



**USA Ultimate Board Minutes
January 24-25, 2015
The Penrose House, Colorado Springs, CO**

Saturday, January 24, 2015

President Mike Payne calls meeting to order 8:10 AM MT, Saturday January 24, 2015.

Board Members Present In-Person*:

Mike Payne* – President, At-Large (Appointed) Representative
Kathy Hendrickson – Treasurer, Mid-Atlantic Region Representative
DeAnna Ball – Secretary, At-Large Representative
Henry Thorne – At-Large Representative
Stephen Hubbard – Southwest Region Representative
Ness Fajardo* – Athlete Representative
Brian Garcia* – Athlete Representative
Val Belmonte – At-Large (Independent) Representative
Michael Eck – At-Large (Independent) Representative
Mary-Clare Brennan – At-Large (Appointed) Representative
Josh Seamon – At-Large Representative

Board Members Present via Teleconference:

Kevin Minderhout* – At-Large Representative

USA Ultimate Staff Present:

Dr. Tom Crawford – CEO
Julia Echterhoff Lee – Director, Finance and Development
Ethan Taylor-Pierce – Manager, Finance and Administration
Will Deaver – Managing Director, Competition and Athlete Programs
Ty Krajec – Manager, Competition and Athlete Programs (College)
Byron Hicks – Manager, Events
Mike Lovinguth – Manager, Education and Youth Programs
Sarah Powers – Coordinator, Youth and Education Programs
Conner Maloney – Manager, Competition and Athlete Programs (Youth)
David Raflo – Manager, Events
Ernest Toney – Manager, Competition and Athlete Programs (Club)
Andy Lee – Director, Marketing and Communications
Matthew Bourland – Manager, New Media
Stacey Waldrup – Manager, Communications and Publication
Melanie Byrd - Director, Membership and Sport Development
Rebecca Simeone – Manager, Membership and Sport Development



Ryan Gorman – Manager, Membership and Sport Development
Josh Murphy – Manager, Membership and Sport Development

Introduction

Presented by Mike Payne and Tom Crawford

- New board members and new USA Ultimate staff were introduced and welcomed.
 - Rob Rauch was introduced; President of the World Flying Disc Federation.
 - Summary of the reception held January 23 was presented; two USOC guests presenting.
 - Positive and encouraging feedback from the USOC.
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Board Member Responsibilities

Presented by DeAnna Ball

- Reviewed the newly implemented Board Handbook.
 - Reviewed Board use of Gmail accounts.
 - Walked through Google Drive – to house shared files.
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Guest Speaker

Kelly Skinner, Team Leader, Sport Performance at United States Olympic Committee

How to be a good NGB

- “We’re glad/proud to have USA Ultimate HQ in Colorado Springs.”
- Congratulations about being recognized by USOC; brutal process.
- Olympic light is now looking at “you.”
- What is successful, where other NGBs have tripped; USOC wants USA Ultimate to succeed.

5 Pillars – Leadership, Planning, Consistency and Continuity, Service, Results

LEADERSHIP

- Empowered professional staff is critical.
- Policy Board (active 100% of the time; closely associated with staff) sets strategy direction, raises funds to support the plan.
- Passion! – let go of where you came from; it’s about the greater good. The current group likely won’t be around when we become an Olympic sport.
- Volunteers are important.

PLANNING



- Top priority
- Four-year rolling plans; can see the future, but know what needs to happen now.
- Long-term thinking, short-term horizon.
 - Adjustment time.
 - Time to celebrate.
 - Minimize the dust, move into action.
- USA Ultimate's six-year plan – 80-90 things in total; form committees
- Accountability - Pick the right people and the right staff to help.

CONSISTENCY and CONTINUITY

- The shiny objects pillar.
- Temptation can derail progress.
- Don't be rigid, but maintain discipline.

SERVICE

- "Blessed are those who are flexible because they will never get out of shape."
- Focus on doing things the right way.
- Set and communicate.

RESULTS

- Organization must be outcome focus, but can't be end goal.
- Sustaining growth is very challenging.
- Field of play results good; but when a sport becomes an Olympic sport, the rest of the world catches up.

2014 Financial Report

Presented by Kathy Hendrickson

- Total income and expenses were very close to budget; this budget was administered very carefully for 2014. Audit and Ethics committee reviews the report closely.
- Membership revenue is around 60%; this is similar to other NGBs.
- One-time event memberships at -18.7% is a good shift; more are becoming regular members.
- Overall membership increased 7.4%.
- In 2014 USA Ultimate invested funds in US Olympic Endowment's pooled investment fund. USA Ultimate's Reserve Policy requires at least 30% of that year's budget be maintained in liquid investments; prepare for the unexpected.
- Operating Reserve for 2015 is larger due to 17% increase in budget.
- The Investment Working Group will create a written investment policy in 2015.



