

Underwater Society of America

2022 Board of Governors' Meeting

1 October 2022
11am-12:30pm CST

The Board of Governors' is composed of the voting representative from each active USOA Council or Club, Society Officers, the Elected Directors and Regional Vice Presidents. (USOA By-laws Section 3.2.1)

1. Call to Order (5 minutes)
 - a. Attendees: Karen Thullner, Diana Madden, Mike Gower, Wendy Okafuji, Ray Tucker, Carol Rose, Scott Turgeon, Diego Rodriguez, Timmy Burke
 - b. Establish quorum: 28 present or proxy out of 61 members
2. Approval of Minutes from 2021 Meeting (5 minutes): MS Approved
3. Approval of Agenda: MS Approved
4. Reports (20 minutes)
 - a. Artificial Reefs – Position Vacant. Scott will check with Katy Cummins to see if she would be appropriate.
 - b. North American Catch Records – Phil Lamm
 - i. No requests were received for any potential record(s) in 2021.
 - ii. Carol will request the records list from Phil to post on the USOA site.
 - c. CMAS – Karen Thullner
 - i. Worked with CMAS on Finswimming at the World Cup.
 - ii. Have become more in tune with CMAS Americas (with Diego's help)
 - iii. Potentially next year KT can attend the CMAS general assembly
 - d. Historian – Charlie Matthews: not present
 - i. Carol has put together a history of some of the sports. We need to add to the website. Also working on a history of USOA.
 - e. IBSRC – Terry Maas
 - f. Insurance - Wendy Okafuji
 - i. We have two new policies - separate for UWH & UWR.
 - ii. Coverage is expanded \$2M/\$4M GL plus SAM
 - iii. Combined premiums are lower than previous policy.
 - iv. Separate event insurance for Spear. Coverage is available for freshwater events but not open ocean. We are still waiting for confirmation that we need this for Nationals.
 - g. Legislation – Anne Giesecke: not present.
 - i. Some of the things in her report that she is working: Ocean pollution, estuaries, floodplains, Drift Net & Bycatch Reduction Act, NOAA & marine sanctuaries.
 - ii. Per Carol, mid-California sanctuary is being worked on.
 - iii. Per Ray, Lake Ontario sanctuary is in NOAA's court right now. Hoping for designation next spring.

- h. Membership - Position Vacant. 705 members currently. Increased membership due in large part to sport directors being diligent about ensuring all nationals participants are USOA members.
 - i. NOGI – Mike Gower
 - i. Presentations & banquet coming up in November at DEMA. Expecting 200 attendees.
 - ii. Election is coming to an end and results are forthcoming.
 - iii. Board meeting usually occurs at the show, but it has been replaced by a video conference in December.
 - j. Ocean Pals – Carol Rose: No contest in recent years due to BTS being cancelled. Hoping for contest starting in May 2023 with awards in 2024. Proposing that CenCal take responsibility for West Coast contest. Theme needs to be selected by the spring before the fall semester starts.
 - k. Regional Vice Presidents
 - i. NE – Charlie Matthews: Not present
 - ii. SE – Bill VanDeman: Not present. Scott reported:
 - 1. FL State Championships were scheduled for next weekend but cancelled due to hurricane.
 - iii. Midwest – Phil Lamm: Asked to get the catch records on the website
 - iv. NW – Carol Rose: Report is on the website. Currently California is split in two regions, suggested that going forward we move California entirely to the NW.
 - v. SW – Mike McGuire: Working toward bringing Freshwater Spearfishing Worlds under CMAS. The next Freshwater spear tournament in May will not be under CMAS.
 - l. Safety – Position Vacant
 - m. Scuba - Tom Leard: not present
 - n. Technical / Shipwrecks – Ray Tucker: No updates
 - o. Women’s Divers Hall of Fame – Carol Rose: New member induction for 3 classes will be at DEMA. Tickets available at wdhof.org.
5. Officers’ Reports:
- a. Vice President: Thank you to the EC & Sport Directors. USOA is coming along :)
 - b. Secretary: Proposed Finswimming Nationals has been postponed to next year.
 - c. Treasurer: USOA is in a good position financially after struggling for a few years.
 - d. President:
 - i. Documents/policies have been updated with update from the EC, sport directors and our legal counsel.
 - ii. Sport nationals have happened for all sports except Fin.
 - iii. Finswimming went to TWG.
 - iv. Thank you Diego for all of your help with translations & CMAS liaison.
6. Old Business: (10 Minutes)
- a. Harassment Policy - Finalized and on website
 - b. Sexual Abuse & Molestation Prevention Policy - Finalized and on website
 - c. Concussion Protocol - Finalized and on website

- d. Pandemic Procedures going forward: Following local protocol.
- e. NY Lake Ontario Marine Sanctuary: See notes above.
- 7. New Business: (10 Minutes)
 - a. Sports Commission meeting held prior to this meeting
 - i. Reviewed Standardized Competitive Rule updates
 - 1. Harmonized language
 - 2. Bring Nationals events under Sanctioned Events
 - ii. USOA covering World uniforms

