



UNITED STATES CURLING ASSOCIATION
Board of Directors Meeting
July 26, 2022
Teleconference

Approved October 21, 2022

1. **Call to Order** - Chair Lynn LaRocca calls the meeting to order at 6:03 pm ET, July 26, 2022.
2. **Roll call**
 - Board Members**
 - Present** – Jeff Annis, Charlie Brown (voice, no vote), Terri Gleason, Darryl Horsman, Courtney Schmidt, Roger Smith, Alex Agre, Steven Birkliid, Colin Huffman, Alex Leichter, Bill Stopera, Tracy Lawless, Shane Coppola, Lynn LaRocca (Chair), Hawley MacLean.
 - Absent** –.
 - Quorum** - 15 being present in total and eight being required, we have a quorum.
 - Non-Board**
 - Committee Members** – Aileen Geving, Debra Horn, Russ Lemcke, Rich Lepping, Christine McMakin, Bryan Pittard, Allison Pottinger, Jennifer Stannard, Luc Violette.
 - Staff/Non-Board Executives** – Jenna Burchesky, Jana Dalton, Dean Gemmell, Eric Gleason (CFO), Gordon Maclean (Secretary, recording), Jenna Martin, Jeff Plush (CEO), Amy Wolf.
 - Guests** – Katie Baker, John Benton, Jim Pleasants, Phil Shyroch, Gina Triolo.
3. **Appointment of Parliamentarian** – The Chair appoints Gordon Maclean as Parliamentarian.
4. **Additions/changes to the agenda** – None
5. **Discussion/approval of Meeting Minutes** – May 6, 2022, USA Curling Board of Directors meeting minutes have been posted for the director’s review. Motion to accept the minutes by Annis, second by Agre. Motion approved on a unanimous voice vote.
6. **Chair Report**
 - a. The Chair welcomes the directors and future AAC board members John Benton and Patrick McDonald. We will say goodbye to Bill Stopera and Alex Leichter at the end of the meeting.
 - b. The Chair attended the USOPC Assembly meeting at the end of June in Colorado Springs with the CEO and Colin Huffman. This enabled us to network with other NGB executives and CEOs.
 - c. Welcomes Katie Baker as our new Sporting Director and looks forward to working with her in the future.
 - d. Met with the Strategic Planning committee and looks forward to the Plan’s presentation at this meeting.
 - e. Acknowledged receipt of a letter to all USA Curling board members from the Wisconsin State Curling Association.
7. **CEO Report** –
 - a. Welcomes Katie Baker and her 23 years of experience in the Olympic movement to the organization.

- b. The CEO discusses the details of the letter mentioned above from the Wisconsin SCA. The CEO notes that meetings are held after every event, and all positives and negatives are reviewed. We are proud of last season's efforts, and positive results, including over 5,000 ends of competitive Curling played with no positive Covid tests during the events.
- c. Review of Vikings campus arena situation. Things are moving forward towards having a state-of-the-art facility on the Vikings Lakes campus.
- d. We are having good communications regarding event media distribution. NBC Sports and Olympic channels have shut down. It appears that NBC is walking away from a lot of Olympic sports programming outside the actual Olympic events. We can explore other opportunities, and we are doing so.
- e. WCF will relaunch its loan program later this year. We are ready to move forward with our plans for Curl Vegas when this happens.
- f. Introduces Gabby Tachis and the hard work she is doing assisting Jenna Burchesky in the area of Member Services.
- g. The Ad Hoc Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee have produced a charter (attached as Appendix A.) This charter speaks to who we are as a sports organization, where we strive to go, and enables the task force to improve the diversity, equity, and inclusivity of USA Curling through initiatives at every level of the organization. It also provides the task forces' vision, mission, scope, responsibilities, structural framework, and reporting requirements. Huffman speaks to his excitement about the charter's development. Motion to approve the charter by Horsman, seconded by Schmidt.

8. **Strategic Plan Review**

- a. The CEO introduces those who worked on the Strategic Plan Development Committee, Eric Gleason (CFO), Jenna Martin, Lynn LaRocca, Courtney Schmidt, Shane Coppola, Colin Huffman, and Alex Agre. This plan is aspirational, and we look forward to the next four years using this as our guidelines. But as the past four years have taught us, we need to be nimble and be able to pivot as unforeseen needs and requirements arise.
- b. The plan is based on our stated mission to grow, strengthen, and advocate for the Olympic and Paralympic sport of Curling in the United States by prioritizing accessibility and programmatic development from grassroots to the podium. We will continue to stress our values of integrity, respect, collaboration, inclusivity, and accountability.
- c. Our strategic imperative is our "Pipeline Development" (athletes, coaches, officials, ice technicians, instructors, national office staff, board members, and trustees) and our "Pillars of Priority" brand development and authenticity, revenue growth and diversification, national team programming and accountability, operational efficiency, foundation development and relevancy, grassroots and diversity, and membership services,) and the interdependence among the stated priorities.
 - i. We need to develop a brand that matters and use key performance indicators. These include brand development (increase year-over-year impressions, traffic, and engagement), revenue growth (sponsorship, event, and membership), and development (expand national team program funding and on-ice success.)
 - ii. The CEO discusses our organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and staffing/support resources. This was followed by a projected quadrennial financial plan, including the need to build financial reserves.
 - iii. The Finance Committee will continue to look at the impact of financial forecast scenarios and how they will factor into the Strategic Plan as we move forward.

- d. Discussion: Brown - The organization's big positives are not discussed enough; are the projections aspirational? Reply – CEO: To a degree, they are based on years of experience and hundreds of millions of dollars of sponsorship deals, and with the assistance of our new Foundation, they are attainable.
- e. Motion to approve the Strategic Plan as presented by Schmidt, seconded by MacLean. Motion passes with Gleason in opposition.

9. **Audit/Finance Committee**

- a. The CFO presents the preliminary unaudited review of the FY22 Budget versus Actual.
 - i. The estimated deficit is about \$332,000.
 - ii. Positives: Membership dues surpassed estimates by about \$90,000. There were strong event revenues from the Olympic Trials in Omaha and growth in corporate sponsorship. The creation of the USA Curling Foundation was significant for the organization's long-term financial health, plus our Head Ice Technician is now on as a full-time employee.
 - iii. Higher than expected Olympic and Paralympic preparation costs, combined with the decision to stream our major events, including the Olympic Trials and Curling Night in America, as well as general travel cost increases and pandemic-related expenses led to the deficit being more than budgeted.
- b. Fiscal Year 2022-23 (FY23) Budget Review
 - i. This being the first year of the quad, we want to ensure spending aligns with our Strategy Plan as closely as possible.
 - ii. The CFO briefly covers the salient parts of the Strategic Plan as it relates to the upcoming budget, including additions to staff in key organization growth areas.
 - iii. The committee thoroughly reviewed the past year's budget versus actual and accounted for that in developing aspects of the FY23 budget. The FY23 budget as presented is balanced and contains no membership dues increase.
 - iv. Question regarding the FY22 actual budget deficit. Much of the FY22 budget deficit was real, not a balance sheet deficit. Much of the Olympic-related deficit was due to unexpected cost increases directly related to being in Beijing and having to self-fund the broadcast of the Olympic Trials in Omaha when NBC pulled out of that effort. Looking forward, we will have to anticipate those expenses leading into the Cortina games. In terms of rebuilding reserves, we will need to look at annual surpluses to build that back. The board discussed the comparisons to previous quads; and Membership, Paralympic, and Olympic budget sections.
- c. Action: Motion to adopt the 2022-23 Budget as presented by Agre, seconded by Gleason. Motion approved on a unanimous voice vote.

10. **AAC Report**

- a. AAC elections are completed. Agre thanks the incoming and outgoing AAC directors.
- b. The AAC looks forward to working with the new Sporting Director, Katie Baker.
- c. The AAC has a male and female Paralympic USOPCA representation for the first time.
- d. We recently attended the USOPC assembly in Colorado. The USOPC board chair seat was up for election. Our representatives had the opportunity to meet with both candidates. We also met with representatives from other sports. By comparison, our AAC status versus other sports is very positive. Our organization's approach to AAC is a strength rather than a challenge to overcome.

11. **World Curling Federation**

- a. We have had discussions regarding the upcoming WCF elections; more interviews are coming. Guaranteed committee positions for the US, Canada, and Scotland will be eliminated.
- b. The eight ends versus ten ends question will be voted on in the fall

12. Governance

- a. Russ Lemcke will be tenured off the board this fall. The committee is looking for a replacement candidate.

13. College Curling Association

- a. The Secretary presented a Member Club application from the College Curling Association. Normally this type of application is handled on a routine basis, but specifics of the application require some board input and interpretation.
- b. The application was verbally presented to the Secretary as a club that allows those college students from the Utica CC (which has resigned from USA Curling) and are looking to participate in our college program as a place to register for the upcoming year.
 - i. As presented, the applications and CCA bylaws contain no such geographic restriction and have a membership category allowing anyone, including non-students, to become members. This lack of restrictions would seem to make the proposed organization appear to be more like the USWCA (a USA Curling adjunct member) or the US Junior Curling Association (a non-member) than a "Curling Club." The Secretary requested input from the board as to how to proceed.
 - ii. After discussion, the board directed the Secretary to communicate with the applicant that it felt the proposed organization was more akin to an "association" than a "club" and to refine its membership definitions to place geographic restrictions on the organization, remove the "Supporter" category or reapply as an "association."

14. GNCC

- a. The motion (Appendix B) is read into the record by the Chair. Motion to approve by Gleason, seconded by Huffman.
 - i. Comments by GNCC Director Brown: Reviews the transition from the 100% Rule to the 95% rule (2017). "By the letter of the bylaws and the 95% Rule, GNCC's current status cannot be disputed." Questions about how this fits with brand development aspects of the Strategic Plan. This action does not just affect the GNCC.
 - ii. Discussion:
 - This is a narrow-focused motion regarding a member organization not aligned with the national organization. We are doing what is best for the existing and future members. This has nothing to do with clubs in the GNCC; this has to do with the GNCC not being willing to make the hard choice to enforce the bylaws that they helped negotiate and agreed to.
 - Other members speak in favor of supporting the bylaws.
 - There have been thousands of hours spent by staff and board members on this issue that could have been better spent on other more positive organizational development.
 - Our reputation is best served by upholding our bylaws.
 - Discussion regarding the integrity of the current membership model, but in the long run, maybe this pushes the organization into a better position for growth. The real integrity issue results from not following the bylaws.
 - Reiteration that we are not expelling any clubs, only the regional association. All clubs in good standing will have the opportunity to remain USA Curling members.
- b. Action: Revocation of GNCC Regional Association Membership roll call
 - i. In favor: Jeff Annis, Terri Gleason, Darryl Horsman, Courtney Schmidt, Roger Smith, Alex Agre, Steven Birkliid, Colin Huffman, Alex Leichter, Bill Stopera, Tracy Lawless, Shane Coppola, Lynn LaRocca, Hawley MacLean.
 - ii. Oppose: None.

- c. This action will be brought before the Members Assembly in October for ratification. The GNCC clubs in good standing will be sent a link to an online form that, when submitted, will indicate that club's intent to become a US Curling At-Large club. This action falls under Section 6 of our bylaws, which requires the board to approve the movement of a club from one region to another (in this case, GNCC to At-Large.) We will collect batches of those for an email vote by board members to approve or address those in any special session that may occur. Discussion regarding communications and playdown information

15. **Old Business** – None

16. **New Business** –

- a. Motion to accept Coastal Carolina Curling Club's application to move from the GNCC to At-Large by H. MacLean, seconded by Gleason. Motion passes on a unanimous voice vote.
- b. The Chair expresses thanks for all the hard work that AAC Directors Bill Stopera and Alex Leichter have put in over their board tenure and welcomes the new AAC Directors John Benton and Patrick McDonald.

17. **Key Items of Agreement** – DEI Charter, Strategic Plan, FY 23 Budget, GNCC action, acknowledgment of AAC outgoing/incoming directors.

18. **Next Board Meeting** – The weekend of October 21 in Minneapolis.

19. **Adjourn** – Motion to adjourn by H. MacLean

Appendix A –

USA CURLING DE&I TASK FORCE CHARTER

Our Purpose

The Board of Directors represents the *public* interest in its fulfillment of the mission of USA Curling. USA Curling has formed the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) Task Force, an ad- hoc Task Force, to improve the diversity, equity and inclusivity of USA Curling through initiatives at every level of the organization.

Our Vision

To foster a more open, welcoming, and supporting curling community in the United States through establishing and implementing sustainable programming that champions a continued sense of belonging and equitable opportunities.

Our Mission

The DE&I Ad-Hoc Task Force works towards a more inclusive tomorrow by upholding the mission of the National Governing Body (NGB). The mission of USA Curling is to grow, strengthen, and advocate for the Olympic and Paralympic sport of Curling in the United States by prioritizing accessibility and programmatic development from grassroots to podium.

Scope

Through collaboration with the organization, we will undertake the following work to support USA Curling's objectives:

- We will work collaboratively to raise awareness about diversity, equity, and inclusion in the curling community through a holistic approach of campaigns, programming, and resources.
- We will work collaboratively to study best practices, identify opportunities for improvement, and advocate for inclusive policies and practices in support of the mission.
- We work collaboratively to celebrate diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives by highlighting progress in every full Task Force meeting, as well as promoting the work that is being done within our USA Curling community.

What Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Mean to Us

We believe that diversity in our sport may manifest itself in a range of all human identities and differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability or attributes, national origin, language, religion, political beliefs, and socio-economic background.

Equity is about creating a fair and level playing field for everyone by eliminating barriers and biases that may limit certain individuals or groups from reaching their full potential.