2015 Budget Adjustment

Presented by Kathy Hendrickson

- Congratulations to USA Ultimate staff on a successful move to Colorado Springs.
- Expenditures were close to what was budgeted, but there were more expenses than originally budgeted in 2015 for the move, due to temporary housing costs that were not covered as expected. No further expenses will be incurred beyond the additional request.
- Requested 2015 budget adjustment - \$16,500.

Josh Seamon moves to approve the 2105 budget adjustment. Henry Thorne seconds the motion.

Motion passes with a vote of 12-0-0.

CEO Update on 2014 Programs

Presented by Tom Crawford

Highlights

- Another great year, in terms of strategic plan.
- Acquired USOC membership, with their support as we drive to becoming an Olympic sport.
- Successful move to Colorado Springs, CO.
- Established and implemented the USA Ultimate Foundation.
- Over the last five years, we have doubled the staff and the budget.
- Our national teams have continued to have international success.
- We have seen double-digit growth in our youth membership. YCC (USA Ultimate's biggest event) participation up 40%. There are more high school teams than club teams.
- We have our own new technology platform.
- The relationship with ESPN relationship extended
- Girl's Ultimate Movement (GUM) – inspiring US Open presentation. We are going to get more girls involved.
- Staff is working on completing operating manuals for greater efficiency.
- USA Ultimate has issued 48 equipment grants to help new teams.

Membership

- Youth up 11%; Overall up 7%; Organization membership from 5 to 21%



- Jewish Community Center (JCC) provided marketing to all 500+ JCCs in the US regarding our Organizational Membership, Learn to Play, and Equipment Grant programs.
- Boy Scouts of America (BSA) - we are in preliminary talks with the “Scout Strong” initiative to include information about USA Ultimate on the BSA website, including the ability for their “Order of the Arrow” Honor scouts to access Learn to Play Kits to use in meetings & camps.
- Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) - signed up for organizational memberships, and will deliver kits to 10 of their networks.
- Coach member growth is a strategic priority.
- While youth is trending up, goal is to retain youth members and transition them to college.
- Three new affiliate programs were added.
- Play it Forward: helped over 1000 kids in 2015 with financial support obtained from donations.
- Five-phase approach for youth/high school; State “phasing” development structure provides roadmap for USAU and state organizers to understand where they are in their development, where they are headed, and the steps required to get there (e.g. events, staffing, outreach programs).
- Looking at new approaches to continue growing the college division.
- Need to grow youth and college to see significant growth for the club division.
- US National teams won 12 medals in Italy; USA Ultimate will continue to select teams to be the best in the world.
- Currently there are 63 Learn to Play programs across the country.

Marketing & Communications

- CBS national news ran two features during the US Open, one airing on the CBS Evening News, and the other on CBS This Morning
- Retained Davis Sports Marketing.
- Approved multiple discs with Discraft.
- Revenue from the sales of official event merchandise up 12%.
- Broadcast 59 complete games with broadcast partners. 51% of viewers are watching men’s games over women’s games; 38% of viewers are watching mixed over women’s games.
- Broadcasts resulted in Four SportsCenter Top 10 clips: 2 in men, 2 in women.

Administration & Finance

- Great new staff hired.
- USOC Endowment is a great opportunity to increase investment revenue.



Working Lunch: CEO overview of 2015 Operating Plan (Tom, Directors)

Presented by Tom Crawford

Membership & Sport Development

- Grow affiliate program while we build a more robust national infrastructure.
- Play It Forward
- Safe Sport

Competition & Athlete Programs

- Continue growing youth; YCC is now a three-day event.
- Revise coaching development to align with athlete development model.
- Integrate observer training into education programs structure.
- Shifting the timing of TCT; effort with the Competition Working Group and Athletes councils.
- The US Open is expanding.
- Working with WFDF SOTG at competitive events.
- Improving event quality; event manager certification program.
- Selection of US National coaches and teams.

Marketing & Communications

- Beginning work on a mobile app.
- Expanding broadcast coverage.
- With early venue selection for big events, developing local sponsorship relationships.
- Assisting in positioning Ultimate for Olympics.

Administrative & Finance

- Developing and providing resource materials for affiliates to help them become 501(c)(3) organizations.
- Finishing up the move to Colorado Springs.
- Messaging and branding for USA Ultimate Foundation.

Building our National Infrastructure: State Chapters & Affiliates

Presented by Melanie Deaver

- To grow significantly, USA Ultimate needs to build a national infrastructure similar to that of most other NGBs; need a way to deliver more programming to more places.
- Currently there are nine USA Ultimate affiliates.



