



**U.S. Biathlon Association, Board of Directors Meeting  
09:00 A.M. 21 July, 2020  
Meeting Minutes, Submitted by Art Stegen, Secretary**

**I. Call to Order**

Bob Hall called the video conference meeting to order at 09:00 A.M.

**II. Roll Call**

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

**III. Opening Remarks**

Bob Hall welcomed the members and thanked them for joining the conference at the early timeframe. He recognized Sara Studebaker Hall for arranging the video conference and the staff for their efforts during the ongoing disruptions of the COVID-19 requirements. He then suggested a revision to the agenda, putting the athlete's report as the first item in light of the recent letter expressing concerns of the athletes sent to the Board of Directors. Bill Alfond thanked the staff for the abundant briefing materials forwarded in advance of the meeting.

**IV. Athletes' Report**

Haley Stewart began with an update with the election process for the primary and alternate representatives to the Athletes' Advisory Council for the next quadrennial. She indicated that it will be a challenge due to the small pool of qualified athletes with only 5 men and 2 women meeting the criteria. She indicated that opportunities to expand the pool are being explored. She explained that the election cycle is synchronized with the Summer Olympic Games cycle and the Athletes' Advisory Council is a two-year term. Haley reviewed the planned election and reviewed response of an athletes' survey. Twenty-one national team athletes were invited to respond with 67% participation. Major issues that were identified included on-going concerns of better communication and engagement and those which were identified in the recent athletes' letter distributed to the Board of Directors.

Haley asked Sean Doherty to review the issues contained in the letter. Sean explained that the letter was unanimously supported by all the National Team members and all the active senior athletes who represented the USBA internationally in 2019-2020, a total of 18 athletes. Summarizing the letter he explained that the current

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pandemic has forced many to contemplate their future as professional athletes under the persistent problems of financial insecurity. As indicated in the letter, athletes view USBA's poor financial health as a major contributor to their insecurity. He outlined the key issues addressed in the letter and encouraged the Board of Directors to help find ways to limit self-pay requirements, to increase developmental support for athlete careers through athlete assistance and accessibility to resources, making availability and providing knowledge of resources that may improve financial security. He also addressed the issue of the USBA's organizational functions and decision making which should be more transparent. As suggested by the letter, Sean mentioned athletes feel they are at the bottom of the organizational hierarchy but feel central to its purpose. He also indicated that athletes are very willing to assist in improving all possibilities towards reducing their anxiety.

Following Sean's comments, Bob Hall thanked him and indicated that the issues brought forward in the letter were not something that are easily or immediately solved, but that the Board of Directors would take the issues seriously. Extensive discussion and important comments followed. A motion was made to form a working group or committee to address the athletes' concerns, however after additional discussion about how such a group should be comprised, staff or Board members, the motion was withdrawn. Many of the Board members felt this should be a staff-driven effort.

### **V. CEO Report**

With the help of the distributed pre-conference materials which were also presented on-line, Max Cobb summarized the information that indicated improved communication, team participation and revision to the selection criteria due to the canceled August event at Jericho. A motion to approve the changes in the criteria was made and approved. A motion was also made to approve the ICC junior criteria and was approved.

Max gave an update of the USOPC and IBU. He asked Dexter Payne to explain how the rewrite of USOPC By-Laws may impact USBA with the need to rewrite its By-Law to remain in compliance. Dexter explained that current pending legislation would require an increase to 33% athlete representation on the NGB board of directors and committees and that it may require changes of the criteria for athlete representation. Max indicated that IBU will begin reviews NGB governance. He pointed out that USBA still has a vacancy on the Board of Directors.

### **VI. Financial Report**

Brian Noyes reviewed the previously distributed budget indicating that it was balanced but without much flexibility. He suggested that there must be a larger surplus and emergency fund for unexpected shortfall of \$500,000 built into the future budgets. He opened discussion about how best to use the PPP funds of \$140,000, such as paying down debt, however a decision would be determined in the near future. A motion was made to approve the budget and was approved.

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Chair of the Audit Committee, Susan Miller explained that a new firm has been contracted for the audit and that there is not yet a complete report. Thus far the main concerns expressed are the large dependency on the USOPC and the need for increased sponsorship. She indicated that management costs are under 15% but there needs to be greater prioritization to reducing the deficiencies of athlete support.

Bob Hall reviewed his efforts with the Foundation Board and was working to increase membership. He told the members that the podcasts and other efforts were helpful and are getting good responses from the current and potential members.

Hap Brakeley gave an update about sponsorship saying that there were currently three proposals with additional targets. Larger and traditional sponsorships are limited due to the current environment and that Alllyn Michalek is continuing to work towards finding potential resources.

### **VII. Strategic Plan**

Due to time restraints a revision, discussion and approval of the Strategic Plan will be delayed to a future date.

### **VIII. Adjournment**

Prior to adjournment a motion to approve the previous meetings minutes was approved. The next meeting, which will be in conjunction with the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. Biathlon Association and was tentatively scheduled for Boston, November 6-7, 2020. The meeting was adjourned into Executive Session at 11:33 AM.