the CEO. The CEO will review our current committee structure with the goal of creating a more effective and streamlined committee structure. The CEO will have authority to create or eliminate committees to best meet the operational needs of the organization.

For voting purposes, a club may choose to send its own representative, or leave the voting power in the hands of its state or regional representative. A club will need to provide notice to the USCA and to its regional body of its intent to vote on behalf of its members, which notice shall

be effective for the next Members Assembly only. Voting power is based on number of curlers represented, whether by a club or regional representative. In addition, athletes will have twenty percent of the voting power at the Members Assembly as to any by-law amendment affecting governance, and on any matter affecting expenditure of funds not previously approved by the Board of Directors.

The Members Assembly would retain primary responsibility and authority over by-laws changes. The Members Assembly would not be a policy setting body. *(The GTF has not yet reached consensus on whether the Board of Directors should also be able to pass amendments to the by-laws, as allowed under our current by-laws, but we do agree that the final say on by-laws amendments rests with the Members Assembly)* The Members Assembly's primary function would be to assist and advise the staff in carrying out the policies set by the Board of Directors, and to serve as a conduit between the grass roots curlers and the staff and directors of the organization.

We envision the Members' Assembly as a dynamic event to which all curlers are invited. Even for those who are not voting, the meeting should be enjoyable and informative. For a curler who would like to get more involved, this would be an excellent opportunity to learn about USCA operations and to volunteer for a committee. The process of joining a committee will be more transparent. We anticipate that major committees, such as Member Services and Championships, will have chairs, who will work closely with the designated staff person to select committee members from among those who have expressed an interest in serving. Committee meetings occurring during the assembly will be open to observation by any curler. The staff and committee chairs will help direct volunteers to an area of need in which the volunteers are interested. To give everyone a chance to participate, we anticipate moving the Assembly around the country each year. Additional benefits for those who attend may include any of the following:

- clinics and discussion about building and retaining membership for established clubs;
- presentations about optimizing arena ice, and advancing to the next level of dedicated ice;
- developing community support for curling;
- training sessions for coaches, ice makers, instructors, and officials;
- a celebration of curling, capturing the highlights of the past year, with appearances by National team athletes;
- award presentations recognizing outstanding contributions to the sport;
- presentations by and a chance for dialogue with the leaders of USA Curling about the direction of the sport and the organization;
- depending on the location and facilities, it could include a high-level competitive event which showcases the sport or a concurrent bonspiel.

The Board of Directors

The Directors will be similar to a private sector corporate Board of Directors in that its focus will be big picture/long term and policy oriented. It will likely meet four times per year. Its major tasks will be to consider and approve or reject the budget proposed by the staff, to enhance the organization's fund raising, to set measurable performance goal and review the performance of

the CEO, to set policies, to review and approve the strategic plan, and to advise the CEO on major business decisions. Ideally, directors should be oriented to the national interests of the organization, have good business/financial skills, and be strategic thinkers. Those who have studied effective organizations have found that a board of directors functions best when its role is policy setting and oversight, rather than directing day to day operations. The Board is still the governing body of the organization, but operational decisions should be made by the staff within the policy parameters set by the Board.

The size of the current board is larger than optimal for the new duties we will be asking the board to fill. In addition, our current board is an operational board, and many of its members are oriented to operational issues. We envision that board members interested in operations will in the future gravitate to the Members Assembly, and be able to assist the staff through service on the many operational committees. We have a plan to shrink the board down to twenty directors, while retaining both regionally elected directors and nationally elected directors (see Appendix 1.)

It is anticipated that the directors will choose a Chairman of the Board with authority to call meetings, set agendas, and appoint chairs of the Board elected committees (see Appendix 2 below) and otherwise direct the Board in its business. The Corporation will not have a President or Vice-Presidents. The CEO will recommend individuals, subject to Board approval, to serve as secretary and treasurer to carry out the functions handled by those officers under our current structure. The secretary and treasurer need not be directors, and will not vote on the Board if they are not already directors.

The Staff

Our staff has grown significantly as we have asked them to do more over the years with additional championships and increased member services. When curling became an Olympic sport, the USCA took on the role of National Governing Body for the sport. We benefit from significant funding for our High Performance Program, but also assume responsibility and accountability for our stewardship of the program. The multiple layers of responsibilities to a variety of stakeholders and constituencies create greater complexity to the functions of a national organization than ever before, and the modern approach to governance of non-profit organizations (not specifically sport-related entities) is to enable a CEO/Executive Director to have greater authority over operations. Currently we have a Chief Operating Officer with no defined operational authority. We would change to a Chief Executive Officer with clear operational authority.

The duty of administering the high performance budget, and selecting a high performance director and coaches has been assigned to the staff by a Board resolution, but the bylaws have not been amended to define and approve the staff authority in this and many other operational areas. One concrete proposed change is to have the staff direct the operational committees such as championships, member services and operations. Over the years, our committees have proliferated to 33, with very little review of whether this committee structure best meets our needs. The CEO should be empowered to review the committee structure and make changes. There likely will still be volunteer chairs of the operational committees, performing functions

similar to our current vice presidents, but the staff will be in charge of the committees, which will be advisory to the staff. This will be particularly true for high performance. There will also be committees that will be intentionally independent of the CEO, such as the nominating committee or committees that handle grievances. These committees will report directly to the Board.

There is some confusion and concern about what it means to have a policy-setting board and an operational staff. The Board's primary jobs are to set the goals and priorities of the organization and give policy direction to the CEO. It is important to keep in mind that the Board still defines what is policy and what is operational. Theoretically the Board could set very detailed policies, and find itself sinking back into an operational role. An effective Board would refrain from doing that. Policies are about goals of the organization; operational decisions are about how we achieve those goals. Having the ultimate power to make decisions does not mean that the Board should exercise that authority. The owner of a sports team has the power to bench players and send in plays, but doing so would be a losing governance formula. An effective organization hires qualified people and gives them the space to do their job. The relationship between the CEO and the Board should be one of trust, respect, collaboration, and team work as each fulfills their particular role in building a strong future for USA Curling. Evaluation of results, rather than micro-management of plans, becomes the operative Board ethic. The person in charge then owns the results and can be fairly judged on the outcome.

The staff needs to be able to design and build its programs without fear of being overruled and second guessed by the directors or the members' assembly. There are numerous difficult decisions and judgment calls in high performance and they require observation and keeping records over time, careful evaluation of tangibles and intangibles, and expertise that no committee of part-time volunteers can provide if we want to be competitive at the highest level. Our Board has already voted to give the COO and the High Performance Director a high degree of autonomy over the direction of the program under our present structure. We have also voted as a matter of policy to preserve a path to world competitions for teams who are not in the high performance program and to preserve play on the ice as our selection method. Our board believes this is good policy for keeping us competitive in the long run. The board retains the power to define policies, but it should consider carefully before setting policies that unduly restrict the professionals' ability to conduct an effective program, and to deliver the results for which they are held accountable. In other areas, like member services, the same principle applies: when we hire someone to work full time to improve the services we deliver to our members, we ought to give them the authority to design and carry out the program. Otherwise they will have no incentive to take the initiative and cannot be fairly judged on the results achieved.

Meeting the Responsibilities of Being an NGB

Being an NGB carries with it responsibilities of compliance with Federal Law, USOC By-laws, and good governance practices. Our organization intends to continue as the NGB for curling and accepts the responsibilities that go with that designation, as stated below:

- (a) The USCA is currently the national governing body for the sport of curling within the territorial limits of the United State of America and shall be operated in such a manner to maintain such a status.
- (b) In furtherance of that purpose, USCA shall comply with the requirements for recognition as a National Governing Body as set forth in the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, 36 U.S.C. § 220501 *et seq.* and as mandated in accordance with federal law by the United States Olympic Committee as such requirements are promulgated or revised from time to time. In fulfilling those requirements USCA shall:
- i. be a member of only one (1) international sports federation, which is recognized by the International Olympic Committee as the worldwide governing body for the sport of curling;
 - ii. be autonomous in the governance of the sport of curling by independently determining and controlling all matters central to such governance, by not delegating any of that determination or control, and by being free from outside restraint;
 - iii. maintain the managerial and financial competence and capability to establish national goals for curling relating to the development and wellbeing of the sport, to implement and administer a plan for the attainment of those goals, and to execute its obligations as the National Governing Body for the sport of curling;
 - iv. provide for individual and organizational membership;
 - v. ensure that its Board of Directors has established criteria and election procedures for, and maintains among its voting members, individuals who are actively engaged in amateur athletic competition in curling or who have represented the United States in an international amateur athletic competition in curling within the preceding ten (10) years, and ensures that the voting power held by those individuals is not less than twenty (20) percent of the voting power held in its Board of Directors or other governance body;
 - vi. be governed by a Board of Directors whose members are selected without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, or sex, with representation on the Board of both males and females when reasonably possible;
 - vii. provide an equal opportunity to amateur athletes, coaches, trainers, managers, administrators, and officials to participate in curling competitions without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, or national origin;
 - viii. not have an officer who is also an officer of another amateur sports organization that is recognized by the USOC as a National Governing Body;
 - ix. provide procedures for the prompt and equitable resolution of grievances of its members;
 - x. provide fair notice and an opportunity for a hearing to any amateur athlete, coach, trainer, manager, administrator, or official before declaring such individual ineligible to participate;

- xi. agree to submit to binding arbitration in any controversy involving:
 - (1) its recognition as a national governing body, or
 - (2) the opportunity of any amateur athlete, coach, trainer, manager, administrator, or official to participate in amateur athletic competition in curling, upon demand of the USOC or any aggrieved amateur athlete, coach, trainer, manager, administrator, or official, conducted in accordance with the commercial rules of the American Arbitration Association or as modified pursuant to the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act;
- xii. not have eligibility criteria relating to amateur status or to participation in the Olympic Games that are more restrictive than those of the international sports federation for the sport of curling recognized by the International Olympic Committee;
- xiii. perform all other obligations and duties imposed by the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act and by the USOC on a National Governing Body.