- Affiliates are on the ground running USA Ultimate programs and services. USA Ultimate provides insurance, event quality measures, and other benefits.
- Average size of affiliates is 600 members.
- Some affiliates are 501(c)(3) organizations.

Recommendation: State chapter model that ensures local partners are robust enough to deliver our services.

- In this model, USA Ultimate would oversee and empower chapters.
- The support provided could include insurance, educational materials, grants, support staff, hiring help, and USA Ultimate programs.
- Begin with a pilot program, and receive feedback.

Current challenges

- Resistance from existing organizations
- Being perceived as “big brother.”
- Immaturity of our existing structure/local organizations (very few could step up now and be a chapter)
- Currently some affiliates are getting services for free, and even profiting from it.
- There is no consistency behind what the current affiliates are doing.

Board approves staff moving forward with research on the chapter model via a straw poll vote of **12-0-0**.

USA Ultimate Foundation: Research findings/launch/plan (Henry, Mariah Cunnick, Julia)

Presented by Henry and Mariah Cunnick

Market Research Findings:

Donor Motivation and Barriers

Methodology

14 interviews

Focus groups with same 14 people

Online Survey

Interviews

Consistent motivation –

1. Expanding local opportunities (13 of 15); SOTG instilled in youth, desire to see sport grow.



2. Opportunities for girls/women in sport (10 of 15); understand that mixed is unique, more girls/women grows the sport.
3. Investing at all levels (increased visibility/promotion/elite play).

Barriers –

1. Counterculture feel of Ultimate not jiving with NGB. “Geeks in Colorado”; don’t want “UPA all over again”. Want a community feel.
2. Lack of awareness/connection to NGB. “I’m not sure USAU has a face yet.”
3. Donor fatigue. Not unique to any foundation.
4. Lack of contact information. Can’t find people from the past.
5. Lack of resources among USAU members. Would be willing to give time, but not necessarily money.

Agreement on opportunities/barriers; barriers are not unique to this foundation. Participants wanted to continue the conversation – spoke about “WE,” not “us” and “they.” Consistent in how they spoke about Ultimate – joy, emotions about SOTG. Emotional connectivity would be a big piece – needing to feel connected moving forward.

Focus Groups

Didn’t learn a ton of new information. Value was being together and connecting. Feel good process.

Online Survey

Broader community

100 members – target groups, and based on likeliness to respond

49% response rate

- Youth expansion
- Women/girls opportunities
- Disadvantage youth
- Willingness to support Foundation (high response rate reflects this)

Guest Speaker: NGB expectations/governance

Benita Fitzgerald Mosely, USOC Chief Of Organizational Excellence

Guidelines for NGB Boards

Duty of Obedience

Duty of Care

Duty of Loyalty



- Moving from Organizing Board to Governing Board
- Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards (Robert T Ingram, Board Source)
- Ten Governing Standards for NGBs
- Grounds for Removal of Board Members
- Process for Removal of Board Members

From USOC, this is important education of NGBs, so that everyone is on the same page while governing NGBs.

Ultimate is like a rocket ship but we need to ensure the ship is headed in the right direction via governance, input from USOC vets like Kae Rader and Benita is very helpful.

Guest Speaker: Olympic Opportunity/Campaign/Challenges/WFDF expectations

Rob Rauch, Board President, WFDF

Disc Sports Globally

- Fred Morrison – first disc, 1950's
- Guts 1958
- Wham-O bought rights from Fred
- 1970's – different elements developed
- "Everyone has thrown a Frisbee."
- 7.5 million players world wide

WFDF

- International sports federation for world governance of flying disc.
- Ultimate, Beach, Golf, Freestyle, Guts, Overall events
- 62 member associations
- Recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), and it is a member of the Association of Recognized International Federations (ARISF).
- Also a member of SportAccord and the International World Games Association (IWGA)
- A signatory to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) code.

Mission: Advance all flying disc sports globally while protecting and promoting the spirit of the game.

- WFDF began 1985



- First World Games were held in 2001.
- 145,000 members
- Dues/sanctioning – main sources of income
- IOC Stipend
- 1 full time staffer, half time staffer (event manager)

WFDF Congress:

WFDF Board of Directors – functional not a policy board

New strategic plan 2015-2018; goals will cover what is needed for Olympic entry, despite not explicitly stated.

IOC

- ASOIF, AIOWF, ARISF, ANOC
- SportAccord (formerly GAISF) represents all sport.
- IWGA
- WADA

IOC Olympic Movement

- The IF must have 50 country members for recognition; June 2015 official.
- To become a medal sport, must have male participants in at least 75 countries on 4 continents and female participants in at least 40 countries on 3 continents.
- Must have events on a world level - World championships.
- Requirement as a physical (not mechanical) sport.

