

**Minutes**  
**Special Meeting of the**  
**USA Fencing Board of Directors**  
**February 19, 2019 in Denver, CO**

The board approved, by email vote open January 7-14, 2019, to approve the updated SafeSport Policy and the Spectator Code of Conduct.

**Present:** Donald Alperstein, Don Anthony, David Arias, Cliff Bayer, Raquel Brown, Sam Cheris, Alan Kidd, Lorrie Marcil Holmes, Jeff Salmon, Ann Marsh-Senic, Cody Mattern, Daria Schneider, Adam Watson

**Guests:** Peter Barton, Bob Bodor, Sam Callan, Brandon Dyett, Kris Ekeren, Jill Grotzinger, Nicole Jomantas, Doug Hayler, Melissa Jones, Bill Korbus, Dan Mott, Jim Neale, Kate Reisinger, Suzie Riewald

**I. General Information and Organizational Items**

**1. General Announcements**

**2. Remarks – Donald Anthony, President (Appendix A)**

**Motion (Mr. Alperstein):** to amend the agenda to add the acceptance of the Tournament Committee minutes to new business.

Second Mr. Watson  
Motion passed.

**II. Consent Agenda**

- 1.** To approve the minutes from the November 20, 2018 minutes with corrections to add email vote results from October 2018 and the meeting attendance.
- 2.** To approve the minutes from the January 6, 2019 meeting.
- 3.** To approve the financial reports from October, November and December 2018.
- 4.** To accept the Audit Committee, Budget Committee, Hall of Fame Committee and Nominating Committee reports.
- 5.** To approve the Coach and Athlete Code of Conducts as provided to the board.
- 6.** To approve the addition of Alex Gruman to the Marketing and

Communications Resource Team.

**Motion (Mr. Alperstein):** to approve the consent agenda.

Second Mr. Kidd

Motion passed.

### **III. Executive Director's Report (Appendix B)**

### **IV. Finance Report (Mr. Hayler)**

#### **December 2019 Financials**

Membership Services total net income is currently behind budget by \$59K, total income is \$62K behind budget and expenses are \$3K under budget.

Competitive memberships are down \$58K. We have started making budget cuts and adjustments to the membership budget to account for this shortfall.

Despite the fact that membership is behind budget, membership's net income is \$1,555K, \$125K ahead of prior year actual income of \$1,430K as of 12/31/2018.

National Events total net income is currently behind budget by \$38K, total income is \$12K over budget and expenses are \$50K over budget. We believe that membership will be able to make up this difference by the end of the fiscal year.

The December NAC in Cincinnati, OH made a net income of \$127K. It came in \$6K under the budgeted net income of \$133K. Decorating expenses were \$11K higher than budget and airfare to Cincinnati was \$8K higher than budgeted.

Marketing and Communications total net income is currently ahead of budget by \$7K, no significant budget variances to report.

General Admin total net income is currently behind budget by \$15K, total income is behind budget by \$15K and expenses are under budget by \$1K. Due to the downturn in the market, the investment income from the USOE account is now at a \$9K loss.

Sports Performance total net income is currently ahead of budget by \$72K, total income is \$55K ahead of budget and expenses are \$17K under budget. Cadre to World cup revenue is \$39K higher than budgeted. Hotel expenses are \$16K under budget. These timing differences will be more in line with budget as the year goes on.

Development total net income is currently ahead of budget by \$16K, total income is \$33K behind budget and expenses are \$49K behind budget. Beginning January 2019 we now have a fulltime Director of Development.

Executive Office and Board and Committees are on budget or close to budget with no major variances.

Our YTD net income is \$1,691K versus a budgeted number of \$1,169K giving us a negative variance of \$8K. Our prior year net income was \$1,102K versus a budget of \$1,258K as of December 31, 2018.

Our cash + receivables exceed our payables by approximately \$2,687K. The cash on hand includes \$153K in a money market account + \$962 held in the US Olympic endowment account. Total \$1,115K in money market and USOE endowment. The USOE balance reported is from November 2018 as we had not received the December 2018 statement from the USOE. We believe that we will finish within budget by the end of the 2018-19 fiscal year.