Conclusion

We are currently operating with by-laws that were designed for an era when curling was not an Olympic sport, and we could only afford one staff person. By necessity, operational duties were carried out by the volunteers who made up the Board of Directors. With growth across the country spurred in large part by the Olympics, and with our designation as the NGB for curling, we have been able to expand our staff and do more in the way of member services and high performance training. We have advanced to the point where our governance structure is holding us back and needs to be changed to make us more effective. The key changes are that the board will set policy and provide oversight of the CEO; and the CEO and staff will be in charge of carrying out the policies at an operational level. The Members Assembly will provide an opportunity for more curlers to volunteer and be involved in the business of the USCA, under the direction of the staff. The members of the Governance Task Force have given these changes a great deal of thought and discussion, and ask for your input and support in taking our organization to a higher level of success through the changes outlined in this Statement.

Respectfully, the Governance Task Force

James Pleasants, Chair

Andy Anderson, Kent Beadle, John Benton, Dave Carlson, Maureen Clark, Gabrielle Coleman, Jeff Hannon, Rich Lepping, Gordon McLean, Leland Rich, Chris Sjue, Jennifer Stannard, Ann Swisshelm Silver, Carl Thomas

APPENDIX 1: COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The GTF recognizes that the new Board of Directors will have a different role than our current board. For a Board focusing on national policies and goals, the size (currently 28) is greater than optimal, and the percentage of nationally elected representatives is too small (currently only one board-elected director serves, one USWCA appointed director, and all others are regionally appointed, except for athletes). One of the compromises growing out of GTF discussions was that our Board of Directors should have some regionally elected members and some nationally elected members, and that it should be reduced in size. This concept was approved by the Board of Directors, and the GTF continued to work on it after the fall meeting. The following position garnered significant support from most of the GTF, but still needs to be reviewed by the Board of Directors and the States/Regions. Under our current Board structure, we have representatives coming from State Associations and from Regional Associations composed of multiple states. A State or Region may have one, two, or three directors depending on the number of registered curlers.

We would like to reduce the number of directors to twenty. Our regions break down into three having 2,000 or more, three having almost 1,000, and six having significantly less than 1,000. By combining smaller regions, and setting the maximum number of directors at two, we could maintain some proportionality, but reduce the size of the Board. Regions having less than 2,000 registered curlers would have one director. Those with 2,000 or more would have two directors. We could also express this in percentage terms (e.g regions having 12.5% or more of the total registered curlers would receive an extra director). This would allow for growth and change without automatically increasing the size of the board.

By consolidating some states and regions for director voting purposes, we would not be abolishing any state organizations or affecting playdown regions. The USCA recognizes each state and region as an independent organization with its own governance, responsibilities and authority. Allocation of slots for playdowns is not part of the bylaws and would not be affected by any by-laws change. This proposal is applicable only in the context of voting for member-elected directors. We would propose to consolidate Colorado, Nebraska, and At-large into a Mid-South voting region having about 1,000 curlers. Illinois, voting with GLCA, would have a little over 1,000 curlers. Washington and Alaska would consolidate into a Northwest voting region, having about 1,000 members.

The regional part of our Board would then look like this:

Wisconsin	2 directors
GNCC	2
Minnesota	2
Great Lakes	1 (GLCA plus Illinois)
MOPAC	1
North Dakota	1 (include South Dakota, too)
Northwest	1 (Washington plus Alaska)
Mid South	<u>1</u> (Colorado plus Nebraska plus At-large)
Regional total	11

The remainder of the Board would be non-regional, composed of:

Athletes	4 (voted in by the AAC)
USWCA Rep	1
Nationally elected	4 (Voted for by the Board of Directors)
TOTAL number of directors	20

Independent Directors

One of the acknowledged deficiencies in our current structure is the limited use of independent directors: i.e. directors who bring to the Board a history of success from outside the world of curling and can give us fresh perspectives on governance, and contacts with the business community that can help in fund raising to support our goals of competitive success and growing the sport. The new structure would provide four potential director spots for qualified independent directors, and preference would be given in filling those spots to individuals who can bring those critical skills and experience to the Board. The nominating committee will propose nationally elected directors to meet the needs of the organization for independent directors. The Board of Directors will vote for the directors (referred to above as the 4 nationally elected directors). The following definition of independent directors is taken from our earlier proposed by-laws amendment:

- (a) The Nominating/Governance Committee shall present a slate of board-elected directors to the Board of Directors. In determining said slate, the Nominating/Governance Committee shall affirmatively make a determination as to the independence of each nominated board-elected director, and disclose those determinations. Under the definition of "independence" adopted by the Board, board-elected directors shall be determined to have no material relationship with USCA, either directly or through an organization that has a material relationship with USCA. A relationship is "material" if, in the judgment of the Nominating/Governance Committee, it would interfere with the director's independent judgment. To assist it in determining whether a director is independent, the guidelines set forth below shall be applied on a case-by-case basis by the Nominating/Governance Committee.
- (b) A director shall not be considered independent if, within the preceding twelve (12) months of the director's initial election as Board-elected director:
 - i. the director was employed by or held any Governance Position (whether a paid or volunteer position) with USCA, regional or state curling associations, the international federation for curling;
 - ii. an immediate family member of the director was employed by or held any Governance Position (whether a paid or volunteer position) with USCA, regional or state curling associations, the USOC, **or** the international federation of curling;
 - iii. the director was affiliated with or employed by USCA's outside auditor or outside counsel;

- iv. an immediate family member of the director was affiliated with or employed by the USCA's outside auditor or outside counsel as a partner, principal or manager;
- v. the director was a curling member of USCA's Athletes' Advisory Council;
- vi. the director receives any compensation from USCA, directly or indirectly;
- vii. the director is an executive officer, controlling shareholder, or partner of a corporation or partnership or other business entity that does business with USCA.

(c) A director shall not be considered independent if at any time during the director's term:

- i. an immediate family member of the director was employed by or held any Governance Position (whether a paid or volunteer position) with USCA, regional or state curling associations, the USOC, or the international federation of curling;
- ii. the director was affiliated with or employed by USCA's outside auditor or outside counsel;
- iii. an immediate family member of the director was affiliated with or employed by the USCA's outside auditor or outside counsel as a partner, principal or manager;
- iv. the director was a curling member of USCA's Athletes' Advisory Council;
- v. the director receives any compensation from USCA, directly or indirectly;
- vi. the director is an executive officer, controlling shareholder, or partner of a corporation or partnership or other business entity that does business with USCA.

(d) If a person is elected as an independent director, that person is obligated to resign any position that said person holds as an officer or board member of a curling club member immediately upon said person's election to the Board of Directors as an independent director. As an independent director, said person shall not, subsequent to his/her election as an independent director and while serving as an independent director, take a position as an officer or board member of a curling club member.

(e) Where the guidelines above do not address a particular relationship, the determination of whether the relationship is material, and whether a director is independent, shall be made by the Nominating/Governance Committee.

APPENDIX 2: COMMITTEES

This section discusses in more detail our future committee structure, how the committees will be populated and who the committees will report to.

Our Current Committee Structure

We currently have in the neighborhood of 30 committees and subcommittees, some of which are active and some not. Under the current practice, all of the USCA volunteer committees report to the Board of Directors, usually via the vice-presidents. The majority of the committees are either chaired by or have one or more Board of Director members on the committees. The current By-Laws specifically grant to the Board of Directors or the President the authority to constitute the committees.

Three committees-- the nominating committee, the championship committee, and the Board of Review--are given specific tasks under the by-laws, but the other committees are at the discretion of the Board or the President. Twenty percent athlete participation is required on the three named committees by express provisions in the by-laws. Athlete representation on other committees is addressed in Exhibit A to the by-laws, consisting of a citation to the USOC athlete representation requirement. We have adhered to the athlete participation requirements in our committees, but not in regard to our Members meeting.