Adjournment:

Underwater Society of America

2021 Board of Governors' Meeting

20 March 2021
11am-12:30pm CST

The Board of Governors' is comprised of the voting representative from each active USOA Council or Club, Society Officers, the Elected Directors and Regional Vice Presidents. (USOA By-laws Section 3.2.1)

8. Call to Order (5 minutes)
 - a. Club and Council Registration Karen Thullner, Charlie Matthews, Anne G, Michael Gower, Mitchell Belanger, Ray Tucker, Wendy Okafuji, Carol Rose, Michael Riccitelli, Diego Rodriguez, Bill Van Deman, Josh Brouwer, Kurt Allen, Joe Fernandez, Scott Turgeon, Eliana Bedoya, James Sears
 - b. Establish quorum
9. Approval of Minutes from 2020 Meeting (5 minutes) Minutes approved.
10. Approval of Agenda: Addition in New Business. Agenda approved.
11. Reports (20 minutes)
 - a. Artificial Reefs – Position Vacant
 - b. Catch Records – Phil Lamm
 - i. No requests were received for any potential record(s) in 2020.
 - c. CMAS – Karen Thullner
 - d. Historian – Charlie Matthews
 - e. IBSRC – Terry Maas
 - f. Insurance - Wendy Okafuji
 - i. USOA offers a group insurance to over 40 pools or entities
 - ii. Basic fee is \$600 with each/any additions \$400
 - iii. Insurance coverage is basic slip and fall. It does NOT cover participants, making the signed waivers critical.
 - g. Legislation – Anne Giesecke
 - i. USOA Legislative Report 2021
 - ii. 116th Congress (2019-2020) and 117th Congress (2021-2022).
 - iii. H.R.544 — 117th Congress (2021-2022)
 1. To prohibit drilling in the Arctic Ocean.
 - iv. S.140 — 117th Congress (2021-2022)
 1. A bill to improve data collection and monitoring of the Great Lakes, oceans, bays, estuaries, and coasts, and for other purposes.
 - v. H.R.59 — 117th Congress (2021-2022)
 1. Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act
 - vi. H.Res.69 — 117th Congress (2021-2022)
 1. Expressing the need for the Federal Government to establish a national biodiversity strategy for protecting biodiversity for current and future generations.

- vii. 116th Congress (2019-2020)
 - 1. The subjects of the Bills are listed and the Bills for ocean management that became law are listed.
 - a. Subjects of the bills included: Great Lakes, West Coast, Florida, Chesapeake Bay, Arctic, Fisheries, Threatened and Endangered Species, Acidification, Algal Blooms, Plastic, Shore Line Protection, Climate Action, Energy, Green New Deal, Coast Guard, NOAA Operations, Sea Grant, Support for Navigation Tools, UN 30 % Ocean Protections by 2030, Law of the Sea
- viii. Public Law No: 116-271 (12/31/2020) Coordinated Ocean Observations and Research Act of 2020
 - 1. This bill reauthorizes through FY2025 and revises the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System (IOOS), which is a network of federal and regional entities that provide information about the nation's coasts, oceans, and Great Lakes, as well as new tools and forecasts to improve safety, enhance the economy, and protect the environment.
- ix. Public Law No: 116-274 (12/31/2020) Great Lakes Environmental Sensitivity Index Act of 2020
 - 1. This bill requires the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to update at least once every seven years its environmental sensitivity index products for each coastal area of the Great Lakes. An environmental sensitivity index product is a map or similar tool that is utilized to identify sensitive shoreline resources prior to an oil spill event.
- x. Public Law No: 116-223 (12/18/2020) Digital Coast Act
 - 1. NOAA must focus on filling data needs and gaps for critical coastal management issues and support continued improvement in existing efforts to coordinate the acquisition and integration of key data sets needed for coastal management.
- xi. Public Law No: 116-289 (01/05/2021) Young Fishermen's Development Act
 - 1. This bill directs the National Sea Grant Office in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to establish a Young Fishermen's Development Grant Program to provide training, education, outreach, and technical assistance initiatives for young fishermen.
- xii. Public Law No: 116-221 (12/18/2020) National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act of 2020
- xiii. Public Law No: 116-224 (12/18/2020) Save Our Seas 2.0 Act
 - 1. This bill establishes requirements and incentives to reduce, recycle, and prevent marine debris (e.g., plastics), including requirements to establish a Marine Debris Response Trust Fund, a Marine Debris

Foundation, a Genius Prize for Save Our Seas Innovations, a strategy to improve waste management and recycling infrastructure, a Waste Management Revolving Fund for states, a Waste Management Infrastructure Grant program, a Drinking Water Infrastructure Grant program, a Wastewater Infrastructure Grant program, and a Trash-Free Water Grant program.

xiv. Public Law No: 116-340 (01/13/2021) **Direct Enhancement of Snapper Conservation and the Economy through Novel Devices Act of 2020 or the DESCEND Act of 2020**

