

# Minutes

## Annual Meeting of the USA Fencing Board of Directors

October 17, 2020 Via Teleconference

**Present:** Donald Alperstein, David Arias, Peter Burchard, Kat Holmes, Lorrie Marcil Holmes, Ann Marsh-Senic, Cody Mattern, Tasha Poissant, Daria Schneider, Adam Watson

**Absent:** Cliff Bayer, Alan Kidd, Jimmy Moody

**Guests:** Dan Berke, Vic Bianchini, Bob Bodor, Sam Cheris, Kris Ekeren, Melissa Jones, Richard Mayer, Dan Mott, Jim Neale, Kate Reisinger, Jeff Salmon, Christine Simmons, Chuck Wemple

### **I. Call to Order**

Remarks – Peter Burchard, President

Conflict of Interest announcement. No conflicts were announced.

### **II. Consent Agenda Items (Mr. Burchard)**

1. To approve the minutes from the October 6, 2020 meeting.

Second Mr. Mattern.  
Motion passed.

Mr. Neale appointed as Parliamentarian for this meeting.

### **III. New Business**

#### **DE&I Resource Team Update**

Ms. Schneider & Mr. Dyett provided an update on the DE&I Resource Team and their efforts. Add info from working session.

Mr. Dyett – share in excitement to get the meeting underway. Know that is a lot of interest and looking for best way to make a big impact for the organization.

**Motion (Ms. Holmes):** to create a task force to complete development of USA Fencing Leadership Academy along the lines of the memo attached (**Appendix A**). The task force should be authorized to further develop the curriculum, select the speakers and moderator and seek applications from interested individuals. The program shall begin as soon as possible and look towards completing its initial program year at the time of the 2021 Summer Nationals.

Second Ms. Schneider.  
Motion passed.

**Motion (Ms. Holmes):** to appoint the following members to the USA Fencing Leadership Academy task force:

Kat Holmes, athlete member;  
Sam Cheris, program developer;  
Board Member to be selected by the Board; and  
staff liaison to be chosen by the USA Fencing CEO

Second Mr. Watson.  
Motion passed with one abstention (Ms. Holmes).

**Motion (Mr. Alperstein, on behalf of the Division Resource Team):** The Board of Directors takes the following actions:

1. The Division Resource Team is hereby authorized to adopt minimum standards to be met by the bylaws of each USA Fencing Division and, in its discretion, to prescribe mandatory uniform provisions for inclusion in Division Bylaws; and
2. The Division Resource Team is directed to undertake a review of the bylaws of each USA Fencing Division to assure compliance with USA Fencing's Bylaws and the resolutions of its Board of Directors; to work with Divisions to obtain such compliance; and to refer to the Board of Directors for decertification or other remedial action any Division that declines, after reasonable efforts by the Division Resource Team, to assure such compliance.

**RATIONALE:** The Division Resource Team has determined that there is unwieldy inconsistency among the Divisions in how they are governed, as reflected in their respective bylaws. In many instances, Division bylaws are long outdated, and some Divisions have adopted bylaws that include provisions that are in direct conflict with USA Fencing's Bylaws (such as limiting or extending voting rights inconsistently with USA Fencing's voting rights). In other instances, Division bylaws have been crafted or applied to unfairly benefit or burden certain clubs, individuals, or other constituencies within the Division. At present, the DRT is unsure of its authority to require compliance with USA Fencing's own Bylaws and the policies embodied in the actions of its Board of Directors. The motion seeks to remedy this situation by allowing the DRT to prescribe certain practices to which all Divisions must adhere and, where latitude is extended to the Divisions, to assure that it is not abused to the detriment of USA Fencing or its members.

Second Ms. Holmes.  
Motion passed.

**Motion (Mr. Alperstein):** USA Fencing establishes the following procedures to be followed by the Hall of Fame Committee and the selection of Hall of Fame Candidates, beginning with the 2020-2021 membership year:

1. In its assessment of candidates who stand for election to the USA Fencing Hall of Fame, the Hall of Fame Committee shall consider the character and reputation of nominees along with their fencing accomplishments.
2. Before announcing candidates for election to the USA Fencing Hall of Fame, the Hall of Fame Committee shall forward the names and credentials of its selected nominees and any rationale for selection it deems pertinent to the Board of Directors, which shall confirm or reject the nominees by simple majority vote. The names and supporting materials shall be reported to the Board of Directors by the Hall of Fame Committee no later than February 1 of each calendar year, and the Board shall act thereon in sufficient time to include approved nominees on the annual election ballot.

**RATIONALE:** The Hall of Fame exists to acknowledge the best of USA Fencing and individuals of whom the organization is most proud. Those recognized by the Hall of Fame represent and reflect on the organization, and should therefore embody its values and ideals. Character is an important element of USA Fencing's identity and the image it seeks to project. It is therefore important that individuals selected to the Hall of Fame be persons of good repute. This is not to say they must be perfect or free of controversy. But members of the Hall should be individuals with whom the organization and its membership are proud to be associated.

Having the Board of Directors approve the nominations of the Hall of Fame Committee serves several purposes. Among these, it better assures the quality of candidates placed before the membership for election. It also relieves the Hall of Fame Committee of final accountability for selection and places it on the Board, which is ultimately responsible for the management of USA Fencing and for protecting its reputation. Further, Board approval recognizes that the role of committees is to assist the Board in discharging its duties, not relieving the Board of responsibility for actions taken in the name of USA Fencing. Nevertheless, it is anticipated the Committee will act diligently, and that approval of its recommendations will usually be routine. The suggested timing for the Hall of Fame Committee report to the Board allows consideration of candidates at the Winter Meeting, well before the Election Committee finalizes the ballot.

Second Mr. Watson.

Motion amended to read:

**Motion (Mr. Alperstein):** USA Fencing establishes the following procedures to be followed by the Hall of Fame Committee and the selection of Hall of Fame Candidates, beginning with the 2020-2021 membership year:

1. In its assessment of candidates who stand for election to the USA Fencing Hall of Fame, the Hall of Fame Committee shall consider the character and reputation of nominees along with their fencing accomplishments.
2. Before announcing candidates for election to the USA Fencing Hall of Fame, the Hall of Fame Committee shall forward the names and credentials of its selected nominees and any rationale for selection it deems pertinent to the Board

of Directors, which shall confirm or reject the nominees by simple majority vote. The names and supporting materials shall be reported to the Board of Directors by the Hall of Fame Committee no later than February 1 of each calendar year, and the Board shall act thereon in sufficient time to include approved nominees on the annual election ballot. **No nominee of the Hall of Fame Committee shall be rejected without first having been given an opportunity to address the Board of Directors.**

Motion passed.

**Motion (Ms. Holmes):** to approve the committee, resource team and working group appointments.

Second Mr. Mattern.

Motion passed.

**Motion (Mr. Mattern):** to approve the creation of the "Coaching Integration Working Group". The Coaching Integration Working Group members will be selected from the National Office staff by the Executive Director of USA Fencing and the United States Fencing Coaches Association selected by its President to explore options for integration models between US Fencing Coaches Association and USA Fencing in an effort to collaborate on coaching education needs for the sport of fencing. The Working Group will form and hold regular meetings to explore integration models of the two organizations and discuss the coaching needs of the sport and report back to the Board at the next in-person meeting, traditionally scheduled in February, on progress and or integration models it would like the board to provide feedback on or consider for adoption.

Rationale: The USFCA has been providing coaching education for a long time in the sport of Fencing. USA Fencing will need to own and drive new standards for coaching education as part of its duties as an NGB as part of its requirements in the near future with the NGB Compliance Standards recently approved by the USOPC. Integration conversations could leapfrog our coaching program forward, honor the service the USFCA has filled in our sport while also identifying and integrating the holistic needs for sports coaching that the USOPC and USA Fencing desire through programs like the American Development Model. The desire is to form a small working group to consider integration models that take advantage of the work both organizations are doing and propose options to the board for the integrated partnership for the development of coaching needs of Fencing in the United States.

Mr. Watson.

Motion passed.