Under the proposed re-structuring, five committees will report to the Board of Directors. All other committees will work through the Members Assembly and ultimately report to the staff person in charge of coordinating that area. The number of operational committees and their duties are to be reviewed and determined by the CEO. It is anticipated that the number of operational committees will be greatly reduced, as committees are consolidated and re-organized.

Operational Committees/Members Assembly

The operational committees would include committees that currently conduct most of the business of our fall and spring meetings: e.g. championships, rules and officiating, arena, college curling, growth and development, Member Services, and education and certification. These operational committees would meet at least annually during the Members Assembly meeting and report to the Members Assembly. The purpose of these committees would be to provide advice to the paid staff of the USCA and to be the foundational work groups which would provide the services and programs to the individual curlers and their clubs. It is expected that the committees would be populated by individual curlers who are not necessarily current directors of the USCA.

The selection of committee members would be a collaborative process between the staff and the Members Assembly. It is anticipated that committee chairs would be selected to work with the staff to help find the best persons to provide advice and to take on assigned tasks in the major areas of interest to the Members: Growth and Development, Member Services including training and certification, championships other than the men's and women's championships, and Revenue Development. At the Members Meeting, and through other outreach, a curler would

have the opportunity to request placement on a committee, and the committee members would be chosen by the staff in collaboration with the committee chair. Final decision making authority on operational matters would rest with the CEO or designated staff member to whom the CEO has delegated authority.

In addition, the USCA would retain an open meeting policy such that any individual curler who is interested may attend the committee meetings, and there will be a clearer process for volunteering and being selected to serve on a committee. The overall direction of the operational committees and their number and work load would be set by the CEO.

The High Performance program is an autonomous program with unique responsibilities, and a larger staff consisting of the HP director, coaches, and other professionals. We recognize that the decisions they make require specialized expertise and constant evaluation of the performance and potential of athletes and teams. The High Performance Director and other HP staff should be free to consult such persons as they feel can be helpful to them, without imposing any rigid requirements for a standing HP committee of volunteer curlers or a volunteer chair. It is anticipated that the HP Director would oversee most aspects of the men's and women's national championships, and all aspects of the high performance program for able bodied and wheelchair curling, including training, coaching, funding, sports science, and world team prep.

The CEO will need to review the functions currently managed by the Championships Committee (site selection, awards, field of play, format, draws, rules and officiating, and requests for ruling), and determine the best relationship between the staff and the volunteer committees to carry out the many functions currently handled by volunteers on the championship committee.

Another important area for committee work involves the broad area of fund raising and revenue development: large donor, corporate sponsorship, annual giving, and planned giving. This function will be a key priority of the Board of Directors, so the Board and its independent directors should have a greater role in this area.

Board Level Committees

On the board level, five standing committees are proposed. These are Audit/Finance; Ethics, Judicial, Nominating/Governance; and Human Resources. These committees would report to the Board rather than the CEO because they handle the core oversight functions of the Board. These would be populated by either Board of Director members or board elected members on each of these committees. In addition, there would be at least one athlete representative on each of these committees because they are board level committees. As an NGB, we are required to have a grievance procedure that meets all federal requirements for impartiality, fairness, and timely decision making, and that function would be handled by the judicial committee. These committees would report to the Board. Chairs of the committees would be appointed by the Chair of the Board.

To assure freshness of perspective, there would be term limits established for membership on each of the board level committees. The proposal is the initial term of the committees members would be four years with a term limit of two terms or a maximum of eight years.

The following descriptions of the duties and particular requirements of the board level committees are substantially taken from the previous proposed by-laws amendments:

Audit/Finance Committee.

- (a) The Audit/Finance Committee shall consist of five (5) members, one of which shall be an athlete-elected representative who is a director.
- (b) The Board of Directors shall elect the members of the Audit/Finance Committee, all of whom shall be directors of the Board. One member of the committee shall, preferably, be an independent director with financial experience. The chair of said committee shall be appointed by the chair of the Board out of the elected committee members.
- (c) The Audit/Finance Committee shall:
 - i. recommend the independent auditor of USCA, review the report of the independent auditors and management letter, and recommend action as needed;
 - ii. investigate matters of fiscal controls and disclosure and such other matter as directed by the Board;
 - iii. perform such other duties as assigned by the Board.
- (d) The Audit/Finance Committee may meet periodically with management, USCA's financial staff, and USCA's outside auditor. The Chair of the Audit/Finance Committee, or its designee, shall meet with the outside auditor prior to the release and filing of USCA's audit reports.

Ethics Committee.

- (a) The term of the Ethics Committee members shall be for four (4) years. No committee member may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.
- (b) The Ethics Committee shall consist of three (3) members, one of which shall be an athlete-elected representative, and none of whom shall be current members of the board. The other two members of the Ethics Committee will be shall be elected by the Board. The chair of the Board shall appoint the chair of the Ethics Committee from the three (3) members.
- (c) The Ethics Committee shall:
 - i. oversee implementation of, and compliance with, the Code;
 - ii. report to the Board on all ethical issues;
 - iii. develop, and review on an annual basis, a Code of Ethics for the Board, officers, committee and task force members, volunteers, staff and member organizations

for adoption by the Board;

- iv. generally administer and oversee compliance with the Code of Ethics;
- v. review and investigate matters of ethical impropriety and make recommendations on such matters to the Board;
- vi. review and provide guidance on ethical questions presented to it by the Board, officers, committee and task force members, volunteers, staff and USCA members;
- vii. perform such other duties as assigned by the Board.

Judicial Committee

- (a) The Judicial Committee shall consist of five (5) members, one of which shall be an athlete-elected representative, and none of whom shall be current members of the board. The other four (4) members shall be elected by the Board. The chair of the Board shall appoint the chair of the Judicial Committee from the five (5) members. At least one (1) member of the Judicial Committee shall have legal training.
- (b) The term of the Judicial Committee members shall be four (4) years. No committee member may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.
- (c) The Judicial Committee shall:
 - i. generally administer and oversee all administrative grievances and right to compete matters filed with USCA;
 - ii. identify individuals who would be fair and impartial and who would have the qualifications and ability to serve on hearing panels;
 - iii. hear and render a decision, or appoint a panel to hear and render a decision, on grievances and disciplinary matters;
 - iv. hear and render a decision after hearing held pursuant to Section 5.6; and
 - v. perform such other duties as assigned by the Board.

Nominating/Governance Committee.

- (a) The Nominating/Governance Committee shall consist of five (5) members, one (1) of which shall be an athlete-elected representative. The other four (4) members shall be elected by the Board. The chair of the Nominating/ Governance Committee shall be elected by its members.
- (b) The terms of the Nominating/Governance Committee members shall be four (4) years. No committee member may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

- (c) No individual shall be eligible to be a member of the Nominating/Governance Committee if that individual is a current director of the USCA. No individual who serves on the Nominating/Governance Committee may serve or be eligible to serve on the Board of Directors. Members of the Nominating/Governance Committee shall be precluded from serving as a Board director for a period of one (1) year after his/her term on the Nominating/Governance Committee ends.
- (d) The Nominating/Governance Committee shall be responsible for nominating candidates for the Board of Directors, all standing committees, and as USA representatives to the World Curling Federation. When nominating said candidates, the Nominating/Governance Committee shall be guided by the goal of having candidates who provide diversity in the governance of the USCA.
- (e) As applied to any prospective nominee, the Nominating/Governance Committee:
- i. shall identify and evaluate prospective candidates;
 - ii. shall select individuals to serve on any position as provided in these By-Laws;
 - iii. may take into consideration the candidate's contribution to effective functioning of the USCA;
 - iv. may take into consideration any potential or impending change in the candidate's principal area of responsibility with his/her company or in his/her employment;
 - v. may take into consideration whether the candidate brings or continues to bring relevant experience to the Board or committee, as is applicable;
 - vi. may take into consideration whether the candidate has the ability to attend meetings and fully participate in the activities of the Board or committee, as applicable;
 - vii. may take into consideration the candidate's reputation for personal integrity and commitment to ethical conduct;
 - viii. may take into consideration whether the candidate has developed any relationships with another organization, or other circumstances have arisen, that might make it inappropriate for the director to continue serving on the Board or committee, as applicable;
 - ix. shall consult with the Ethics Committee with respect to vetting all nominees from potential conflict of interest or other problematic background issues.
- (f) The Nominating/Governance Committee shall perform such other duties as assigned by the Board. Within a reasonable time, the Nominating/Governance Committee shall provide to all of the Members an invitation to submit the names and qualifications of prospective nominees for identified positions to the Nominating/Governance Committee.

Human Resources Committee.

- (a) The Human Resources Committee shall consist of three members who are directors, one of which shall be an athlete-elected representative. The Chair of the Board shall appoint these three (3) members and shall appoint the Chair of the committee from said three (3) members.
- (b) Each of the Human Resources Committee members shall serve at the pleasure of the Chair. No committee member may serve more than two (2) consecutive two (2) year terms.
- (c) Human Resources Committee shall:
 - i. review and recommend employee benefit programs;
 - ii. review and recommend compensation for the CEO;
 - iii. conduct an annual review of the job performance of the CEO; and
 - iv. perform such other duties as assigned by the Chair.

