



USCA Board of Directors Meeting  
Hilton Ft. Wayne Grand Wayne Convention Center  
October 17, 2015  
Fort Wayne, Indiana

APPROVED February 11, 2016

### Call to Order

Chair Lepping calls the meeting to order at 8:05am EDT.

1. **Roll call**

**Present** – Jeff Hannon, Cyndee Johnson, Rich Lepping (Chair), Catharine Persinger, Doug Potter, Courtney Schmidt, Sean Silver, Chris Sjue, Mark Swandby, Nick Wellen, Jennifer Stannard, Hawley MacLean

**Absent** – Matt Gamboa, Scott Stevenson, Carl Thomas, Craig Brown, Joe Polo, Allison Pottinger, Doug Pottinger, Jessica Schultz, Beau Welling

A quorum constitutes 11 members, with 12 board members present, there is a quorum.

**Non-Board Present** – Non-Board Committee Members - Russ Lemcke Staff/Non-Board Executives - Jenny Biadasz, Derek Brown, Tom Doherty, Victor Huebner (Treasurer), Simone LaMarche, Gordon Maclean (recording), Rick Patzke Guests - Dick McCartney, Triangle CC.

2. **Introduction of new Directors** – The Chair recognizes Catharine Persinger, Fairbanks AK as a new director and recognizes Doug Potter who is attending in person for the first time.

3. **Appointment of parliamentarian** – The Chair appoints Jeff Hannon as Parliamentarian.

4. **Additions/changes to Agenda** – The Chair notes the addition of a proposed Amendment to be introduced under “New Business.”

5. **Discussion/approval of Meeting Minutes:** Motion to approve Minutes from the August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015, USCA Board of Directors Meeting by Doug Potter, seconded by Jennifer Stannard. Motion passes on a unanimous voice vote.

6. **Membership action:** Petition from Illinois Curling Association pursuant to Section 6.1(a) and Petition from St. Louis Curling Club pursuant to Section 6.2(a).

a. The Secretary reviews the By-Laws article relating to a club requesting membership in a state/regional member association that it is not geographically associated with. The St. Louis Curling Club, being in Missouri, is geographically linked to the Mid-America Curling Association but has petitioned for membership in the Illinois Curling Association. The ICA has indicated that they will accept the membership of the St. Louis CC if the USCA approves this petition. Sufficient support has been shown from the Presidents of other state/regional associations to indicate approval of this petition.

b. Silver moves that the USCA accept the petition from St. Louis CC and seconded. Motion passes on a unanimous voice vote.

7. **CEO Report – Rick Patzke**

a. Overview - What’s the big plan? We were on firm ground before, and we are moving to higher ground. Since the last meeting has met with most Directors and many constituents. Common themes that ran through these meetings were, a need to focus on revenue development, communications, High Performance and leadership from the CEO. Relists the 10 points identified in the Members Assembly report.

## 7. CEO Report – Rick Patzke (cont.)

### b. Revenue Development –

- i. Sponsorships and Event Support - Review of recent confirmed and potential upcoming sponsorships. Curling Night in America production support totals more than \$400,000 from NBC, plus another \$280,000 in grants and sponsorship from the WCF, USOC and other sponsors, and community grants from the Eveleth vicinity. Fantastic support from NBC overall. Negotiations with Dow continuing with the assistance of USOC.
- ii. Fund Raising- USOC Challenge grant will meet the \$25,000 matching goal in the fourth quarter of calendar year 2015. No active campaigns launched since June 30, but there will be a digital campaigns this fall. It is unlikely that there will be a direct mail campaign. USOC Challenge grant for 2016 is not in budget forecast, but details should be similar to this year.

### c. Communications –

- i. Need to “communicate” less and “connect more.” More person to person contact such as was done with the St. Paul CC Board of Directors. Town Hall meetings and regional meetings are important to attend.
- ii. Newly announced USCA “Fan Ambassador” Brian Reich an important factor; if he succeeds with his goals, the USCA would have access to another mailing list that could benefit member clubs as well as the USCA overall. There is no real down side to engaging with Brian on this project.
- iii. Tapas will continue with positive feedback from the states/regions and member clubs.