## **V. Legal Update (Mr. Neale)**

We have been reviewing the Center for SafeSport policies that need to be commented on prior to the adoption of the new SafeSport code. The code is being completely revamped and USA Fencing will need to conform to the updated policy. There have been some disciplinary and eligibility issues and review of a potential sponsorship agreement, which will be discussed in executive session.

## **VI. New Business**

**Motion (Mr. Arias):** to approve the 2019-20 budget.

Second Mr. Kidd.

Motion passed.

**Motion (Mr. Alperstein):** Resolved, that USA Fencing adopt the following policy regarding Interim and Final Resolutions received from the US Center for SafeSport:

### **POLICY REGARDING SAFE SPORT RESOLUTIONS**

USA Fencing shall adhere to the following policies and practices regarding Interim Measures and Final Resolutions issued by the US Center for SafeSport (“the Center”) concerning members of USA Fencing:

1. USA Fencing shall publish on its website all Interim Measures and Final Resolutions of cases under the jurisdiction of the Center and involving current, past and prospective members of USA Fencing to the extent that the same are published in the Center’s publicly searchable database; and USA Fencing shall notify all those with a need to know and whom USA Fencing is required to notify (such as committee members, Divisions and member clubs) of such Interim Measures or Final Resolutions.
2. Final Resolutions involving current, past or prospective members of USA Fencing that are not published by the Center on its publicly searchable database shall not be published by USA Fencing and the rights and privileges of the persons subject to such Final Resolutions shall not be limited by USA Fencing based on sanctions issued by the Center.
3. The Executive Director and principal Safe Sport Officer of USA Fencing shall maintain a list of individuals subject to Interim Measures and unpublished Final

Resolutions for the duration of any such sanctions. In the event USA Fencing receives information of conduct that violates the terms of any such Interim Measure or Final Resolution, and in addition to any other action that USA Fencing deems appropriate under the circumstances, USA Fencing shall report the same to the Center and such other agencies as the law requires.

The terms “Interim Measures” and “Final Resolution” are defined by the “Guide to Searchable Database Glossary of Terms” issued by the U.S. Center for SafeSport, as currently existing or as may be amended from time to time, which definitions are incorporated herein.

Motion passed.

**Motion (Mr. Alperstein):** to receive the Tournament Committee report (**Appendix C**).

Second Mr. Arias  
Motion passed.

**Motion (Mr. Alperstein):** to accept and adopt the recommendations of the Tournament Committee from the meeting minutes (**Appendix C**).

Second Ms. Brown  
Motion passed.

## **VII. Good & Welfare**

The next meeting will be in April. We need to set the date.

## **VIII. Recess to Executive Session**

**Motion (Mr. Watson):** to recess to executive session.

Second Mr. Bayer  
Motion passed.

## **IX. Executive Session**

**Present:** Donald Alperstein, Don Anthony, David Arias, Cliff Bayer, Raquel Brown, Sam Cheris, Alan Kidd, Lorrie Marcil Holmes, Jeff Salmon, Ann Marsh-Senic, Cody Mattern, Daria Schneider, Adam Watson

**Guests:** Peter Barton, Kris Ekeren, Doug Hayler, Melissa Jones, Bill Korbus, Jim Neale, Suzie Riewald

The board was presented with a sponsorship proposal and gave staff feedback on the proposal

The board received an update on the status of a contract with a vendor.

Ms. Ekeren provided a SafeSport update.

The board voted to deny a red light appeal.

The board received an update on the results of a compliance audit.

**X. Adjournment**

**Motion (Mr. Watson):** to adjourn.

Second Mr. Alperstein  
Motion passed.

## **Appendix A**

President's Remarks  
BOD Meeting  
February 19, 2019

Welcome Cliff Bayer to his first in-person Board meeting. I also want to welcome a new member to our National Office staff – Jill Grotzinger, director of development.

I want to thank the entire fencing community for its support over the last few weeks with my father's passing, especially the National Office and the Board.

