

Minutes of the US Rowing Board of Directors Meeting

June 18, 2016

Present: Erin O’Connell, Kris Thorsness, Gary Caldwell, Dan Herbert, Joe Manion, Sohier Hall, Bill Donoho, Meghan O’Leary (via telephone), Jamie Redman, Scott Gault and David Banks

Absent: Jim Dietz (unexcused), Al Acosta (resigned), Dan Newman (unexcused)

The Board convened at 8:00 a.m.

High Performance Committee (HPC) Discussion: HP Director Curtis Jordan, and HPC co-chairs Christine Collins and Bruce Ibbetson, were in attendance to discuss various matters regarding the High Performance Committee. Glen Merry and Curtis Jordan gave an overview of the evolution and functions of the HP committee, its relation to the USRowing board and the involvement of the National Rowing Foundation (NRF). Increased cooperation between USRowing and the NRF has created an environment that better addresses the core mission of supporting those boats with the best chance of success in international competition.

A major challenge for the future is to obtain large corporate sponsorship(s), as this environment has changed in recent years and will require different approaches. The gap between college and elite level rowing is also an important focus, in order identify athletes with potential for being productive on national teams and find ways to help them to develop, such as encouraging further development of high performance clubs to offer opportunities for high level training and competition. The makeup of the HP committee was also discussed. While the number of members seems appropriate at this time, it is important to ensure that important constituencies/competencies are represented.

Looking toward the next quadrennial, all current coaches’ contracts have been renewed.

April 2016 Olympic Team Trials (Sarasota, Fla.): Glenn Merry reported on the excellent NBC coverage and the quality venue. He also reported that \$130k was given to trials boat classes in the form of athlete prize money, direct athlete support (DAS), and some portion of training and travel support grants. Another \$38k was used for referees and USRowing staff travel and accommodations.

Rio credentials: 11 credentials have been issued—Doctor, Physical Therapist, Team Leader, plus 8 coaches. Working with USOC to provide venue access via day passes for additional coaching staff.

Gender Identity Policy: The board reviewed and discussed the proposed policy regarding gender identity. In challenges to a competitor’s identity, the burden of proof lies upon the person making the challenge. These rules will not apply to trials for national teams or trials, which are governed by FISA rules. Moved by Dan Herbert as amended per Gary Caldwell to add a reference to the IRA, in addition to NCAA; seconded by Kris Thorsness. **Vote:** unanimously approved.

AAC update: Jamie Redman reported that the USOC has created a position to coordinate the relationship between college sport and the Olympic postfolio. SafeSport is establishing a clearinghouse for misconduct issues. An upcoming effort is to increase paralympic/adaptive athlete inclusion on the AAC, to address unique adaptive issues.

Quarterly update by CEO:

Olympics: Glenn Merry first reported on Rio preparation, security and post-Games health monitoring.

Budget: The first 5 months this year have been exceptional: \$150k above budget and membership is running well above goals.

Branding: The managing editor is working with staff to put new branding initiatives into action, including moving to a new photo site with potential for a revenue stream to the Association.

Collegiate division: Operations went very well in the first season. Participants report positive experiences, and sponsorship efforts have begun. Contract renewal for 3 years was moved by Dan Herbert and seconded by Bill Donoho. **Vote:** 8 aye, Gary Caldwell abstained (conflict), Scott Gault was out of the room and did not vote.

Learn to row day was extremely successful

LA 2024: Paris Lake parks department talking with USRowing to develop new club(s) aimed at bringing rowing to the local (largely Hispanic) community. Starting to collect climate and other data to put together venue package. College dormitories nearby.

Event czar: The prior target has withdrawn for personal reasons. Staff are re-launching the search, but there is concern about the depth of candidate field in the rowing world. May look outside rowing for event management specialists.

Referee corps: Glenn Merry reported that staff are looking at specialized training/certification in especially land based roles, e.g., control commission, and are working to standardize training materials. Communication piece is going out to the referee corps to discuss upcoming changes in the referee committee. After discussion, a working group of Glenn Merry, Gary Caldwell, Joe Manion and Kris Thorsness was appointed to address several referee related issues that have been brought to the Board's attention recently.

Youth Invitational Nationals: Glenn Merry reported that this was a heavily subscribed event with 1814 athletes from 175 teams. Weather problems cut into practice and racing schedules, and required cancellation of repechages. The graduation ceremony was very popular. As a result of concerns expressed by participants, planning documents for Club and Master's nationals will be revisited, and changes will be implemented for future Youth regattas.

FISA Agenda 2020: The February 2017 FISA Congress is upcoming. The IOC looking at changing schedules, diversity, global interest and gender equity. Moreover, rowing venues are extremely expensive (over \$100,000,000) and TV watching/ticket sales are limited, so there are economic pressures. In the long term, we may see decreases in athlete numbers and/or events.

Other business/update:

Glenn updated the board on current status of pending grievances and legal actions.

Adjourn: Bill Donoho moved to adjourn and Kris Thorsness seconded; unanimously approved at 4:35 p.m.

Upcoming:

July 25th: 3pm eastern/noon pacific

August 29th: 3pm eastern/noon pacific **September 17th**: **Q3** Board of Directors meeting – teleconference. Time TBD