### d. High Performance –

- i. Athlete conceived “UNITED” was great. Athletes are dedicated and not doing this for the money. System is on the right track. Only a couple athletes did not come back from last year, for reasons not related to the program (other interests).
- ii. USOC is definitely interested in continuing to invest in our high performance program but will not be infinitely patient. They are working on data analysis that predicts progress of athletes, looking at statistical metrics that analyze performance. Not basing resource allocations on this system yet, but it could be coming. As an NGB we must be aware of this and other similar trends.
- iii. (Brown) New sports psychology program that does online profiling of coaches and athletes to help each understand the other better and can help putting compatible personalities together on teams. Detailed assessment of own personality.
- iv. (Patzke) USOC is looking at these analytics on athlete’s performance and on NGB performance. For example, they make the analysis on what is required to move from 4<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>, and may use this to invest in sports with the greatest impact potential, rather than continuing to invest in a sport that is 10<sup>th</sup> and has potential to move to 8<sup>th</sup>. Reviewed current benchmark status.
- v. Reviewed updates on the national team selection process with respect to U.S. Nationals and World Curling Tour points.

## 7. CEO Report – Rick Patzke (cont.)

- e. Operations –
  - i. Deputy Manager Position update. Fourteen applicants, so far no one has withdrawn due to the expected salary range. Review process this week with interviews starting shortly thereafter.
  - ii. Controller position has mostly completed the transition. Sandy Robinson has begun to step back and is available to assist Tom Doherty if needed. Looking at shared services for payroll and benefits. Simone regularly assisting. Controller thanks Rick and staff and Sandy for help in this transition.
- f. Continental Cup -
  - i. Burned Stone Vodka – Reviewed the financial details related to the production, distribution and retail costs and markups related to the development of this creative revenue development project tied to the event.
  - ii. Other revenue streams include donor program tied to an on-ice participation contest, and 50/50 raffle.
  - iii. USCA expenses involve outfitting all teams (with Nike value in kind). Rooms will be comped. Goal is to net \$50k in the budget; we seem to be on track. Continental Cup will go into International Fundraising part of budget.
  - iv. Hawley MacLean discusses details of these fundraising efforts. The Orleans Resort has really fallen in love with curling; perhaps U.S. Curling could look at this area for future events beyond the Continental Cup. Discussion of hosting other events at the Orleans facility.
- g. Discussion -
  - i. Brief discussion regarding the expectations of the curling community and the Curling Night in America series and communicating the intent and benefits of the format and the production.
  - ii. Branding opportunity involved with Curling Night in America.
  - iii. Concern about liability and ownership of “The Hackers” fan engagement program discussed.

## 8. Other reports

- a. **Secretary (Gordon Maclean) –**

Reminds the Directors, Staff and Committee members to fill out and return the Conflict of Interest Statement as soon as possible as it is part of our required annual paperwork.
- b. **Treasurer (Vic Huebner, full Financial Report on file) –**
  - i. Finalizing the 2015 budget, audit will be in November.
  - ii. 2016 numbers up to September 30 shows a \$7k deficit which is not unexpected due to our revenue flow.
  - iii. No information other than that which is in the report on file.
- c. **World Curling Federation (Swandby/Rich/Welling/Stannard) –**
  - i. (Mark Swandby reporting) Annual meeting took place in Belgrade. Under THE new governance there will be elections annually and positions are being phased in. Executive Committee now has one president, three Vice Presidents (by zone) and four at large. Reviewed recent elections. Reminds everyone that Andy Anderson is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a 4-year term as an At-Large Director. In future there is no guarantee that a U.S. presence will be on the WCF executive committee.