Inclusion is when a diverse group of people feel openly welcomed and valued, have equitable access to opportunities and resources, can proudly express their perspectives and values, and are able to freely pursue their interests and talents.

Our Values

- We are an organization that operates with INTEGRITY and strives to be inspirational to all.
- We are an organization that celebrates a COLLABORATIVE spirit that leads to a sense of place and belief in purpose.
- USA Curling prioritizes sportsmanship and RESPECT for the game, our opponents and the communities in which we live, work and play.
- We are inspired to strive every day for an INCLUSIVE community that will increase the reach, diversity and accessibility of curling across the USA.
- We will always endeavor to conduct business with ACCOUNTABILITY, both internally and externally every day.

Our Responsibilities

The DE&I Task Force shall make recommendations to USA Curling to:

- Help support USA Curling's mission, specifically regarding DE&I Initiatives.
- Work in collaboration with USA Curling through providing recommendations and expertise on initiatives that identify opportunities of outreach to underrepresented communities in curling.

- Provide input on short and long term strategies when inequalities exist, as well as institutional policies and procedures to ensure that they support the mission of USA Curling.
- Provide insight to USA Curling on training and events that bring DE&I awareness to every level of the organization.
- Serve as a resource for consultation regarding DE&I subject matter.
- Provide input for best practices of inclusion in policies, ~~teaching~~ education, and training.
- The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force will review its charter at least annually and recommend any proposed changes.

Our Commitments

We make the following public commitments to promote the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion within American curling:

- We will work diligently towards making USA Curling and its member clubs reflect the diversity of the communities and geographic regions they operate in.
- We will actively identify and address systemic barriers and implicit biases that prevent our sport from being truly inclusive.
- We will create, promote, and maintain opportunities for engagement, education, and discourse related to issues of diversity, equity and inclusion within United States curling.
- We will seek to understand and draw on a variety of opinions, perspectives, and experiences as we try to implement solutions that align with the mission statement of USA Curling.
- We will draft suggested changes to USA Curling policies and procedures through a DE&I lens that supports the organization's goals and mission.
- Create an Unconscious Bias Training for USA Curling's use.

Task Force Composition

- The USA Curling Staff will collaborate with the DE&I Task Force to appoint members onto the Task Force and to recruit and fill any

vacancies thereof.

- The Task Force shall have a minimum of five (5) members and a maximum of fifteen (15).
- Each DE&I Task Force member shall commit to serve for an appointment of 1 year (July 1 to June 30).
- The CEO may remove a member from the Task Force at any time with cause.
- The Task Force is lead by a chair who will organize and lead meeting with the full committee in collaboration with USA Curling Staff.

Meetings

- The DE&I Task Force shall meet quarterly.
- A majority of the DE&I Task Force members shall constitute a quorum.
- Minutes of the DE&I Task Force meetings shall be recorded.

Attendance Policy

- The purpose of the Attendance Policy is to ensure that Task Force members contribute their expertise and experience to help the Task Force do its best work possible in the pursuit of its goals.
- Task Force members are expected to attend all Task Force meetings.
- It is recognized that Task Force members may be unable to attend some meetings due to conflicts with other commitments or unforeseen circumstances.
- Where a Task Force member fails to attend at least 75% of the meetings in a 12- month period, the Task Force Chair shall call and discuss the attendance with the individual and may ask them to resign if the member is unable to rearrange their schedule to accommodate regularly scheduled Task Force meetings.
- A member's record of attendance shall be considered with respect to renewal of a Task Force term.

Reporting to the Board

USA Curling staff involved with the DE&I Task Force will report directly to the board on DE&I efforts. USA Curling staff will always communicate directly to the USA Curling Board of Directors.

Charter adopted by the USA Curling Board of Directors meeting in Teleconference July 26, 2022

Appendix B –

Motion to be put forward for consideration by the USA Curling Board of Directors regarding the Grand National Curling Club

“I move that the Grand National Curling Club (GNCC), a Regional Association member of USA Curling, having failed to revoke its association with its Member Clubs having delinquent dues dating from January 31, 2021 as required by USA Curling Policy 21-08 ‘Regional, At-Large Club, Member Club, and Affiliated Organizations Policies and Procedures’ and violating that policy’s Section 5.d, have its USA Curling membership revoked pursuant to the USA Curling Policy 21-15 ‘Membership Suspension, Termination, and Reinstatement Process Policy.’ I further move that GNCC, having passed its current bylaws that violate USA Curling Bylaw Section 5.2 and USA Curling Policy 21-08, have its USA Curling membership terminated pursuant to Section 5.3 of the USA Curling Bylaws.”