Athlete's Advisory Council

The USCA shall have an Athletes' Advisory Council consisting of no more than eight (8) individuals.

Qualifications.

Those individuals:

- (a) who have represented the United States as athletes in the Olympic Games, the Pan American Games, World Championships or other major international competitions in the sport of curling within the ten- (10) year period prior to December 31 of the year in which the election is held, or
- (b) who have competed in and finished in the top half of USCA's National Championships as athletes within the two- (2) year period prior to December 31 of the year in which the election is held, shall be eligible to run for election to the Athletes' Advisory Council. Additionally, in order to be eligible to run for election, an individual shall be a citizen of the United States and eighteen (18) years of age or older by December 31 of the year in which the election is held.

AAC Representatives to USCA Board of Directors.

The Athletes Advisory Council shall elect from its members, by majority vote, an individual or individuals who shall be the athlete-elected representative(s) on the Board. The number of

athlete-elected representative(s) on the Board will be such that there shall be twenty (20) percent rounded up of all of the Directors.

Athlete Members of Committee.

For the Nominating/Governance Committee, Judicial Committee, and Ethics Committee, the Athletes Advisory Council shall elect, among its members, by majority vote, an athlete who shall be the athlete-elected representative of each of aforesaid committees. The athletes who are elected as athlete-elected representatives on the Board of Directors shall not be the same individual athletes who will serve as athlete-elected representatives on each of aforesaid committees.

Procedures/By-Laws.

The Athletes Advisory Council shall establish such additional procedures and By-Laws for conducting its business and affairs as said council may see fit, provided the same do not conflict with the By-Laws of the USCA and/or USOC. Said procedures/By-Laws shall be published and available on USCA's website.

Compensation.

Athlete Advisory Council members shall not receive compensation for their services as Athlete Advisory Council members. USCA shall pay for the reasonable expenses of all members of the Athletes Advisory Council to attend Athletes Advisory Council meetings. In addition, USCA shall pay for the reasonable expenses of the athlete Board members to attend Board meetings and for the athlete members to attend the Nominating/Governance, Judicial and Ethics Committee meetings.



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USCA High Performance Director Report
Board of Directors Meeting
Hilton Minneapolis Airport * Riverside Room
April 27-28, 2013

The USCA HP Program supported 60 athletes during the 2012-13 season in four distinct tiers as follows:

- Olympic Trials Teams (17)
- Adult Elite (8)
- Project 2018 Adult (19)
- Project 2018 Junior (16)

Since the fall 2012 Board meeting, which I unfortunately missed due to a date clash with a High Performance Camp, I have had an extremely busy travel and tournament schedule. I gave priority to supporting our Trials and Elite Teams at key tournaments such as the Women's Grand Slam events. Below is my Tournament/event Schedule for the season:

September

- 2 x High Performance Camps, Rice Lake, WI
- USOC Team Leaders Summit, Sochi, Russia

October

- Women's Grand Slam, Calgary
- St. Paul Cashspiel

November

- Women's Grand Slam, Saskatoon
- Grand Slam, Brantford
- Nissan Classic, Brantford

December

- Madison Cashspiel
- Curl Mesabi Cashspiel, Eveleth

January

- Perth Masters
- Bern Ladies
- Women's Challenge, Seattle (I presided over a HP Program Presentation and Q and A session during the Women's Challenge round in Seattle)



February

- Junior Nationals, Broomstones
- Nationals, Green Bay

March

- World Juniors, Sochi, Russia (Test event)
- World Women's, Riga, Latvia

April

- World Men's, Victoria BC, Canada

We were delighted to welcome our new National Program Coach, Al Hackner, on board in September, someone who needs no introduction to the curling world. We divided Al's time between Teams Potter and McCormick (Trials Teams), while Scott Baird divided his time between teams Pottinger and Fenson (Trials Teams). We felt our best use of the National Coaches was to have them work with both genders. They also spent time with other Program athletes/teams as and when time permitted.

Our National Program Project 2018 coaches (John Benton and Phill Drobnick) divided their time with the Project 2018 adults and junior teams. They also took on the National Coach/Team Leader roles at the World Junior Championships.

2012-13 HP Program Highlights

- HP Elite Teams Erika Brown and Tyler George qualified for the Olympic Trials by finishing 1st and 2nd respectively at Nationals
- Three Project 2018 Athletes in team Courtney George were runners-up in the Nationals
- HP Junior teams Dropkin and Solem won the Junior Nationals, HP teams Christensen and Myers placed 2nd and 6th, respectively.
- Team Erika Brown won 2 tour events in Canada and finished the season at 19th on the WCT OOM
- Team Tyler George finished the season at 34th on the WCT OOM
- Team Fenson finished the season at 36th on the WCT OOM
- Team Fenson won the Great Lakes Curling Tour (GLCT) OOM
- Teams Erika Brown and Becca Hamilton (Project 2018) tied for 1st on the GLCT OOM

2013 World Championships results

- Women – 4th
- Men – 9th
- Junior Women – 7th
- Junior Men – 7th

2013 World Rankings

- Women – 7th (+1)
- Men – 8th (-1)

2014 Olympic qualification

- Women – 5th
- Men – 8th (Men now need to qualify via the OQE in Germany in December)

2014 Olympic Trials

The following women's teams have qualified for the Olympic Trials:

- Pottinger
- Potter
- E Brown

One discretionary selection team will be added by the HP selection committee by 15th May 2013

The following men's teams have qualified for the Olympic Trials:

- McCormick
- Fenson
- Clark
- T George

One discretionary selection team will be added by the HP selection committee by 15th May 2013

Other HP Information

- The HP Plan is currently being drafted for submission to the USOC on the 1st May
- The HP Plan and resource allocation request will take place in Colorado Springs on 29th April
- The HPD presided over a HP Program Presentation and Q and A session during the Women's Challenge round in Seattle
- Sochi Team Leader site visit to take place from September 25-28, 2013

I look forward to seeing you all in Minneapolis/St. Paul at the Spring Board Meetings

Derek Brown

Director of High Performance

SPRING, 2013
REPORT VICE PRESIDENT OPERATIONS & MARKETING

OPERATIONS:

Advise COO in negotiations of contract terms and contract language on a number of contracts with third parties over the last seven months. These contracts included the following:

1. Digital Media Agreement with USOC;
2. Webstreaming Production Agreement with TESN US LLC for US Men's and Women's Nationals 2013 and 2014;
3. 2014 US Olympic Team Trials and Exhibition Agreement with USOC; and
4. Supplier Agreement with Ludus Sports, Inc., d/b/a Ludus Tours (hospitality services).

HUMAN RESOURCES:

Revised and updated Employment Handbook for USCA paid staff.

Conducted Performance Evaluation of COO in October, 2012.

Information sharing discussions with paid USCA staff regarding perceptions/concerns with pending governance reform.

BY-LAWS:

Proposed By-Law Amendment to current By-Laws addressing Athlete 20% vote at Members' Meeting.

GTF - Vision Statement and Organizational Chart addressing ongoing governance reform process.

ATHLETE/CURLER RECOGNITION:

With the last of the World Championships for this season in which USA is participating just ended (World Mixed Doubles and Seniors), the Committee anticipates meeting in the near future.

Bruce Bennett Media Award

2013 Nominee:

Matthew De George, assistant sports editor for the Delco Times, a Philadelphia area newspaper serving Delaware County in Pennsylvania. Since the Philadelphia region was announced as the host for the 2012 Nationals, De George has written approximately 20 stories that are curling focused in the past three years. As Philadelphia prepares to host another curling championship, I anticipate the same curling focus, if not more. In addition, during the time in between championships, he has written several stories on Sarah & Taylor Anderson (Philadelphia CC) and continues to promote curling items in social media. His dedication to writing curling stories has greatly impacted the exposure of the sport in a major U.S. metropolitan area.

IceWorks Skating Complex (host site of the 2012 and 2014 Nationals) supports this nomination as well, as Anthony Lorusso states below:

“As far as Matthew goes I 100% believe that he would be worthy of this type of nomination ... I definitely believe that Matthew did a great job with the 2012 Nationals, I think he was hooked on the sport from media day 2012 until now. I don't know if you recall all of his stories but we did get the whole back cover of the newspaper the day after our Media day last year with a picture of one of the Anderson sisters throwing a stone. This surprised me because as a HUGE basketball fan, the Sixers beat the Bulls by double digits the night before and you'd think that would be the back cover, but it wasn't. The back cover of the paper that day was curling.

“Then there was a story about curling in the paper every day during the week long competition. He ran a story when we were awarded the 2014 Nationals, numerous stories about Sarah & Taylor's pretty successful year this past season, stayed up to date on them when they were at Nationals, did a story about Sarah being named a World Alternate, and then the big 3 page article on this sisters that was in the paper a few weeks ago here. I don't know if social media counts in all of this but he retweets & posts as many things as possible that help out IceWorks, the 2014 Nationals, Sarah & Taylor's popularity in the area and with the sport, and the Philadelphia Curling Club.”

About the award:

The Bruce Bennett Media Award honors Bruce Bennett, who captured the many aspects of curling - the people, the competition, the strategy, and the skill. He was able to convey, in his stories, the essence of the game, for curlers and non-curlers alike. He wrote about curling with passion and enthusiasm. Bennett was responsible for generating interest in the sport and expanding the curling community throughout the curling world through his newspaper stories, as well as in curling publications the U.S. and Canada. He covered local competitions, national curling championships, four World Curling championships, and the Olympic Trials in Duluth in 1998. Bennett was an ambassador for all curlers and for the sport of curling.

The award is presented to those who exemplify Bennett's sustained journalism skills for the promotion of curling.

History:

We last awarded the BBMA in 2011 to Jim Carrington of the Bemidji Pioneer Press for his decades of promoting curling in northern Minnesota. Other recipients have included Janie McCauley of the Associated Press for coverage during the Olympic Trials and Olympic Games in 2009-10; Peter Diamond and Jon Miller of NBC for Olympic coverage; Tom Erskine of NBC/Utica; cartoonist Walter Brzoza; and Curling News originators Frank & China Rhyma.

Submitted by: Terry Kolesar, chairwoman, USCA Media & PR Committee

April 2013 Report to the United States Curling Association Board of Directors College Curling

In brief, during the 2012-13 curling season 36 schools participated in 11 college only bonspiel events with four or more teams, plus 15 other smaller events, easily making it the busiest college curling season ever. Sixteen schools were invited to our championships in Duluth the weekend of March 8-10. In addition, that weekend saw a 14 team college bonspiel running concurrent to the championship, and the winner of that event has automatically qualified for the 2014 College Curling Championship. Final Merit Point Standings can be found at www.collegecurlingusa.org.

The University of Minnesota won the National Championship, beating the College of St. Benedicts/St. John's University. Massachusetts Institute of Technology took the Bronze and Boston University finish fourth.



College curling has never been so big, and the students present were almost universally in support of this year's format, with several lobbying hard to have the championships at their home club next year.

The College Curling Committee is now looking to see if we potentially fit into the USCA Championship's structure and if so, does the fit work both ways. There are five main issues that need to be addressed; Financial, Format, Staff Burden, Student Membership in USCA, and long term strategic goals of the USCA.

Financial: At this point the financial issues are obvious. We received \$1,000 in funding from the USCA this past year. If I were to submit a budget to do everything that I would like to see, I would request somewhere in the neighborhood of \$7,500. Obviously that is not going to happen in the foreseeable future. We did have an on-line funding campaign for the championship event. A few members of the USCA Board added their financial support, and I thank those who did. We fell significantly short of our goal, but that is primarily due to the fact that we had no record to run on. I am confident that we can leverage the success of this year into more funding from outside sources next year. I personally have a philosophy that, to the extent possible, the participants should not be required to pay an entry fee to an event they are invited to play in. Realistically, that may not end up being practical.

Format: It is obvious, with even a cursory glance at our format, that we are operating outside the norms of the other USCA championship events. The format we have chosen is in part a response to the participants in the event. Many schools were concerned that if we go by a "team" selection that many of the strong school programs would limit access to the available berths to the smaller schools. The result was that we fill the brackets with "school" invitations rather than "team" invitations. We need to determine whether this format presents challenges for Championships that would make it difficult to integrate the college event.

Staff Burden: Under our current format, the College Championship presents almost no burden of the USCA staff. I have been doing the spreadsheet work of keeping track of the merit points earned at college only bonspiels and sending out invitations and arraigning for awards. Our only real footprint on the staff so far has been some accounting of funds by Sandy and of Christy arraigning for teleconference setup at the USCA meetings. The work I currently do can, and eventually will be delegated to other volunteers. With the current "invitation" format, there is no need for staff time to set up any registration framework.

Student Membership in USCA: One of the concerns that we do need to be looking at is student membership in the USCA, and this might affect the impact on Staff burden. Right now USCA membership is not a requirement of the college championships. I do not know, but I highly suspect that, if this event were to fall under the USCA Championships, that USCA membership would be requisite for participation. Right now, I work under the assumption that if the college students are curling at a community based facility, that they are members of that facility and hence members of the USCA. Obviously, if USCA membership becomes a requirement for participation in the college championships, then we would write that into our Guidelines AND require staff resources for verification. This could be mitigated if we were only required to verify the participants of the championship. On the other hand a membership requirement could be a vector for increasing membership levels in the USCA by this demographic (one where we typically lose members).

Long Term USCA Strategic Goals: I cannot speak to the long term strategic goals of the USCA. But it is obvious that college curling fills a demographic gap in our competitive structure for those who have aged out of Juniors but do not have the time due, to educational choices to curl at the adult level.

Gordon Maclean
Director for College Curling



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**USCA Growth and Development Report
Spring Board of Directors Meeting
April 26-28, 2013**

This report highlights general activity in the Growth & Development/Member Services area during the past six months. As the summary is not all inclusive, please feel free to contact Kim Nawyn, Growth & Development Manager, with questions on additional areas or clarifications on topics listed below.

USCA Membership: Membership numbers are currently up by over 3% (approximately 500 curlers) from last season, with 16,884 reported members. New clubs joining the USCA this season include: Callaway Curling Club (MN), Four Seasons Curling Club (MN), Lake Tahoe Epic Curling (NV), and Oval Curling Club (UT). Clubs returning to membership after a several year absence include Cook County Curling Club (MN) and Stephen Curling Club (MN). The Canadian Curling Association of New York (paper club) and Lakewood Curling Club (club curling at Granite Curling Club) are now listed as defunct. St. Louis Curling Club is currently on hiatus due to structural instabilities in the facility from which they rented ice. Several questions regarding membership categories and requirements have been raised during the past several months. These items will be discussed during the Member Services meeting.

Club Development: Both arena owners/managers and others interested in curling in areas not currently served by established clubs regularly contact the office for information on how to start a curling club. In addition to answering their questions, I regularly connect these groups to curlers in their regions who can assist them with development. Over the past few months, there has been activity in Colorado, Idaho, Indiana, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, South Dakota, and several other states. The Arena Committee is continuing to work on compiling information that will better assist these clubs in development in anticipation of another surge in interest following the Sochi Olympics.

Facility Development: The number of calls to USA Curling from arena clubs interested in developing dedicated facilities is on the rise. To help better meet the needs of these clubs, I am actively recruiting members for a new Facilities Development Committee, which will include former USCA board member Bob Pelletier. It is envisioned that this group, which will be comprised of individuals who had key roles in building curling facilities during the past approximately 15 years, will focus on compiling information for other clubs.

In late November, I traveled to Austin, Texas, to speak at a council hearing in support of the construction of the Austin Curling Club. Since the members of the council had little knowledge of the sport, it was particularly important to show support from the national organization. I also have been in touch with the Austin Sports Commission to provide them with more information about the potential economic impact of hosting USCA events at the facility. In addition, I have written memos touching on various development issues and provided data from the Growth & Development survey to various clubs in the GNCC, GLCA and MOPAC embarking on the building process.



Growth & Development Survey: Although progress on the full Growth & Development Survey report has been slower than originally anticipated, it is getting close to completion. The analysis highlights the various differences between the needs and experiences of dedicated ice clubs and arena-based clubs. Results from the survey will be discussed during the Growth & Development Strategy Planning session at the board meeting.

Grant Programs: During the 2012-13 season, six clubs received funding for various initiatives through the USCA Darwin Curtis Grant Program. Clubs receiving support include: Columbus Curling Club (dehumidifier); Evergreen Curling Club (low-emissivity ceiling); Norfolk Curling Club, (chiller); Ocean State Curling Club (stones); Oklahoma Curling Club (freezer for stones); and San Francisco Bay Area Curling Club (outreach/development program). To date, I have received two final reports, which are due on May 31, 2013, from grant recipients. The application, revised for the 2013-2014 season, has been distributed to clubs and other organizations working to grow the sport of curling (see Dropbox for current application). Grant applications for the upcoming cycle are due on Friday, June 14, 2013, at 5pm CST. All but one of the Selection Committee members from the 2012-13 cycle have committed to the project again this year. The Selection Committee for 2013-14 will consist of Pam Finch, Rich Lepping, Chris Sjue, Jennifer Stannard, and Kim Nawyn.

Training and Instruction: The following summary details activity in the Instructor, Officiating, and Ice Making certification and training programs over the past season.