1. This bill addresses the use of descending devices to release reef fish in the Gulf of Mexico. (A descending device is an instrument that will release fish at a depth sufficient for the fish to be able to recover from the effects of barotrauma.)
2. **International Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development** The Ocean we want for the Future we need by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (United Nations entity) The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC) and its partners are planning to launch for 2021-2030 an International Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. Achieving the targets of the Sustainable Development Goal 14 requires novel science-based solutions and their systematic transformation into informed policies and decisions. Such initiative would provide Member States and all relevant stakeholders with a framework for coordinating and consolidating the observations and research needed to achieve SDG14. A Decade of Ocean Science will help increase public awareness about the urgent need for new science and use of existing science to increase our understanding of the cumulative impacts affecting our oceans. The First World Ocean Assessment found that much of the ocean is now seriously degraded and many fear there has been a global failure to integrate scientific evidence into the sustainable management of our oceans. The entire process of developing and implementing the Decade will also help to build stronger cooperation between the different bodies responsible for ocean science while facilitating a faster and more effective delivery of knowledge to policy and decision-makers.
3. **The Key objectives of the Decade would be:** Stimulate a global partnership on the marine science requirements needed to support implementation of Agenda 2030; Understand the impacts of cumulative stressors and seek sustainable solutions for sustaining benefits from the ocean; Share knowledge and enhance interdisciplinary marine research capacities through the transfer of marine technology, leading to economic benefits for all Member States, particularly for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and

Least Developed Countries; Gain a better quantitative knowledge of ocean ecosystems and their contribution to society, through the whole ocean column, from the surface to the bottom; Map the ocean floor and its resources to support their sustainable management.
<https://oceanconference.un.org>

- h. Membership - Position Vacant
 - i. NOGI – Mike Gower
 - i. Carol Rose will be a recipient at the 2021 DEMA Show Las Vegas, Wednesday, November 10.
 - j. Ocean Pals – Carol Rose
 - i. The poster contest was canceled for 2020 and 2021
 - ii. The status for next year will be determined upon the hosting of BTS.
 - iii. Carol may do a regional poster contest as a potential replacement to the BTS contest.
 - iv. Florida Skindivers had a contest, but FSDA would like to continue the contest.
 - k. Regional Vice Presidents
 - i. NE – Charlie Matthews - May have some new spearfishing clubs.
 - ii. SE – Bill VanDeman
 - 1. This past year, SE regional activities were disrupted by COVID-19.
 - 2. Meets and National events were postponed and then canceled, including Skindiving Nationals which was supposed to be held on the East coast of Florida.
 - 3. The outlook for 2021 will be dependent on state and national guidelines for holding events.
 - iii. Midwest – Phil Lamm
 - iv. NW – Vacant
 - v. SW – Mike McGuire
 - l. Safety – Position Vacant
 - i. No incidents were reported in 2020
 - ii. USOA is working on a collaboration with the Divers Alert Network (DAN) for support in this area.
 - iii. An Incident Report form needs to be presented to the USOA Executive Committee for approval and then posted on the website.
 - m. Scuba Certifications - CMAS has indicated that NAUI may be able to assist.
 - n. Shipwrecks – Vacant
 - o. Women’s Divers Hall of Fame – Carol Rose
 - i. 2020 was the 20th Anniversary of the inception of WDHOA
 - ii. If anyone has a candidate for the Hall, go to website: whdof.org and see the prerequisites.
 - 1. Last year the WDHOA gave out over \$72,000 in scholarships
12. Officers’ Reports:
- a. Executive Vice President: No much has happened since October. There have been a number of questions regarding scuba certifications.
 - b. Secretary: No updates

- c. Treasurer: USOA general fund is positive. Mouthguards are still for sale.
 - i. UWH fund is about \$34,000; UWR fund is \$5000, Spearfishing is about \$3000. UWH Juniors fund still has about \$8,000.
 - ii. Next year, the general fund should have an additional \$5000.
- d. President:

13. Old Business: (10 Minutes)

- a. Dues Structure Proposal:
 - i. No changes are proposed. The USOA fees are \$20, with UWH Development Fund is \$10 and UWR Development Fund \$15.
 - 1. CenCal fees are collected and passed through to CenCal.
 - 2. Spearfishing has a national fee of \$30 per individual for the world team.
 - ii. Should there be a multi-year fee structure to ensure memberships over multiple years, i.e. 1 year, 2 year, 5 year, 10 year?
- b. Sexual Harassment Policy

14. New Business: (10 Minutes)

- a. COVID-19 Procedures
- b. Spearfishing Recommendation: The Sports Committee recommends to the Board of Governors and General Membership Meetings that Ryan Myers be denied membership until the costs of the Churchill Duplicate Trophy repaired have been recovered by the USOA from Ryan Myers and is validated by USOA National Spearfishing Director. Motion passed.
- c. Florida marine sanctuary is a potential template for the NY/Lake Ontario marine sanctuary (Ray is part of the committee working on this.)

Adjournment: