



**U.S. Biathlon Association, Board of Directors Meeting  
10:00 A.M. July 20, 2021  
Meeting Minutes, Submitted by Art Stegen, Secretary**

**I. Call to Order**

Bill Alfond opened the Zoom virtual meeting at 10:00 A.M. with a video presentation of the 2020-21 season's highlights.

**II. Roll Call**

Members of the Board of Directors joining the online video meeting were: Bill Alfond, Bob Hall, Art Stegen, Phyllis Jalbert, Hap Brakeley, Sarah Konrad, Susan Miller, Brian Noyes, Dexter Payne, Jerry Baltzell, Sean Doherty, Kelly Kjorlien, and Jake Brown. Also joining were CEO/President Max Cobb, Sara Studebaker-Hall, Lowell Bailey, Tim Burke, Preston Noon, Danika Frisbie, Tom Kelly, Courtney Harkins, and Laura Peeters. The members online represented a quorum.

**III. Opening Remarks**

Bob Hall welcomed the members and thanked them for joining the meeting. In his opening remarks he thanked Max Cobb and Sara Studebaker Hall for the Annual Report, which had been distributed to the Board of Directors. He mentioned that the USOPC is playing "money ball" and noted that biathlon has 36 opportunities for an Olympic medal whereas Hockey has only two. He explained that the Annual Report has a "fundraising sense". Bill Alfond added that seeing the Chinese video emphasized a "Green Village" for their upcoming Winter Games and also thanked the staff for the excellent report. Bob asked for approval of the previous meeting's minutes, and they were approved. He asked Max Cobb to give the Chairman's report.

**IV. Chairman's Report**

Max began his report by mentioning the opening of the year-late Summer Games in Japan and that the Winter Games in China would quickly follow. He indicated that there would be concerns about China and a challenge to the freedom of expression and potential threats of detention. This would be a potential problem for social media users and that the USOPC is currently preparing information about those concerns. Currently China is indicating that no foreign spectators will have access and that the athletes will be isolated. He indicated that the USOPC is in good financial health and would be providing more information following the Summer Olympic Games in Japan. Max asked Lowell Bailey to give his report and would continue his report following the staff reports.

Lowell had prepared a written report which he reviewed with the Directors. This report summarized the previous season and plans for the coming season that started with a training camp at Lake Placid and then moved to Bend, Oregon. During the Lake

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Placid camp, the team worked with shooting coach Matt Emmons and focused on shooting fundamentals, while the camp at Bend centered on skiing. June and July training camps were taking place at Lake Placid and is the first time that the athletes were using the newly developed 30-point shooting range and paved roller ski loops. Two roller ski World Cup and IBU Cup races were planned for Jericho, Vermont with an additional three races to be held at Soldier Hollow, Utah at the end of October. These races were to be used for selecting the rosters for the opening World Cup and IBU Cup races for the 2021-22 Olympic Season. For most of September the team will be training in central Europe.

Lowell announced the hiring of a new Assistant Coach, Dana Hatton. Joining the staff, her duties will be to help the National Team based in Lake Placid and to assist the Junior National Team during training camps. Her presence will be a great benefit to the National Team athletes who live and train in Lake Placid.

He explained that a USOPC grant will be used to construct cold-test facilities in Lake Placid. When completed it will allow the testing of ammunition and rifle barrels for accuracy at colder temperatures, something that was previously problematic and inconvenient. It will provide the ability to diagnose and fix rifle and ammunition issues early and improve the number of testing to a wider group of athletes.

He told the directors that the Association had worked on exemptions for our foreign coaches for in-person attendance of their training. The Covid virus had prevented them from entering the United States, however approval and concomitant consulate appointments and stamps were obtained and as of the June training camp, their presence with the athletes will go forward. He ended his report by emphasizing that as the 2022 Olympic Games approaches, each training camp day is important and that it has been valuable to get the athletes back in a group training environment because teamwork and peer competition is critical to both team and individual success.

Tim Burke followed with the Development report by saying that loosening restrictions of the pandemic has allowed programs to return to some normalcy and that there is anticipation of full development of training and racing programs. This includes regional racing, Youth and Junior World Championships trials, the IBU Junior Cup and the World Junior Championships at Soldier Hollow, Utah. The first Junior National team training camp was held in June at Lake Placid, the first since the start of the pandemic. He emphasized the importance of the new facility at Lake Placid and the opportunities it presents for young athletes to have interaction with seniors. He concluded by saying that great thought has been given to extending and continuing the progress, and at a faster pace with constant attention to the strengths and weakness in the key areas for success.

Max complemented Lowell and Tim for their reports and efforts, and spoke about the "Sustained Competitive Excellence", a "Program Sketch" that is in development. It will provide ideas, planning and guidance to sustaining progress towards continued success. After giving an IBU update he asked Sara Studebaker Hall to give the report on operations.

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Sara summarized her written report saying that she had spent a week at the office with the entire administrative staff. They had begun work on updating the Hall of Fame and organizing file storage. She reported that at the end of the fiscal year in June the Annual Fund drive had overachieved the goal at \$57,555 and the number of donors had improved by 30%. A new Club Certification was being developed that would provide better guidance for development and ensure compliance with SafeSport and general sport safety procedures. She was working on a Board and Foundation trip to see a World Cup competition for which details would be available soon. She also announced that a new sponsor, Reign Energy Drink would be filming the National team training at the end of the National Team Camp.

### **V. Committee Reports**

Lowell Bailey gave the ICC report indicating the National team nominations which were provided in the documentation for the meeting. There were no discretionary decisions and objective criteria was followed. Two women had achieved pre-qualified status for the Olympic Games with two remaining and will be decided at the 2022 World Cups and January 2022 races. He asked for a motion to approve the ICC nominations and teams, and the motion was approved.

Bob Hall again reported from the previous meeting that 6 new members had joined the Foundation and that all present members renewed their membership. He was encouraging Foundation members to attend a planned trip to the World Cup at Antholz, Italy for January 20-23, 2022.

Hap Brakeley, Tom Kelly and Courtney Harkins gave a social media presentation indicating the importance of its role in media awareness and sponsorship. Hap announced that Maloja has renewed their sponsorship through 2026.

Brian Noyes and Phyllis Jalbert reviewed the financial status to date. The proposed budget provided showed that total assets and liabilities were in harmony and a spreadsheet of income and expense was provided for the Directors review. Phyllis asked the board to approve three actions, approval of the unaudited results of the 2020-21 fiscal year end and to approve the 2021-22 budget, a vote to approve in concept the 3% net operating income approach which had been discussed, and to authorize the repayment of athlete prize money as soon as cash flows permit. Each action was approved.

Dexter Payne gave a report on the Governance/Bylaws proposed changes that were necessary and reviewed in the previous meeting. He announced that there will be a 60-day comment period with a vote scheduled for approval for October 16, 2021. He noted that a copy of the changes discussed in the previous meeting and noted that a redlined By-Laws document provided to the Directors meeting package, are mandated by the USOPC.

## **VI. Athletes' Report**

Kelly Kjollien and Jake Brown reviewed a presentation to the Directors that included an update on the current initiatives by the Athlete Representatives, the results from an athlete sustainability survey, a review of the 2020 letter to the Board of Directors and the Athlete Agreement update. Their current initiatives are to communicate clear expectations for Athlete Reps, follow up on initiatives from 2020 athlete letter, formalize a process for athletes to bring issues to athlete reps, establish better communication of athlete issues to staff, and formalize the Athlete Agreement.

Results from the survey were discussed with the staff in June with the key points being self-funding and sharing feedback relating to strategy with the Board of Directors. The review of the 2020 letter to the Directors indicated that the athletes sense positive changes with the survey and recent townhall meeting provided opportunity for the athletes to reflect on progress and identify opportunities for improvement. The report emphasized again that the vision from 2020 athlete letter is to provide "a new normal, one that prioritizes robust financial health as a cornerstone of our team's mission" because athletes feel that they bear the consequences of financial instability. The survey indicated that the areas where athletes saw greatest improvement in 2020-2021 were filling international start positions and athlete involvement but were still looking for improvement in transparency and communication, and the financial health of the Association.

Regarding the Athlete Agreement, they explained that goal is keep the 2020 athlete letter in focus and to keep on working on increased transparency and communication between the athletes and staff that will continue the professional growth of the team. The current timeline for finalization is to continue to receive athlete input with discussion to reach agreement via an athlete townhall meeting and to begin discussion with the staff to develop the document towards finalization.

## **VII. Adjournment**

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for October 16, 2021, at Soldier Hollow, Utah. The meeting was adjourned into Executive Session at 12:50 PM.