Congratulations to all for completing another very successful Junior Olympics here in Denver. I also want to thank all of those who made the recent Women's Sabre World Cup an outstanding event that drew praise from the international community for its amazing quality and, as members of the FIE Comex said, its perfect execution. This is a testament to all of the effort that has been invested over the years into running high level international events that are highly respected by the FIE and the international fencing community.

Our athletes continue to perform on the world stage at every level of competition. Some of our significant senior results include Race Imboden on winning the recent men's foil Grand Prix with Gerek Meinhardt taking the bronze. Eli Dershwitz winning the Warsaw World Cup in saber and Jake Hoyle's Grand Prix and World Cup bronze medal finishes. All of our teams and athletes continue to compete at the highest level and we are very proud of their excellent results.

Financially, we continue to manage to our budget and monitor our financial performance. We have a new budget for approval on the agenda and the National Office and our Treasurer have worked diligently on developing a budget that will allow USA Fencing to continue performing at the highest level in all of the areas that we working to excel in.

We are still working on our marketing efforts to bring more attention to the amazing success of our athletes and create opportunities for corporate partners and sponsors to connect with our sport. USA Fencing has recently began working with an outside agency to develop a campaign for building support and following for our athletes and our sport leading into the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

I look forward to seeing our membership around future fencing events soon.

Donald K. Anthony, Jr.  
President and Chairman of the Board

## Appendix B



To: USA Fencing Board of Directors

From: Kris Ekeren, Executive Director

Date: February 5, 2019

Subject: Executive Director's Report

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Please see the updates on the progress made on USA Fencing's identified business objectives.

### **Grow and Promote the Sport of Fencing**

USA Fencing membership is up through January 2019 by approximately 3,000 when compared to January 2018 as we continue to work towards the initial target goal of 40,000 members.

We are working with an agency on marketing and branding for the sport of fencing through an FIE initiative. The objective of the project is to elevate the sport of fencing during the lead-up to Tokyo 2020.

### **Improve Sports Performance and Development**

Staff will provide an update during the February board meeting on sports performance and development initiatives including coaching education and Paralympic fencing.

Our athletes continue to do very well on the international stage. Congratulations to all of the athletes and the individuals who support their efforts!

### **Generate Sustainable Revenue from Internal and External Sources**

I am pleased to introduce Jill Grotzinger as our new development director. Jill joined USA Fencing in early January and has hit the ground running. We have aggressive goals for both USA Fencing and the US Fencing Foundation and we are all looking forward to Jill's leadership in this area.

Fundraising for the international events, including the Junior and Cadet World Championships remains a priority for the office. We have engaged a Salt Lake City firm to assist with building awareness and excitement as well as selling local sponsorships for the Jr/Cadet World Championships and other upcoming Salt Lake City events.

### **Optimize Qualification and Tournament Process**

Our events team is working with the bid review group to award the 2019-20 regional bids. We anticipate reducing the number of SYCs and ROCs to achieve a better event balance. The first IRC was a success and the second event will be held in March.

### **Optimize Leadership/Operational Effectiveness**

The National Office is working with volunteers that are serving on resource teams and committees on several goals and initiatives for the organization. The Ethics Committee is reviewing a number of items and the Election Committee will be setting the dates for the 2019 election soon.

### **Achieve /Maintain Financial Solvency, Stability & Sustainability**

We continue to track close to our 2018-19 budget numbers/goals, despite increased travel costs. The board will review and approve the 2019-20 budget during the February board meeting.

### **Transform Culture of Fencing Leadership and Governance**

Safe Sport is a top priority; we anticipate a number of policy changes over the next several

months as the U.S. Center for Safe Sport and the USOC make adjustments. Communicating with clubs on proactive policies and new education requirements will be key in order to ensure compliance.

The Board of Directors will review and discuss succession planning and other governance issues during the February board meeting.

**Refine Organizational Structure of Fencing in the US**

The National Office will work with the Divisions Resource Team on compliance issues and expectations for divisions as we move towards the next quad.



