

Agenda

Special Meeting of the USA Fencing Board of Directors and Membership Meeting

July 9, 2021 at 11:00 am ET in Philadelphia, PA
1-877-805-0965 Passcode: 2478629

I. Call to Order

General Announcements

Remarks – Peter Burchard, President

Conflict of Interest announcement.

II. Consent Agenda Items (Mr. Burchard)

1. To approve the minutes from the May 26, 2021 meeting.
2. To approve the email vote minutes from December 14, 2020, December 29, 2020 and June 9, 2021.
3. To approve the March and April 2021 financial reports.
4. To receive the Election Committee (**Appendix A**) and SEMI Committee (**Appendix B**) minutes and report.

III. CEO and Strategic Plan Update (Ms. Ekeren)

IV. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Resource Team Update (Ms. Ekeren)

V. Tokyo Update (Ms. Reisinger)

VI. Finance Update (Ms. Toelle)

VII. Governance Task Force Update (Mr. Kidd)

VIII. New Business

Motion (Ms. Holmes): To receive the report and accept the recommendations from the Governance Task Force.

IX. Good and Welfare

X. Recess to Executive Session

XI. Executive Session

XII. Recess

Appendix A

Name: Election Committee

Meeting Minutes: February 5, 2021

Members Present: Dan Berke, Michael McTigue, Susan Belanich, Eli Dershwitz, David Hitchcock

Members Absent: Anna van Brummen

Board Liaison: Daria Schneider

Staff Liaison: Nicole Jomantas

Guests: N/A

Election of Committee Chair

Dan Berke was unanimously elected to return as committee chair.

2021 USA Fencing Election

The 2021 USA Fencing Board of Directors Election will include elections for two At-Large Directors. The Nominating Committee selected six individuals to run for the two positions as follows: Donald Alperstein, Jeff Kim, Vickie Miller, Ann Marsh-Senic, Scott Webb and Dawn Wilson. Additional individuals may run for election through the petition process as outlined in the USA Fencing Bylaws.

Election Petition Process

Following the USA Fencing Bylaws update from August 2020, the petition process has been updated to require 50 signatures from voting members in good standing from 10 clubs. Petitions must be received in hard copy by the National Office by March 31, 2021.

Berke has updated the petition form and a call for petitions will be posted on the USA Fencing website.

Election Timeline

Candidates to submit statements to the Election Committee: April 21

Candidate statements posted: April 26

Election: May 5-19

Election Advertising

Candidates will have the opportunity to purchase a maximum of two email blasts during the election period. Email blasts may be sent at any time after the publishing of the candidate statements between April 26 and May 19. Advertising will only be available via eblast. The purchase of mailing lists will not be permitted.

Timeline of Election Closing

Discussion was had regarding the establishment of the end time of the election on May 19. In past years, the election concluded at 11:59 p.m. Mountain Time. Closing the election at 5 p.m.

Mountain Time would allow for improved customer service as well as a same-day announcement of election results. The timeline will be established during a subsequent meeting.

Election Process

Per the updated bylaws, elections for the Board of Directors will be conducted through the method of ranked preferential voting. Due to the new nature of the process, the electronic voting provider, eBallot, will be consulted to see if a practice or test election may be conducted with the members of the Election Committee prior to the Board of Directors election in May.

Hall of Fame

Jomantas to follow up with the Hall of Fame Resource Team to receive their timeline on the Hall of Fame Election

Name: Election Committee

Meeting Minutes: April 8, 2021

Members Present: Dan Berke, Michael McTigue, Susan Belanich, Eli Dershwitz

Members Absent: Anna van Brummen, David Hitchcock

Board Liaison: N/A

Staff Liaison: Nicole Jomantas

Guests: Dawn Wilson, Lauren Phillips, Phil Manna, Vickie Miller

Petitions

Two individuals submitted petitions for the Board of Directors Election: Patrick Durkan and Abdel Salem. Both petitions were approved with Durkan and Salem being added to the list of candidates that was finalized to include:

- Donald Alperstein (Nominated)
- Patrick Durkan (Petitioned)
- Jeff Kim (Nominated)
- Ann Marsh (Nominated)
- Vickie Miller (Nominated)
- Abdel Salem (Petitioned)
- Scott Webb (Nominated)
- Dawn Wilson (Nominated)

Preferential Voting

Following the update to the USA Fencing Bylaws in August of 2020, the USA Fencing Election will be conducting utilizing preferential voting. The preferential voting system we will be using is called the "Borda Count." In this system, a point value is assigned to each preferential rank. With eight candidates in the current election, the points for each rank are assigned as follows:

Rank 1 = 8 points

Rank 2 = 7 points

Rank 3 = 6 points

Rank 4 = 5 points

Rank 5 = 4 points

Rank 6 = 3 points

Rank 7 = 2 points

Rank 8 = 1 point

Voters rank the candidates by preference, which adds the specified number of points to each candidate's running total. (Candidates not ranked by a voter do not get any points from that voter's ballot.) At the conclusion of the election, the total number of points earned by each candidate is reported. The two candidates earning the most points will be elected to the two At-Large Director positions.