- **Instructor** - Since September 2012, ten Level I Instructor courses and one Level II Instructor course were conducted in the following regions: Alaska, GLCA, GNCC, Illinois, MOPAC, and Wisconsin. (Since the Level II curriculum is undergoing a substantial redesign, the Training and Instruction Committee agreed to limit the number of times the course was offered this season.) Approximately 144 curlers attended Level I courses and ten attended the Level II course.

Through over 20 conference calls, the Training and Instruction Committee has been meeting regularly throughout the season. We have restructured the Level I Instructor certification program to better meet the needs of curling clubs throughout the country. A trial run of the new course occurred on December 22, 2012, at the Nutmeg Curling Club. Five committee members, including myself, were on hand to evaluate and identify areas where changes were needed. A training program for Level I course conductors will be held at the St. Paul Curling Club on May 17th – 19th. Candidates from around the country, with special attention given to emerging areas, such as MOPAC, will attend. Approximately 20 course conductors will receive training through this program.

- **Officiating** - Four Level I and three Level II classes were offered this season at Broomstones, Granite, Green Bay, and Willmar Curling Clubs. Additional classes in Hibbing and Columbus were cancelled due to lack of registration. According to my records, 48 people attended Level I courses and 29 attended Level II. As there are ongoing issues with consistency in officiating courses, Gwen Krailo, Herb Kupchik, Donna Statzell and I have been discussing recommendations for change.
- **Ice Making** - A single Level I Ice Technician course was offered at the Granite Curling Club with 14 participants. Scheduling conflicts prevented additional courses from being offered.

Registration for these programs, which was previously done at the club level, has now been centralized in the National Office through the SportSignUp program. The centralized registration system allows staff from USA Curling to send course materials and instructions to participants prior to the course and follow-up immediately after the course with information about certification. This communication allows the National Office to better track courses, collect fees, and interact with members who have enrolled. During the 2012-13 season, approximately 110 people completed certification requirements in the various educational programs.

Insurance Program: A total of 41 clubs participated in the 2012-13 USA Curling Club Insurance Program, which provides insurance to clubs that elect coverage in regions outside of the GNCC. (The GNCC operates a separate program using the same policy structure for their member clubs.) As anticipated, participation numbers remained relatively stable, with 4,363 members covered under this policy this season, as compared to 4,233 during 2011-12. While one club withdrew from the program this year, four additional clubs elected coverage (Aspen Curling Club, Cook County Curling Club, Lake Tahoe Curling Club, and Las Vegas Curling Club). The premium went up slightly this year, which warranted a \$1.00 increase in the rate charged per curler for clubs participating in the program. I am currently working with our broker, Steve Gutro, to explore options for the upcoming season.

WCF Stone Purchase Program: All payments for clubs currently enrolled in the stone purchase program are up to date. Seven clubs completed their payment obligations with the USCA this season for stones purchased through the 2006 program including: Casper Curling Club, Coyotes Curling Club, Curl San Diego, Dakota Curling Club, Eau Claire Curling Club, Circle City Curling Club, and Sidner Ice Arena (Nebraska). During the 2012-13 season, the Fogerty Arena in Minnesota (6 sets), Howell Ice Arena in New Jersey (2 sets), and Billings Curling Club in Montana (1 set) received stones through this program. An arena in Illinois also entered into a contract for 2 sets that were subsequently returned to USA Curling under the terms of the contract. At present, there are three sets of refurbished stones in the warehouse in Stevens Point.

In anticipation of the need for refurbished stones for start-up clubs following the next Olympics and interest from existing clubs in purchasing brand new stones through this program, a contract with the World Curling Federation for 288 new and 96 refurbished stones was signed on March 7th. Norfolk Curling Club has already committed to the purchase of two sets of new stones as part of their rebuilding efforts. Several other clubs have each been issued draft contracts to take to their members/board for a vote. We expect confirmations from these clubs this month. As a number of member clubs were unaware that this program is available to them when I initially emailed club presidents about their interest, I have continued to promote with discussion of the program in the *U.S. Curling News* and during the broadcast from the 2013 Men's and Women's Nationals in Green Bay.

Fall Mailing: As of today, 95 requests have been made for membership materials through the on-demand seasonal mailing. Through this program, which was introduced this season, clubs can request brochures, posters, directories, and in-ice logos in amounts that are relevant to their membership. In addition to established clubs, I offered materials to a number of emerging clubs to assist in their development efforts. Emerging clubs that participated include: St. Joseph Curling Club (Kansas City, MO), Lilac City Curling Club (Spokane, WA), Notre Dame Curling Club (Notre Dame, IN), Cedar Rapids Curling Club, (Cedar Rapids, IA), and Billings Curling Club, (Billings, MT). The unsolicited comments below suggest that those who have participated appreciate the new process:

- Cape Cod Curling Club: Thanks for the support
- Norfolk Curling Club: thanks so much for all you've done to automate this process!
- Madison Curling Club: Thank you for providing this service!
- Las Vegas Curling Club: Nice form Kim, and more effective than just blind shipping.
- Mayfield Curling Club: THANKS! Will be awesome to receive all of these items. Good curling!!!
- Centerville Curling Club: Thank You for offering these items to us.

In the near future, I will be sending out a reservation form for clubs to fill out in anticipation of increased need for such materials next season. This will help us best determine the number of brochures to order for the 2013-14 season.

Member Benefits Brochure: USA Curling staff regularly receives calls from emerging clubs and others asking about the benefits of membership. To better address questions posed on the value of membership, I developed a new Member Benefits brochure, which can be accessed on the website at http://www.usacurl.org/usacurl//images//benefits_1213.pdf. It is also available on Dropbox. Regional representatives are encouraged to distribute this document to clubs with questions about current member benefits.

Volunteer of the Year Award: The Rochester Curling Club held a Volunteer of the Year Celebration to honor Doug Brugler on October 8, 2012, at which time he was presented with the award and a USA Curling jacket. We received thank you emails from both Doug and president of the Rochester Curling Club, John Yaworski. John wrote, "The RCC Board and its members would once again like to thank you and the USCA staff for recognizing Doug for this award. Also, please extend an extra special thanks to Jerome Larson for creating this award. We are all beaming with pride over the national recognition for Doug and the Club." Doug noted, "I want to thank you and USCA for how you have handled this Volunteer of the Year award. I am blown away by both the printed story & the front page treatment. The jacket was a great award and I will wear it proudly at curling events. The Lucite curler with lighted base was just over the top. Everyone who sees it admires it. It will be displayed in the Rochester trophy case someday soon."

The nomination form for the Volunteer of the Year has been updated to clarify points of confusion encountered by clubs last season. Completed applications (Nomination Form and supporting information) must be submitted by 5pm CST on Friday, June 14, 2013 (see Dropbox for the 2013-14 nomination form).

Safety Initiative: The SafeSport program was developed by the USOC over a several year period to address the needs of National Governing Bodies to respond to misconduct in sport. As part of this program, I have been working to develop the *USA Curling SafeSport Handbook*, which is designed to protect athletes, volunteers, and staff while participating in events conducted under the auspices of the USCA, including championships, curling camps, and educational clinics. It essentially builds upon the USCA Abuse and Harassment Guidelines (2004) that had been previously instituted and includes updated policies on abuse and harassment, educational awareness and training, screening, and incident reporting.

In addition to an 80-page handbook the USOC developed to guide NGBs to develop their own SafeSport policies, the USOC outlined a number of minimum standards for these policies. According to the USOC, "Failure to meet the minimum standards...may result in disciplinary action by the USOC including, without limitation, the withdrawal of high performance funding." To ensure that the policy met

organizational needs, legal standards, and USOC requirements, it was reviewed by members of the USA Curling staff and the USCA Executive Committee, attorneys at Bryan Cave, and USOC staff including Malia Arrington, Director, Ethics and Safe Sport; Gary Johansen, Associate General Counsel; and Sara Clark, Athlete Ombudsman Specialist.

Through implementation of a SafeSport policy, the USCA gains access to legal services from some top law firms in the country in case we encounter issues of abuse and harassment and need legal advice. According to the USOC, "The SafeSport Legal Referral Network consists of a group of generous firms and legal professionals committed to providing support to the National Governing Bodies to aid them, free of charge, in responding to claims of misconduct in sport." Participating firms include: Arent Fox; Foley & Lardner LLP; Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP; Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP; Sidley Austin LLP; and White & Case.

While the deadline for the program to be in place is December 31, 2013, the organization will be working to implement that policy prior to the end of the year. For example, in addition to background checks for all individuals working at summer junior curling camps, directors of junior camps and any other junior program receiving financial or administrative support from the USCA will be asked to complete a 90 minute USOC SafeSport online training program, <http://training.safesport.org/login.aspx>. The Executive Committee is currently voting on the latest version of this document. It will be posted to Dropbox if approved prior to the board meeting.