## Appendix C

### **Tournament Committee Meeting Minutes Meeting Minutes – February 15, 2019**

#### **Members Present:**

Brandon Rochelle, Chair  
David Blake  
Meredith Delgado  
Maggie Dull  
Alan Geller  
Andrey Geva  
Cody Mattern  
Laurie Schiller  
Brenda Waddoups

#### **Members Absent:** Nikki Franke

**Liaisons:** Donald Alperstein on behalf of Jeff Salmon - board liaison, and on behalf of Anne Crocket - RC liaison

**Staff Liaison:** Christine Simmons

#### **Guests:**

Dan Mott  
Kate Reisinger

#### **Meeting notes:**

The committee convened for its yearly in person meeting in Denver, CO, during Junior Olympics. The following items were addressed:

#### **Two day epee format classification event**

The two day epee format continues to cause significant issues in scheduling, especially the second day that is adding a significant number of hours to our tournament days. Options were discussed including a deeper cut out of the classification side second day pools, or elimination.

*The committee agreed to move forward with elimination of the classification event beginning in the 2019-2020 season.*

The number of byes and promotions were also discussed for both men's and women's epee. A final determination of the formation language will be made available prior to publishing the athlete packets for the 2019-2020 season.

#### **Maximum DE field size of 256**

The committee discussed various tournament concerns about growth and athlete performance in larger DE field sizes, along with a proposal to limit all national tournaments to a maximum of 256 fencers promoted after pools.

*Beginning in the 2019-2020, season the committee has approved limited all DE field sizes to a maximum of 256 people for national events. The athlete packets and handbooks will be updated accordingly for all event formats at national events.*

### **Y14/Y12 event formats at Summer Nationals**

The committee discussed recommendations for either tightening the qualification paths for Y12/Y14 or instituting a cut after pools at Summer Nationals 2020.

*A 20% cut will be put into place for Y12/Y14 for Summer Nationals 2020.*

### **Seeding principles with FIE points**

A proposal was presented by the national office to remove the FIE top 32 preference in Junior/Div I non-championship competitions and only use rolling points that already capture FIE designated events.

*The committee approved using rolling points only as the seeding principle for July Challenge 2019 with the athlete packet to be updated prior to the opening of registration.*

### **Event Combinations for March**

The national office requested an update to the March NAC event combinations to drop Div III and team and replace with Div II. The new combo would be Y10/12/14 and Div II.

*The committee approved the new event mix for the March NAC of Y10/12/14 and Division II. The national office will also provide a report on the April NAC Division III numbers and viability.*

### **Eligibility for DV2/3 after higher classification earned**

The committee discussed issues with fencers who qualify for Division II/III Summer Nationals, but later earn a higher classification that makes them ineligible. Due to the current wording of the Athlete Handbook section 2.2.4, those fencers are still allowed to compete regardless of when the qualification is earned. Since regional events now serve as a qualification path, fencers could potentially earn qualification as early as August for Summer Nationals the next July. Further, the committee has fielded many concerns that those who are classification ineligible should not be allowed to compete.

*Beginning in the 2019-2020 season, the classification of a fencer at the time of registration for Summer Nationals will be used for determining eligibility. An exception will be made for fencers earning C ratings at a Division III division qualifier. The Athlete Handbook for next season will be updated to reflect the new language.*

### **Ratings decay**

In last year's meeting, a proposal was made to decay A and B ratings faster than four years but the committee did not have time to come to consensus. The committee continued the discussion and will submit a board action prior to the July board meeting if needed.

**Additional committee updates prior to the February in person meeting:**

An emergency meeting of the committee was held at the December NAC to address the women's epee field size when there were not enough competitors to hold the classification event.

The national office presented and the committee approved a new team exhibition format for the April NAC to consist of three members: a male fencer, a female fencer, and a wheelchair fencer. It has been approved as an exhibition format.

The committee received an update on recognizing collegiate club individual events similar to the high school club options currently available. As a trial, the committee approved and has made known a concern about needing referee compliance with SafeSport at these events.

A subgroup of the tournament committee has been formed to create a local and regional best practices manual for tournament operations at those tournament levels.

Respectfully submitted,  
Brandon Rochelle  
Tournament Committee  
Chair