### **8.c. Reports - World Curling Federation (cont.)**

- ii. Mentioned a long list of minor rules changes that were voted into effect.
- iii. Significant changes for Mixed Doubles related to its status as an Olympic sport. Some of the changes were demonstrated including changes for the non-throwing player, power play, stone in house placement, and synchronized throwing new rules on file in Dropbox. Discussed Last Shot Draw measurement when stone is over the pin using two measurements.
- iv. (Jennifer Stannard reporting) Many concerns initially regarding the synchronized curling aspect from players and WCF members. After the first demonstration play, most of the doubts were alleviated. This will not be used this year in national competitions. Short discussion regarding fan expectations when fans come to clubs expecting synchronized environment.
- v. (Swandby) Review of Athletes Commission of survey of athletes/coaches regarding rules changes that were made last year.
- vi. "Broomgate" - actively pursuing investigations into the matter, including an "approved list" of equipment. Nothing further to report at the time.
- vii. (Stannard) WCF Strategic Plan – WCF is beginning work on a strategic plan. Most agreed that there is a need moving forward to have more than one meeting per year. 2016 is 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary; some recognition will happen; strategic plan should be out next year.
- viii. Summary of some statistical measures of scoring, teams and strategies over the past 15 years.

#### **d. USWCA (Jennifer Stannard) -**

- i. Met in mid-September in Grand Forks, ND, strategic planning process underway, new governance and strategic plan coming up in February.
- ii. Circuit expanded to include state events and 5&under and other events.
- iii. 2016 Scotland tour competitors have been picked.

#### **e. Athletes Advisory Council (Written reports from Allison and Doug Pottinger on file in Dropbox) -**

- i. (Rick Patzke reporting) Doug Pottinger has been an active USOC representative.
- ii. DeVry University program supporting athletes with free tuition is maxed out but a new tuition discount program is in the works.
- iii. Athlete's ombudsman report. Safe Sport program contribution detailed. USCA contributes \$10k as do other similarly-sized NGBs to help program startup. This program is also a major benefit to member clubs.
- iv. Allison reported no changes in AAC Board makeup. Chair reports that he is working on scheduling with athletes to allow attendance.

### **9. Chairman of the Board Report (Rich Lepping) -**

- a. Communication with states/regions, clubs and curling community at large
  - i. Chair and CEO would like to be included in state/region meetings. It is critically important at your meetings.
  - ii. Asking Rick to be the face of the USCA; help us by including him in the process.
  - iii. When Terry sends out a press release, board members should get that right away.
  - iv. Getting business cards to board members to assist with communications with those interested in curling.

## 9. Chairman of the Board Report (cont.)

- b. Director responsibilities-
  - i. Reminds board members of the need to respond to communications in a timely fashion and block off time to attend meetings.
  - ii. Please identify potential sponsors. Challenge to board to present one single contact person or phone number of potential sponsor.
  - iii. We have a media communications policy. If there is a question from the media, work with Rick and Terry.
  - iv. Board attendance at town hall meeting is expected. Counting on directors to add content.
- c. Representation at USCA sanctioned championships
  - i. Directors need to be present at national events.
  - ii. We are going to be working at communicating the facts on this to the curling community. Directors need to be at the events to thank the athletes and be the face of the USCA at these events.

## 10. Standing Committee Reports

- a. **Ethics (Michael Shalhoub) Full Report on file**  
(Rich Lepping reporting) Any violation or action that has come before him has been satisfied.
- b. **Judicial (Kent Beadle) Full Report on file**  
(Rich Lepping reporting) Nothing further to report at this time.
- c. **Human Resources (Chris Sjue)**
  - i. Committee comprised of Chris Sjue (Chair), Courtney Schmidt and Allison Pottinger.
  - ii. Developed goals and key objectives for the CEO in concert with the Chair, these will be finalized shortly. These have been developed to be in line with the strategic plan.
  - iii. Interim evaluation goal is to have quarterly reviews. Any board members having comments or questions should direct them to Chris Sjue.
  - iv. A member of Courtney Schmidt's family specializes in employee benefits, has been looking at our employees benefit package and came back with recommendations. These will be presented to the CEO for implementation.
- d. **Nominating/Governance (Russ Lemcke)**
  - i. By-Laws Amendments were passed by the Members Assembly.
  - ii. Working on a self-evaluation form. Almost ready to be distributed.
  - iii. Looking for independent directors- who have potential for impact to the organization. Challenge directors to think of one individual who could be potential independent board member.
  - iv. Hawley MacLean comments on the importance of bringing in outside directors who are well connected for the potential benefits to be had for the USCA, but mentions the time commitment and expenses involved in belonging to this particular board.

## **10. Standing Committee Reports (cont.)**

### **e. Audit/Finance (Sean Silver) Full Report dated September 30, 2015 on file**

Not a lot to talk about at this time given the time of year and upcoming audit. By February meeting should have more information.

- i. Reviewed the budgeting process for the new directors. New budget put stress on reallocation of resources to be in line with the strategic plan. Reallocation of personnel to allow the CEO to spend more times on items that he should be focused on. Most increased expenses focus on member services, and athlete development model. New funding for Members' Assembly, athlete development, webstreaming and member services.
- ii. Fundraising is biggest risk in the budget.
- iii. Dues are 27% of budget. USOC and sponsors are funding HPP. We do not have a formal policy in that regard, it is simply our way of handling this aspect of the organization.
- iv. Brief discussion on the dues increase and whether the membership fully realizes the fact of that action.

## **11. Off Agenda Discussions**

- a. (Vic Huebner) Comment about director attendance at national events; is it possible to have the board meeting at the Men's/Women's Nationals? Chair Responds: We have not planned on that for this year, but we may in the future, or at another championship event.
- b. Two in-person meetings, two teleconferences. Teleconferences tentatively set February 17, Noon CT, and July 28 (specifically for budget approval); in-person meetings in Colorado Springs at the USOC facilities April 22-24 and in conjunction with next year's Members' Assembly (early October).
- c. (Mark Swandby) A meeting at the National's would represent a distraction for the athletes and those attending the events. Chris Sjue notes that with shorter Board meetings this might not be as much of a distraction as in the past.
- d. (Rich Lepping) Town Hall call on Nov 5<sup>th</sup> as a follow-up to this meeting.
- e. Chair will call for a Board teleconference around Dec 1<sup>st</sup> to approve an executive committee and Vice-Chair in line with the By-Law Amendment that was just passed creating that body.
- f. Brief discussion on conflicts with April dates for Board meetings and on ice events (Senior Men's Championship).

## **12. Open Action Items - None**

## **13. Old Business – None**

**14. New business-**

(Jeff Hannon) With regard to the late notice amendment of By-Laws Section 3 that was turned down by the Members' Assembly. Motion to pass to the Governance Committee proposed new language for Section 3.2.d, to reflect participants rather than events:

*"To conduct, manage and operate national competitions comprising men, women, juniors, seniors, colleges, arena curlers, wheelchair curlers and such other participants as may be sanctioned from time to time."*

Potter seconds the motion.

Discussion- Should not send the governance committee specific wording; let the committee decide on the actual language.

Chair- motion on table is asking governance to come back with new language. Motion passes with objections by MacLean and Sjue.

Bret Jackson notes that there are other items that the Governance/Nominating Committee is looking at, and to please note any issues that you may be aware of. Hannon notes typographical errors. Maclean (Secretary) notes the timing of Members' Assembly delegate's notification (10 days prior to meeting) and Treasurer's vote certification for that meeting (30 days prior to meeting) are in conflict.

15. **Key items of agreement:** Members Assembly recap, Recap CEO report, By-law Amendments, Town Hall meeting, WCF Summary, Promote attendance and volunteers at Jacksonville Nationals.
16. Jennifer Stannard reminds Directors who want to get a blue director's sweater to get their order in.
17. **Motion to Adjourn by Hannon. Meeting adjourns at 11:50am.**

**Standing Committee Meeting Minutes**

1. Ethics
2. Judicial
3. Human Resources
4. Nominating/Governance
5. Audit/Finance