#### **IV. Good and Welfare**

Mr. Burchard: Congratulations to Mr. Mattern who was re-elected to the USOPC's AAC leadership and to Ms. Schneider who was elected to the USOPC's Board of Directors.

#### **MOTION (Mr. Alperstein):**

WHEREAS: USA Fencing has been challenged by recent events of major significance, including a worldwide pandemic, focus on issues of social justice, and upheaval in the

world of recreational and Olympic sports; and

WHEREAS: These events have resulted in unprecedented disruption of financial and operational programs and planning; and

WHEREAS: USA Fencing's Chief Executive Officer and professional staff have demonstrated exemplary nimbleness, dedication and loyalty in the pursuit of USA Fencing's goals and in protecting its interests;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: The Board of Directors of USA Fencing hereby officially commends and acknowledges Kris Ekeren and her staff for their exemplary performance under extraordinary circumstances and conveys our heartfelt appreciation for their service to USA Fencing, its members and the sport we cherish.

Second Ms. Schneider.  
Motion passed.

#### **V. Recess to Executive Session**

**Motion (Mr. Mattern):** to recess to Executive Session.

Second Ms. Schneider.  
Motion passed.

#### **VI. Executive Session**

**Present:** Donald Alperstein, David Arias, Peter Burchard, Kat Holmes, Lorrie Marcil Holmes, Ann Marsh-Senic, Cody Mattern, Tasha Poissant, Daria Schneider, Adam Watson

**Absent:** Cliff Bayer, Alan Kidd, Jimmy Moody

**Guests:** Kris Ekeren, Melissa Jones, Jim Neale, Panel Chair 1, Panel Chair 2

The board appointed Lorrie Marcil Holmes as the board liaison to the USA Fencing Leadership Task Force.

The board voted to suspend the membership of Boris Vaksman through July 31, 2022. Prior to any reactivation of membership following the suspension, Mr. Vaksman must demonstrate fulfillment of certain additional requirements.

The board received an update on the status of a disciplinary panel.

Ms. Ekeren provided an update on SafeSport to the board.

The board received an update on a contract.

#### **VII. Recess**

**Motion (Mr. Alperstein):** to adjourn.  
No objection was heard.

**Appendix A**  
**USA FENCING**  
**LEADERSHIP ACADEMY**

**Mission:** To develop a diverse cadre of leaders of the future for an equitable and inclusive USA Fencing.

**Mechanism:** Monthly 3-hour moderated training session from September to June, with graduation at the Summer Nationals.

**Candidates:** Candidates proposed by the DEI group, the Board and the national office. Goal is to have a class diversified by age, race, religion and as many other elements as possible. Selection criteria will include ability to commit to attendance and participation in the entire program, interest in the governance of USA Fencing and current activity in the sport.

**Class size:** Start with 12 in order to allow active participation by all class members with session moderators in an interactive video format. Candidate will be responsible for familiarization with provided written documents before the relevant session.

**Sample Curriculum and presentation leaders:**

**September:** Short History of Fencing in the U.S., Review of documents governing fencing, including, e.g. Articles of incorporation, Bylaws, Athlete Handbook, Strategic Plan and Roberts Rules of Order. Introduction to the operations of USA Fencing led by USFA President, USFA CEO, Chair of AAC, head of DEI Task Force and someone involved in fencing for decades.

**October:** USA Fencing domestic events led by Senior Director of Sports Operations, Senior Events Manager and the Chair of the Tournament Committee.

**November:** Refereeing led by Chair of Referees' Commission (RC), Chair of RC Domestic Development, a National Coach and USA Fencing members of FIE Rules and Arbitrage Commission. It shall include discussion of Code of Ethics and procedure for handling breaches of the Code.

**December:** USA Fencing Finances led by CFO, Treasurer and the Director of Development and other members of Budget or Audit Committee.

**January:** International programs led by Senior Director of Sports Performance, a USOPC representative, a National Coach, Chair of RC International Development and Assignment and an International Team Manager.

**February:** USA Fencing hosted International Events, Senior Director of Sports Operations, USA Fencing Chief of Protocol and a DT president.

**March:** Ethics and Discipline, SafeSport and DEI led by Chair of Ethics committee, Chair of RC Ethics committee, Member of DEI group, USA Fencing SafeSport Coordinator and General Counsel.

**April:** Youth led by chair of Youth program and USA Fencing staff liaison for youth programming.

**May:** Veterans and Para-fencing programs led by USA Fencing's member of the FIE Veteran's

council, USA Fencing veterans' committee and Paralympic Committee.

June: Membership led by Director of Member Services, and heads of committees for clubs, high school, colleges and grass roots programming.

## 2020.21 USA Fencing Committee Appointments

***Committee appointees must be in compliance before being recognized as a committee member		
<b>Committee</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
<b>Audit</b>		
	Lorrie	Marcil
	Cliff	Bayer
<b>Chair</b>	Sam	Cheris
	Maria	Panyi
Athlete	Daria	Schneider
Athlete	Kat	Holmes
<b>Budget</b>		
	David	Arias
	Adam	Watson
Athlete	Jake	Hoyle
<b>Election</b>		
	Dan	Berke
	David	Hitchcock
	Michael	McTigue
	Susan	Belanich
Athlete	Anna	VanBrummen
Athlete	Eli	Dershwitz
Board Liaison	Daria	Schneider
Staff Liaison	Nicole	Jomantas
<b>Ethics</b>		
Chair/Board Liaison	Lorrie	Marcil
LRG	Trish	Brown
At Large	Valerie	Asher
Ind	TBD	
Athlete	Maya	Lawrence
Athlete	TBD	
Staff Liaison	Suzie	Riewald
<b>Nominating</b>		
Past President	Sam	Cheris
Independent	Alan	Kidd
Elite Coach/Club	Terrence	Lasker
Tournament Official	Molly	Hill
Athlete	Jimmy	Moody
Athlete	Kat	Holmes



<b>Committee</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
Ex Officio	Kris	Ekeren
<b>Committees of the Board</b>		
<b>Hall of Fame</b>		
Chair	Lee	Shelley
	Carla-Mae	Richards
	Doug	Nichols
	Jennifer	Oldham
Athlete	Cassandra	Bates
Athlete		
Staff Liaison	Jill	Grotzinger
Board Liaison	Adam	Watson
<b>International Relations</b>		
Chair	Sunil	Sabharwal
	Donald	Alperstein
	Don	Anthony
	Carl	Borack
	Sam	Cheris
	Rita	Comes
	Iana	Dakova
	Sada	Jacobson
	Greg	Massialas
	Ted	Li
	Jeremy	Summers
	Jennifer	Yamin
Athlete	James	Williams
Athlete	Daria	Schneider
Athlete	TBD	
Staff Liaison	Kate	Reisinger
Board Liaison	Lorrie	Marcil Holmes
<b>SEMI</b>		
	David	Blake
	Ron	Herman
	Al	Merritt
	Liz	Morey
	Brian	Rosen
	Irene	Edgerton
Chair	Kathy	Walters
	Alice	Kee
	Chuck	Alexander
Athlete	Leo	Curtis
Athlete	Jonathan	Yergler
Athlete	TBD	
Board Liaison	Donald	Alperstein

<b>Committee</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
Staff Liaison	Glen	Hollingsworth
RC Liaison	TBD	
<b>Tournament</b>		
Chair	Brandon	Rochelle
	David	Blake
	Maggie	Dull
	Meredith	Delgado
	Nikki	Franke
	Alan	Gellar
	Andrey	Geva
	Jeff	Salmon
Athlete	Cody	Mattern
Athlete	Cat	Bouwkamp
Athlete	TBD	
Athlete	TBD	
Board Liaison	Peter	Burchard
Staff Liaison	Dan	Mott
RC Liaison	Devin	Donnelly
<b>Veterans</b>		
Chair	Bill	Walker
	Valerie	Asher
	Vic	Bianchini
	David	Hitchcock
	Jude	Offerle
Ex Officio	Rita	Comes
Athlete	Kat	Holmes
Athlete	Adam	Maczik
Athlete		
Board Liaison	Ann	Marsh-Senic
Staff Liaison	Brandon	Dyett