Election End Time

The election will close at 5 p.m. Mountain Time on May 19.

Candidate Communications

Berke to send an email to all of the candidates with election details as well as requesting a statement and photo for the website to be published on or before April 26.

Election Promotion

The election will be promoted to the overall membership via social media as well as the USA Fencing website. Eligible voters will also receive at least four emails regarding the election, including an initial email to be sent at 12:01 a.m. on May 5 as well as three reminder emails.

Election System Testing

Due to the utilization of a new method of voting, testing will be done utilizing the eBallot platform prior to the launch of the election on May 5.

Additional Business

It was brought to the attention of the Election Committee that one of the candidates, Scott Webb, did not have a current USA Fencing membership. In order to be in compliance with the USA Fencing Bylaws, Berke will reach out to Mr. Webb to ensure that a membership of supporting level or higher was obtained prior to the election.

Election Committee Report to the Board of Directors

June 1, 2021

Submitted by Dan Berke, Election Committee Chair

This year's election was somewhat unusual in three respects. First, it was the first election to be conducted using the new preferential voting system required by the amended Bylaws. Second, this election used a shorter voting period of two weeks, rather than the three weeks that we had been using in the past. Finally, this election was only for the At-Large Director positions - there was no Hall of Fame nor RC election this year.

After the Nominating Committee announced the list of six nominees for the two At-Large Director positions, we made the standard announcement about the election as well as the process for petitioning to get on the ballot.

The six nominees were Donald Alperstein, Jeff Kim, Ann Marsh-Senic, Vickie Miller, Scott Webb, and Dawn Wilson. Two individuals petitioned to be on the ballot: Patrick Durkan and Abdel Salem.

Prior to the election, we investigated the different preferential voting systems commonly in use. While this investigation was useful, the decision on which to use was essentially made for us because the eBallot system (the vendor we use to run the election) only offered the "Borda Count" system for preferential voting elections. Using the Borda Count, points are assigned to each rank position (rank #1 = 8 points, #2 = 7 points, ... #8 = 1 point.) Candidates earn the corresponding number of points for each ranked vote received. The two candidates receiving the most cumulative points are elected.

The Borda Count method proved to be a good match for our election. It is conceptually simple, and anyone can do the math to verify the results. The only subtlety that some voters may not have realized is that even an 8th-rank vote awards a point to the candidate, so it actually is better to not rank a candidate at all if the voter feels that candidate is not qualified for the position. The voting instructions did state that the voter could vote for "as few or as many candidates as you wish", so we did our best to communicate this fact without providing a long-winded explanation.

Before the official election, the committee ran a small test election on the eBallot system where committee members each cast a few test ballots. We then viewed the reports generated by eBallot and verified that the results were as expected. We did this to make sure we were familiar with the new preferential voting system and its implementation details in the eBallot system.

The election proceeded smoothly, with one problem. On the weekend of May 8-9, the eBallot system prevented voters from logging in to cast their votes. This turned out to be due to a minor administrative mistake on eBallot's end, and the problem was fixed on Monday May 10th. Because of this two-day "outage", we extended the election period by two days to remain compliant with the Bylaws' requirement that the voting period be at least two weeks long. In the future, we will consider an election period slightly longer than 14 days just in case this issue happens again. As happens every year, a handful voters reported not receiving the email with the information they needed to login to the eBallot website. If the voter contacted the National Office or eBallot, the problem was usually resolved within 24 hours. The two most common problems were either an incorrect email address on file, or the voter was not actually eligible to vote due to having a non-voting membership type or missing the February 1st cutoff.

Upon conclusion of the election, the Election Committee received the results and contacted the

candidates. There were 5270 eligible voters, with 1332 (25.3%) individuals casting a vote. This is a slight increase over the 24.2% turnout seen in last year's election.

The number of votes each candidate received for each rank are as follows:

Candidate	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6	Rank 7	Rank 8	Total
<i>Abdel Salem</i>	294	269	135	79	67	61	52	34	6029
<i>Donald Alperstein</i>	339	221	109	86	50	57	51	49	5865
Ann Marsh-Senic	201	177	130	95	79	60	66	61	4791
Vickie Miller	113	130	125	110	99	80	72	53	3947
Jeff Kim	99	129	122	110	119	107	61	38	3934
Dawn Wilson	92	120	141	123	104	71	98	50	3912
Patrick Durkan	152	89	53	53	45	57	66	224	3129
Scott Webb	42	70	82	111	95	120	122	48	2905

Abdel Salem and Donald Alperstein earned the most points and were elected as At-Large Directors.

The Election Committee held a post-mortem meeting on May 27th where we reviewed the election. The consensus was that the new system worked well, and that voters had little trouble adapting to the preferential voting. The one area that we would like to address is the situation where a voter thinks they should have received a ballot, but they did not because they were not voting members as of February 1st. The committee feels that if the voting eligibility date were later in the season, we would see fewer of these issues. We propose changing this date (via a Bylaws amendment) to March 15th to allow more time for people to become eligible voters. This date was chosen to be prior to the petition deadline (last business day in March) so that the membership status of all petition signatories is known.

The only issue with changing the date is that Section 9.3.b.iii of the Bylaws specifies that officer (President and Treasurer) petitioners must collect signatures totaling at least four percent of the voting membership. If the eligibility date is moved to a later date, that number will not be known until a couple of weeks before the petition deadline. To address this issue, Section 9.3.b.iii could be amended to either require a fixed number of signatures rather than a percentage, or to continue computing the percentage based on the number of eligible voters as of February 1st, but still allow people to become eligible voters up until the new March 15th date.

The Election Committee feels that the date change would benefit the membership by making voting accessible to more members and would like the Board's guidance on crafting a Bylaws amendment adopting this change.

Finally, the Election Committee would like to thank Nicole Jomantas at the National Office for her support and hard work on the election. As Chair, I also want to thank committee members Michael McTigue, Susan Belanich, David Hitchcock, Anna van Brummen and Eli Dershwitz for their participation on the Committee.

Sincerely,
 Dan Berke
 Election Committee Chair

Appendix B

Name: US SEMI Committee

Meeting Minutes – June 10, 2021

Members Present: Kathy Walters, Irene Edgerton, Glen Hollingsworth, Liz Morey, Ted Li, Al Merritt Alice Kee, Brian Rosen, Ron Herman, David Blake, Leo Curtis, and Chuck Alexander

Members Absent: Anne Crocket, Jonathan Yergler

Board Liaison: Donald Alperstein (Absent)

Staff Liaison: Glen Hollingsworth

Guests: N/A

Approval of May 6th SEMI Committee Minutes - Approved.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **May NAC**

a. Alice Kee gave an update on the Richmond NAC.

- 1 Hotel issues
- 2 Key for trucks was not available, now have combination locks.
- 3 Set in the ballroom was difficult due to the location and lack of working pallet jacks.
- 4 No ground wires were setup in the Sabre Room.
- 5 Armory did a full check (mask, gloves, body cords, head cords, and lames)
- 6 All covid protocols were followed.
- 7 Changed out 2 strips in the Sabre Room.
- 8 Pack out took longer than expected due to lack of working electric pallet jack.
- 9 Lack of efficient forklift driver
- 10 Replay was responsible for setting up all the Ballroom scoring machines, and that went very smoothly.
- 11 All strip calls in the ballroom were handled by replay staff for this event. Due to the location of the ballroom, it was greatly appreciated that Replay was willing to take on this role. The only problem was that not all the referees were aware of this change, if this arrangement is done going forward, we need to make sure all referees are aware of the change.
- 12 Need more communication and coordination on satellite armory stations.
- 13 Alice did a great job.

2. **June NAC Strips – Reels – Floor cords**

- a. Receiving 24 new strips and will keep the old ones for Summer Nationals.
- b. Receiving 140 new reels
- c. We have 20 old reels from the finals area that did not get returned to Absolute Fencing due to the ballroom pack out issues.
- d. 5 Uhlmann reels marked AF that need to go back to Absolute Fencing.
- e. Receiving 50 new floor cords

3. **Armory Inventory**

- a. This item was moved to the next meeting.

4. **USAFencing Inventory**

- a. We are in the process of color coding the crates and making sure that all crates are numbered.

- b. Replay and IT/Bout committee will identify 4 crates that are priority and need to be unloaded ASAP and must go on the truck last
 - c. This item will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.
 - d. Need new finals and semi crates (need 3 large new crates and 6 new lids)
 - e. Lids need to be ordered for most of our older crates.
 - f. At the next NAC we need to measure all the different crates and come up with a list of sizes (take picture of each different crate)
 - g. Never order crate with doors on the long side all doors must be on the short side.
 - h. One strip was lost in the rollover accident and not replaced by insurance claim.
 - i. Long term the coaches' boxes may have issues due to storage.
 - j. We will need additional scoring machines for the June NAC.
 - k. Al Merritt will send copy of paperwork on SJ12st that was returned to Absolute Fencing (Ted Li said that machine has multiple issues)
 - l. Replay has 11 WS machines and 1 spare for parts, Six 31 machines, and one 21 machines.
 - m. Need to do a complete inventory on all scoring machines.
5. **Send out Armory Survey for the additional July and August events**
- a. Irene will send out the survey.
6. **French Foil grip (see email from Ted Li and Ron Herman)**
- a. After reviewing all the information sent to the committee from the vendor
 - b. The committee had a very lengthy discussion.
 - c. Fencers may be at a disadvantage due to the FIE not approving of the grips for international fencing.
 - d. Most of the committee members did not have an objection to the grips.
 - e. If approved they would be legal for USA Fencing
 - f. FIE SEMI will not allow the grips.
 - g. The SEMI committee voted to approve the grip for domestic use only (all approved)
 - h. SEMI will draft a statement that goes to the USA Fencing Board of Directors for approval
 - i. This grip does meet the definitions of the rules.
 - j. Someone wanted to include the reason why we approved the grip.
 - k. Ron Herman volunteered to draft the approval statement and send to the committee for comments for approval.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next meeting is scheduled for June 10, 2021 at 8:30pm

ADJOURN