IOC Agenda 2020

- Change from sport based to event based
- Fosters gender equality/mixed gender team events.
- Host use of existing facilities.

Mutual Objectives with USA Ultimate

- Olympics
- Growth of the sport
- Acceptance of Ultimate as a healthy lifestyle choice

Impediments of getting in to the Olympics

- WFDF members – hope to gain 17 more countries by 2017.
- Limited broadcast exposure – need broadcast coverage for WUGC 2016.
- Lack of non-endemic sponsors – advice based on work USAU does.



Mutual Objectives and Issues – Long Term

- Must own all variations (grass, beach, indoor, Paralympics).
- One NGB per sport: confederation in US with disc golf and other disciplines (by 2016).
- Anti-doping and USADA – attention to this will increase.
- Support Mixed Division as our entry to the Olympic Program.

Culture

- SOTG
- Self-direction/ownership
- Gender equity
- “Frisbee-community”
- Countercultural aspects
- FUN

The Board approved supporting WFDF in the Olympic movement by a straw poll vote of **12-0-0**.

Meeting adjourned for the day at 5:00PM MT.

Sunday, January 25, 2015

President Mike Payne calls meeting to order 8:15 AM MT, Sunday January 25, 2014.

Executive Session (Mike, Tom)

Election Results

Mike Payne elected President (2015-2016 term)
 DeAnna Ball elected Vice President (2015-2016 term)
 Brian Garcia elected Treasurer (2015 term)
 Josh Seamon elected Secretary (2015 term)

Committees & Working Groups (Mike)

Group type	Description	2015 Groups	Chair	Members
Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Named in bylaws as standing committees • No non-standing 	• Audit and Ethics Committee ^{BC,B}	• Brian Garcia*	• Kathy Hendrickson, Henry Thorne
		• Governance and Board Development Committee ^{BC,B}	• Josh Seamon	• Val Belmonte, DeAnna Ball, Mike



	committees			Payne*
	• 20% athlete requirement applies	• Nominating Committee ^{BC,B}	• Ness Fajardo*	• Josh Seamon, Stephen Hubbard
		• Judicial Committee ^{BC,B}	• Kathy Hendrickson	• Stephen Hubbard, Ness Fajardo*
		• SOaR Committee ^{BC,B}	• Stephen Hubbard	• Kevin Minderhout*, Henry Thorne
Working Groups	• Permanent groups that are not Committees	• Compensation Working Group ^{BC,B}	• Mike Payne	• DeAnna Ball, Brian Garcia
		• Investment Working Group ^{BC, B}	• Brian Garcia	• Kathy Hendrickson, Henry Thorne, Mike Eck
		• Marketing and Sponsorship Working Group ^{SC,B}	• Mary-Clare Brennan	• Ness Fajardo, Kevin Minderhout, Val Belmonte, Mike Eck
		• Competition Working Group Liaison	• Val Belmonte	
Task Forces	• Temporary groups convened by the Board and/or staff as needed	• Policy Repository Project TF	• Josh Seamon	• Mike Payne
		• Strategic Planning (rolling, BHAGS)	• Mike Payne	

*Elite athlete representatives on Committees (20% required by bylaws)

Proposals

Conduct Policy Revisions

Present by Mike Kinsella (on the phone)

General Discussion Points:

- Document changes needed to match updated bylaws approved in the spring of 2014.
- Main thing that changed is how parties may appeal decisions: In the past, it was to the full Board of Directors. Main option now is a binding arbitration via AAA.
- Secondary change – definition of make up of Judicial Committee. Revision allows a hearing committee to be convened, which could include non-board participants. This would help create a hearing committee when a quick judgment is needed. (ie. Sunday of a tournament).
- Rollout of process is needed.



<u>Pros Discussed:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arbitration via AAA is a common practice among amateur sports.• It will allow speed when needed.	<u>Cons Discussed:</u>
<u>Overall Rationale:</u> <p>Standardized appeal process that matches other amateur sports. Allows for hearing committees be convened swiftly.</p>	

Kathy Hendrickson moves to approve the Conduct Policy Revisions. Henry Thorne seconds the motion.

Motion passes with a vote of 11-0-1. Val Belmonte absent.

Gender Equity Ombudsgroup

Proposal was not brought forth to the board. Policy was prematurely placed on the meeting agenda. For explanation, refer to [Mike Payne's statement](#).

Closing thoughts

The meeting was closed with feedback from each board member.

Meeting adjourned at 11:05AM MT.