<b>Resource Teams</b>		
<b>***Appointees must be in compliance before being recognized as a committee member</b>		
<b>Resource Team</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
<b>Club/Member Services</b>		
	Nathan	Anderson
	Fernando	Delgado
	Yitzy	Frankel
	Rob	Lichten
	Vickie	Miller
Athlete	Geoffrey	Loss
Athlete	Isis	Washington
Athlete		
Board Liaison	David	Arias
Staff	Bob	Bodor
<b>Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion</b>		
	Epiphany	Georges
	Terry	Hayes
	Race	Imboden
	Joe	Leonard
	Margaret	Lu
	Nzingha	Prescod
	Konate	Primus
	Richard	Torres
	Dawn	Wilson
Board Liaison	Daria	Schneider
Staff Liaison	Brandon	Dyett
<b>Divisions</b>		
Region 1	Dan	Berke
Region 2	Fernando	Delgado
Region 3	Dennis	Kolakowski
Region 4	Jennifer	Nollner
Region 5	David	Sierra
Region 6	Rich	Weiss
Athlete	Lewis	Weiss
Athlete	Rebecca	Chimahusky
Athlete	TBD	
Board Liaison	Donald	Alperstein
Staff	Bob	Bodor
	Christine	Simmons
<b>Marketing and Communications</b>		
	Richard	Adler

Resource Team	First Name	Last Name
	Mandy	Glidewell
	Anna	Jordan
	Tasha	Mattern
Athlete	Kat	Holmes
Athlete	Race	Imboden
Athlete	Kamali	Thompson
Athlete	Adam	Watson
Board Liaison	Alan	Kidd
Staff	Brandon	Dyett
	Nicole	Jomantas
<b>Paralympic Development</b>		
	Ginny	Boydston
	William	Murphy
	Sean	Shumate
	Gary	Vanderwege
	Mickey	Zeljkovich
Athlete	Leo	Curtis
Athlete	Gerard	Moreno
Athlete	Ellen	Geddes
Board Liaison	Daria	Schneider
Staff	Brandon	Dyett
<b>Safe Sport</b>		
	CJ	Callahan
	Sarah	Kaufman
	Lauri	Lewis
	Rich	Weiss
Athlete	Sada	Jacobson
Athlete	TBD	
Board Liaison	Cody	Mattern
Staff	Suzie	Riewald
RC Liaison	Susan	Borgos
<b>Sports Medicine</b>		
	Valerie	Asher
	Joe	Giovatto
	Jennifer	Krug
	Ronda	Peterson
Athlete	Kat	Holmes
Athlete	Kamali	Thompson
Board Liaison	Cody	Mattern
Staff	Jeremy	Summers
<b>Sports Performance</b>		
	Sam	Cheris

Resource Team	First Name	Last Name
	Iana	Dakova
	Buckie	Leach
	Daria	Schneider
Athlete	Maya	Lawrence
Athlete	Keeth	Smart
Board Liaison	Daria	Schneider
Staff	Kate	Reisinger
	Jeremy	Summers
<b>Youth Development</b>		
	Ina	Harizanova
	Brando	Messinese
	Mika'il	Sankofa
	Jennie	Salmon
Athlete	Adam	Maczik
Athlete	Adam	Watson
Board Liaison	David	Arias
Staff	Christine	Simmons
<b>Legal Resource Group</b>		
	Donald	Alperstein
	Victor	Bianchini
	Trish	Brown
	Sam	Cheris
	Paul	Levy
	Julio	Mazzoli
	Roger	Pierro
	Lew	Siegel
<b>USA Fencing Leadership Academy</b>		
	Sam	Cheris
	Kat	Holmes
Board Liaison	Lorrie	Marcil Holmes
Staff Liaison	Nicole	Jomantas
<b>USF Foundation</b>		
	Robert	Zagunis
Board Liaison	David	Arias
	Sam	Cheris
	Lianne	Merchant
	Don	Anthony
	Bob	Dow
	Bill	Walker
	Adam	Watson
Staff Liaison	Jill	Grotzinger