U-18 Optimists: Six junior teams (3 boys' teams/3 girls' teams) competed in the Optimist International Curling Championships in British Columbia that took place at the end of March. The girls' teams included: Pennsylvania – Anderson, 7th place; Michigan - Schroeder, 8th place; and Wisconsin - Bear, 12th place. The boys' teams consisted of: Pennsylvania – Clouser, 6th place; Washington – McAuley, 7th place; and Minnesota - Moore, 10th place. Both teams from Pennsylvania earned their place in the competition through a playdown in the GNCC. In addition to the Youth Committee, both Project 2018 coaches were invited to participate in the decision-making process this year. While Dave Jensen has resigned as chair of the Youth Committee, he stayed on to assist with the U-18 effort. All of his hard work on this event over the years is greatly appreciated!

Internship Program: Ryan Maier, Member Services Intern, has been working at USA Curling throughout the Fall 2012 and Spring 2013 semesters. In addition to assisting on numerous administrative tasks, Ryan has been involved in writing articles for the Curling News, including a two feature articles on club development in the United States (see next edition of the *U.S. Curling News* for the second article). He also assisted NBC with their live curling coverage at the Men's and Women's Nationals in Green Bay and will be helping out at the Level I course conductor training for the Instructor program in St. Paul this May. Should his class schedule at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point allow, USA Curling staff has encouraged Ryan to continue in this role next Fall (pending funding).

Communications: Last season, I began a column entitled, 'Reports from the Warm Room,' in the *U.S. Curling News*. I continue to communicate with our membership through this column, as well as other items in the magazine. In addition, I regularly provide items for the Stone Soup electronic newsletter. For important member initiatives, such as the stone purchase program, USCA club insurance program, Darwin Curtis Grant Program, Volunteer of the Year Award, etc., email announcements are sent directly to club presidents. As part of the ongoing Growth & Development communication strategy, I wrote more than a dozen commercials that were incorporated into the TESN broadcast. Scott Higgins and I also participated in an on-air interview during the pre-show on Sunday, 2/10, where we discussed various programs that benefit our members.

Travel: During the past six months, I have been able to spend time with curlers at various clubs in Wisconsin, the GNCC, and Texas. Due to the proximity of the National Office, I was also able to attend the USWCA National Bonspiel in Portage and the Men's and Women's Nationals in Green Bay. These events were great opportunities to meet members from around the country, including several I work with regularly on club development efforts. Following the training for Course Conductors to be held in St. Paul in mid-May, I will be traveling to Toronto, Canada, to attend a CCA think tank. The agenda focuses on building the sport at the community level. During the last week of May, I will be in the Czech Republic for the first WCF Business of Curling Symposium where I will be speaking about the state of curling in the United States based on results from the Growth & Development Survey.

Continuing Education: As I think that it's important to learn as much about the organization as possible, I have made it a priority to enroll in USCA courses whenever feasible. This season, I attended the Level II Instructor course and am working on completing the requirements for certification. I also completed the requirements to become a Level II Official. As highlighted in a recent "Reports from the Warm Room" column, I have been taking advantage of the fact that there are a number of curling clubs located in the general proximity of the National Office. Since I moved to Wisconsin, I have been a league playing member of the Stevens Point Curling Club, Poynette Curling Club, and Wausau Curling Club at various times. This experience has given me the opportunity to see how multiple clubs in the Midwest operate firsthand. Finally, I will be completing another master's degree next month. The program at Kansas State University, which I began prior to my employment at USA Curling and incorporates distance learning, afforded me the opportunity to take a several courses which are particularly relevant to this position, including two focused on student-athletes.

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Special points of interest:

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Welcome

As we move into springtime, we enter the busiest period of the year for the World Curling Federation as our Championship season is in full swing.

Since November's newsletter, new European Champions and World Wheelchair Curling Champions have been crowned.

In recent months, many of our Member Associations have also been selecting the teams who will represent their nation at our forthcoming World Championship events due to take place in the coming weeks.

Congratulations to all of the teams who we will see in Sochi, Riga, Victoria and Fredericton.

Two test events are being staged at the Ice Cube Curling Center in Sochi, Russia, which will host the 2014 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Curling competitions.

The World Wheelchair Curling Championship recently concluded and the World Jun-

ior Curling Championships is currently underway and will finish on 10 March.

We are also looking forward to some exciting competition in the coming weeks as the World Women's, Men's, Mixed Doubles and Senior Curling Championships get underway.

Remember, you can read more about each story by clicking on the headline which will take you through to the full stories.



Team Canada, World Wheelchair Curling Champions 2013
Photo: WCF/Alina Pavlyuchik

World Wheelchair Curling Championship 2013

Congratulations to Team Canada who were crowned 2013 World Wheelchair Curling Champions in Sochi, Russia in February.

Congratulations must also go to Russia, China, Sweden, USA, Scotland (who earn points on behalf of Great Britain), Korea, Slovakia, Norway and Finland who, along with Canada, have now earned enough points to

qualify for the Paralympic Winter Games which will be played in the same venue between the 7-16 March, 2014.

It was the first test event to be held in the Ice Cube Curling Center in Sochi.

We were pleased to see the progress that has been made at the venue and look forward to

working with the local organisers to help make the final touches which will ensure that both the Olympic and Paralympic Games are yet another huge success.

We must thank everyone involved in this event, including the local organiser, hundreds of volunteers and most of all the athletes.

World Curling Championships coming to *Beijing and Saint John*

In January, I had the pleasure of welcoming Chinese Curling Association President, Ni Huizhong, to the WCF Secretariat in Perth, Scotland to sign the contract for the [World Men's Curling Championship 2014](#) which will be held in Beijing, China between 29 March and 6 April.

We are also looking forward to heading back to New Brunswick in Canada, where Saint John will host the [Ford World Women's Curling Championship 2014](#) between 15 and 23 March. I hope that you will be able to join us at these Championships, I'm sure they will both be unforgettable events.



Saint John, Canada, will host the [Ford World Women's Curling Championship 2014](#)
Photo: [facebook.com/DiscoverSaintJohn](https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverSaintJohn)

World Financial Group Continental Cup 2013



Team North America, winners of the [WFG Continental Cup 2013](#)
Photos: WCF/Michael Burns

The [World Financial Group Continental Cup 2013](#) proved to be an excellent showcase of some of the world's finest curlers playing in various disciplines of our game.

Congratulations to Team North America who won

the Cup back from Team World, with a points total of 37 points to 23.

This latest victory edges Team North America in front as they have now won the Continental Cup five times compared to Team

World who have won it four times.

That has set up what will be a fantastic occasion in Las Vegas next year, of which you can buy tickets already here:

www.curling.ca/2014continentalcup/ticket-information/

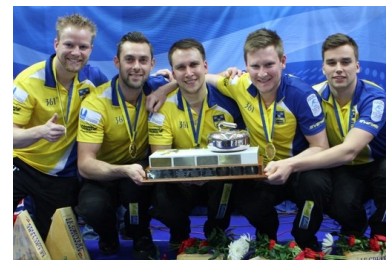
Le Gruyère European Curling Championships

Congratulations to all of the medal winners at [Le Gruyère European Curling Championships 2012](#) which were held in Karlstad, Sweden in December.

Russia's women won the gold medal, beating Scotland who picked up silver. Sweden won the bronze medal. In the men's championship, hosts Sweden won gold, Norway silver and the Czech Republic won their first major championship medal, winning bronze.

The people of Karlstad proved to be excellent hosts and I would like to thank everyone involved in making this a fantastic event for everyone. We can now look forward to the 2013 European Curling Championships which will be held in the Norwegian city of Stavanger.

Following the decision of its Members to dissolve the European Curling Federation, the World Curling Federation will now be responsible for the organisation of future European Curling Championships and European Mixed Curling Championships.



Sweden men and Russia women, gold medal winners at [ECC 2012](#)

Photo: WCF/Richard Gray

European Junior Curling Challenge and Pacific-Asia Junior Curling Championships



Teams at the Pacific-Asia Junior Curling Championship had an enjoyable time in Japan

Photo: WCF/Russel Hamsey



In early January, the European Junior Curling Challenge was held in Prague, Czech Republic. I would like to congratulate [Denmark women and Italy men for winning this event](#) which secured them qualification to the World Junior Curling Championships 2013 taking place in Sochi, Russia.

China men and Japan women also qualified after they both won at the Pacific-Asia Junior Curling Championships held in Kitami-City, Japan.

There was a large number of teams involved in these Championships and the standard of competition at both events was exceptionally high, which suggests our sport is in good hands.

I would like to thank the local organisers, volunteers and all of the athletes who made these Championships fantastic occasions for everyone involved.

Ice Cube Curling Center visit with Vladimir Putin

One of the highlights of my travels over the last three months was to accompany Russian President, Vladimir Putin, during his recent visit to the Ice Cube Curling Center.

This was a fantastic opportunity to showcase our sport to one of the most influential political figures in the world with a global media audience accompanying us on his visit.

President Putin was in Sochi to mark the occasion of 365

days until the start of the Olympic Winter Games and, together with IOC President Jacques Rogge, formally launched the Celebrations later that evening during a Skating Gala Performance.

The venue is in great shape and following the two test events we will make our recommendations for the final touches to be made to the venue ahead of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.



WCF President Kate Caithness, with Russian President, Vladimir Putin, touring the Ice Cube Curling Center in February

Photo: Russian Curling Federation

New Year, New Honour

I was absolutely delighted to receive news in late December that I would be bestowed the honour of an OBE (Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) for services to curling and international disability sport as part of Queen Elizabeth II's New Year Honours List.

It is a great honour and is wonderful recognition for the sport of curling and wheelchair curling and all those involved in playing and developing the sport.

The Queen's Honours List is a means of rewarding an individual's exceptional achievement or exceptional service to the United Kingdom and British Overseas Territories. The awards are made twice-yearly, at New Year and for the Queen's official birthday in June. The Order of the British Empire awards were established by King George V in 1917 to recognise the service and achievement of people from all parts of society.



WCF President, Kate Caithness, will be honoured with the title OBE

Photo: WCF

Athlete Commission & Rules Commission

The World Curling Federation has received a number of nominations from its Member Associations for candidates to sit on two new commissions; the Athletes Commission and the Competition and Rules Commission.

All nominations received will be considered by the WCF Board at their meeting in Riga in March, and the

successful candidates will be notified shortly after.

The **Athlete Commission** will comprise five or six members. Athletes who competed at the World Men's, Women's or Wheelchair Championship or the Olympic or Paralympics Games within the last 8 years have been nominated. The first Commission will be tasked with finalising the

remit of the Commission and also recommending to the Board the election process for future Commissions.

They will be asked to provide feedback and opinion on various matters, to the WCF Board and other WCF Commissions.

The **Competition and Rules Commission** will

comprise five-seven Members and will be chaired by a Board member and supported by the Director of Competitions.

The Commission will provide advice and recommendations to the Board of the WCF and through them to the Members of the WCF, on matters relating to competitions and rules.

Sochi Development Plan



The WCF's CDO Team can help you capitalise on pre and post Olympic interest in curling

Photo: WCF

Recently, the World Curling Federation's Competitions & Development Team published their Sochi Development Plans.

This programme is designed to encourage the growth of our sport during the peak of interest both before, during and

after the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

The Plan provides information not only for MAs to help them prepare their own programmes, but the information contained within the documents will also benefit those operating in all

levels of our sport, such as at local rinks, clubs or at league level for example.

For more information about the WCF's Sochi Development Plans, please contact WCF Competitions & Development Officer, Darrell Ell: darrell.ell@worldcurling.org

MEDIA

Trainee Journalist and Photographer Programme

Following the incredible success of our inaugural Trainee Journalist & Photographer Programme, in which we received over 80 entries from around the world, we were delighted to announce the winners of our Trainee Journalist and Photographer Programme for the season 2012-2013.

Kyle Jahns, who is studying at Red River College in Winnipeg, Canada, was chosen to be our Trainee Journalist, while Alina Pavlyuchik, who is studying the Studio 67 School of Photography in Minsk, Belarus, was chosen as our Trainee Photographer. Alina was given the additional opportunity of joining us for the World Wheelchair Curling Championship in Sochi, and you can see her photos from the event here: <http://wwhcc2013.curlingevents.com/galleries>

She was joined by Kyle to work with the WCF Media & Communications Team at the **World Junior Curling Championships 2013** in Sochi, Russia and you will be able to see their work on: www.wjcc2013.curlingevents.com



WCF Trainee Journalist, Kyle Jahns, and WCF Trainee Photographer, Alina Pavlyuchik, hard at work at WJCC 2013 Photo: WCF/Richard Gray

World Curling Federation Camps and Courses

Prague (24-28 May): We still have spaces available so apply fast if you would like to secure a spot on the Adult Curling Camp.

Business of Curling Symposium (30-31 May): This consists of two days of interactive learning and sharing ideas and successes. There are only 20 spaces available.

Füssen (29 Jun-13 Jul): The Junior Camp and Advanced Instruction & introduction to Coaching Course is fully booked.

There are still a few spaces available on the Ice-Tech and the Basic Umpire Course.

For more information visit: <http://www.wcf-camps-courses.com/>



Some of last year's Füssen Camp students

Photo: WCF



DAP funding was used to set up a curling sheet in Leuven, Belgium

Photo: Belgium Curling Association

Development & Assistance Programme (DAP)

To date, we have approved over \$260,000 USD for this year's DAP programme.

The **application closing deadline is April 30, 2013.**

Projects have to be finished by May 31, 2013.

Claims have to be submitted to the WCF office no later than June 15, 2013.

For more information about

the Development Assistance Programme, please contact WCF Competitions & Development Officer, Eeva Roethlisberger: eeva.roethlisberger@worldcurling.org

WCF Curling Equipment Programme (CEP)

The CEP is a new project introduced by the WCF Curling Development Officers. Three equipment suppliers, BalancePlus, Goldline and Performance partnered with the WCF to provide a number of Starter, Advanced and Instructor level equipment packages for Member Associations, who can apply for this assistance.

The first season of the programme will end April 30th and by that date, we will have provided over 180 packages for the Adult Curling Week in Bratislava, the Füssen Camps and Courses, the Prague Adult camp along with equipment for clinics organised by three Member Associations (the Czech Republic, Japan and Scotland) with two additional applications pending.

Information regarding the second year of this programme will be available on the WCF website: <http://www.worldcurling.org/curling-equipment-programme-cep>

and via an email to Member Associations in April.



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Goldline
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Deadlines

Member Associations are reminded of the following Team paperwork deadlines:

- World Senior Curling Championships 2013 (Fredericton, Canada)
March 8, 2013
- World Mixed Doubles Curling Championship 2013 (Fredericton, Canada)
March 8, 2013

Event hosts

The WCF would like to encourage Member Associations to submit bids for the following championships and would advise that all Associations submit their interest as soon as possible to the WCF Secretariat via: info@worldcurling.org

The WCF is currently seeking bids for:

- **World Wheelchair Curling Qualification Event 2014**
- **European Mixed Curling Championship 2014**
- **European Curling Championship C Division 2014**
- **European Junior Curling Challenge 2015**
- **World Junior Curling Championships 2015**
- **World Mixed Doubles Curling Championship 2015**
- **World Senior Curling Championships 2015**



Visit our website:
www.worldcurling.org

Next Edition

With our next newsletter due in May, we look forward to bringing you news from the World Junior Curling Championships (Sochi, Russia), Titlis Glacier Mountain World Women's Curling Championship (Riga, Latvia), Ford World Men's Curling Championship (Victoria, Canada) and the World Mixed Doubles and World Senior Curling Championships (Fredericton, Canada).

I hope to see many of you over the coming months at these events and would like to wish all competitors good luck. I'm looking forward to some exciting competitions and I'm

sure each and every event will offer some fantastic curling for the world to enjoy.

If you wish to share any suggestions, news or information about activity that your Association has been undertaking in our next newsletter, please contact the WCF Media and Communications Team via media@worldcurling.org no later than 30th April 2013.

Yours in curling,

Kate Bathness

USWCA Report to the USCA Board of Directors

April 27, 2013

The USWCA has had two meetings since we last met. Pres. Bridget Matzke of Madison, WI will complete her year as President May 1st. President Jim Pleasants attended our Annual Meeting in Portage last February, caught a bit of the Bonspiel, met with the President and incoming President and addressed the group. Both his visit and interest, were very well received.

The USWCA goals are to focus on grassroots growth of the sport and, to develop and support junior and women curlers.

The USWCA Circuit completed its third season. We saw growth in individual, bonspiel and sponsor participation. Interest increased at year end with a number of curlers, bonspiels and sponsors already signed up for the 2013-14 season. The Circuit is designed with the goal of encouraging women to curl in more bonspiels and thus improve their level of curling in addition to promoting greater participation in women's bonspiels.

The Senior Friendship Tour exchange with Canada was held in October and all had a great time. 16 women from across the US (distributed evenly by region) curled for 2 weeks throughout the province of British Columbia.

We continue to evaluate the USWCA regions (there are 5 regions, 4 areas) with the aim of balancing the number of curlers in each. The significant growth of curling in general has resulted in skewed numbers in some regions so we are considering a realignment. Regions are used to determine participation in national bonspiels, Tours to Canada and Scotland, rotation of Officers and do not affect our voting processes.

The USWCA Development Fund and USWCA Juniors Committee partnered in a coaching clinic for beginning junior coaches. Planned in conjunction with a USWCA Junior bonspiel it was not held due to low participation. A great idea that did not get traction. I am looking to partner the appropriate USWCA committees with USCA Growth & Development to see if together we can reach this group.

As the liaison between the USCA & USWCA I continue to look for opportunities where we can combine efforts on programs maximizing our resources to impact curling throughout the United States. Should anything come to mind, please let me know. The USWCA has both financial and people resources that together, could move programs and projects forward.

Jennifer Stannard
USCA Director
USWCA Liaison to the USCA