



**UNITED STATES CURLING ASSOCIATION**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**February 23, 2021**  
**Teleconference**

**APPROVED** May 1, 2021

1. **Call to Order** - Chair Courtney Schmidt calls the meeting to order at 8:00 ET, February 23, 2021.
2. **Appointment of Parliamentarian** – The Chair appoints Gordon Maclean as Parliamentarian.
3. **Roll call**  
**Board Members**  
**Present** – Jeff Annis, Garret Perry, Doug Potter, Roger Rowlett, Courtney Schmidt (Chair), Rob Shelton, Roger Smith, Alex Agre, Colin Huffman, Bill Stopera, Elizabeth Demers, Shane Coppola, Lynn LaRocca.  
**Absent** – Hawley MacLean.  
**Quorum** – 13 Board members being present and seven being required, we have a quorum.  
**Non-Board in Attendance**  
**Committee Members** – Charles Brown, Aileen Geving, Russ Lemcke, Rich Lepping, Leland Rich, Jennifer Stannard.  
**Staff/Non-Board Executives** – Jenny Biadasz, Eric Gleason, Gordon Maclean (recording), Jenna Martin, Steven O'Keefe, Jeff Plush (CEO), Ron Rossi (CFO), Tom Violette, Amy Wolf.  
**Guests** – None.
4. **Additions/changes to the Agenda** - None
5. **Discussion and Approval of Minutes** –  
November 12, 2020, USCA Board of Directors Meeting minutes were presented in Prism. Motion to accept the minutes as presented by LaRocca, seconded by Smith. Motion approved on a unanimous voice vote.
6. **Reports to Board:**
  - a. Chair
    - i. The chair notes that this is our first meeting using the Prism Portal. All of our important documents are now located in this portal, and that Prism provides a secure platform that will allow us to move away from the Dropbox system that we have used for many years.
    - ii. Notes that Ron Rossi is leaving us and expresses her appreciation of the work that he has done.
    - iii. Introduces Eric Gleason as Rossi's replacement and briefly describes his background.
    - iv. The chair expresses thanks to Jenna Martin for her work on the website renovation. The site is a significant improvement over what we had before, and it is much easier to find information, resolving a common complaint about the old site.
    - v. Met with the USWCA and was updated on their upcoming activity plans.
    - vi. In 2023 USA Curling will be going through the USOPC audit compliance process. Because of the compliance changes required by the USOPC, the list of compliance documentation has

- been expanded. As a result, we will start a "Governance 3.0" process to review our bylaws to remove items considered to be policies and procedures from that document and ensure that our governance structure is consistent with current recommendations. An ad-hoc committee consisting of Charlie Brown, Russ Lemcke, Alex Agre, Gordon Maclean, Doug Potter, Marc Beyer, and Jeff Plush has been formed. Dave Patterson will be leading the group (USOPC) Expert on NGB governance structure. The first meeting of the group will be on March 8.
- b. CEO
    - i. Notes that this is his first anniversary as CEO of the USCA.
    - ii. The launch of Sport:80 did not go well. We will be taking the next few weeks to meet with some member clubs who are willing to act as a beta-test group to help fix the situation and move forward with the platform
    - iii. The WCF Women's World Championship was canceled on February 8<sup>th</sup>. There may be an effort to move that event into the Calgary "bubble" for a later date, possibly during the time frame of our own National Championships. The same holds with the Mixed Doubles Championship. We will work through this and find the best solution for our championships and our athletes' health and safety.
    - iv. The new website is up and congratulates Jenna on her efforts in that regard. Jeff Annis will be helping with the backfilling of historical information onto the site. The Elmer Freitag Hall of Fame induction ceremony was held virtually on the website.
    - v. Question about Sport:80 info being sent out to member clubs regarding timing, logistics, and compliance. There is no actual "timeline," but the restart process should begin within a few weeks. This time we will be much more communicative and rollout in stages and be less reliant on the software provider in terms of the rollout information and guidance.
  - c. CFO – FY21 Budget vs. Actual
    - i. The current CFO presents the Budget vs. Actual summary for the current fiscal year.
    - ii. Excess Paralympic grant funds from (calendar year) 2020 will have to be returned to the USOPC.
    - iii. The Olympic grant budget (2021 fiscal year) has a substantial surplus due to event cancellations that we have had. Based on our expectations for event expenses, we anticipate a \$55,000 excess at the end of the fiscal year. That money will have to be returned to USOPC. That number could be higher.
    - iv. USCA budget has a current deficit of \$167,000. We are currently projecting that we are on track to exceed our \$184,000 budgeted deficit. Depending on the national's competition bubble situation, we should stay within the budgeted deficit.
    - v. Question regarding level sponsorship commitment as in the past. We are seeing less involvement from sponsors in general. Toyota will be active for us.
    - vi. Dues revenue is at about \$150,000, with about 60 clubs reported. We know that 37 clubs have been closed, leaving 100 clubs unaccounted for. We estimate that there may be another \$100,000 in dues that may come in.
    - vii. The CEO and Chair both note that Steve and Shane have been very diligent in reaching out to and working with clubs during this challenging year.
- 7. Committees**
- a. Nominating/Governance (Lemcke)
    - i. Board Seats – There are five Member Elected board seats with terms expiring in November. Two of those seats will be combined (Alaska/MoPac with Washington) and the Dakota/MACA/At-Large, GNCC, and Wisconsin seats. One Board Elected seat becomes open

- in May. The committee is starting the process of working with states and regions to get nominees. It is noted that with a smaller Board, we are coming up short in some areas of expertise. We are starting the process of developing a new expertise grid to see where we are at and what areas of expertise need to be covered.
- ii. Non-Board Committee openings are also opening. Those openings this year are two WCF representatives, one seat in Nom/Gov, one in Judicial, and one in Ethics. Director only committees, two in A/F and two in HR.
  - iii. Governance 3.0 - our bylaws are inefficient. We have had 13 bylaw amendments since 2014. We have a lot of policies and procedures in procedures in the bylaws that need to be removed.
- b. AAC (Stopera)
- i. We have been put in a very difficult spot in terms of planning and coaching. There has been much effort and numerous conversations on how to get back on the ice and training. We will be looking to see what will happen with the Mixed Doubles and Women's Worlds' rescheduling.
  - ii. Colin Huffman has taken over the USOPC-AAC position from Dean Gemmell.
  - iii. Huffman reports on his first USOPC-AAC meeting and onboarding of the new reps from other sports.
- c. Ethics (Godar)
- i. New Whistle-Blower Policy (Appendix A) is presented for adoption by the Board. Godar describes the details of the policy and its definitions. This policy does not cover criminal activity and SafeSport areas.
  - ii. The concurrent Whistle-Blower Investigation Guidelines document was presented.
  - iii. Chair thanks the committee members for their work.
  - iv. Motion to adopt the policy by Annis, seconded by Potter. Motion approved by a unanimous voice vote.
- d. Diversity and Inclusion (Huffman)
- i. The committee has been split into three subcommittees, BIPOC, Adaptive, and LGTQIA+. Each subcommittee and the whole committee have been very active. They are developing implicit bias training materials, drafting and editing a comprehensive wheelchair and adaptive curler resource guide, and reviewing and updating the USCA Transgender Policy.
  - ii. Have added members to the committee to increase committee diversity.
- e. WCF (Stannard)
- i. Men's Worlds is set for early April in the Calgary bubble.
  - ii. Women's Worlds was canceled due to the local health authority's decision not to support the event.
  - iii. WCF Steward Group met regarding common concerns of long-term curling nations. With so many nations new to curling there are a variety of perspectives. The WCF General Secretary is receptive to meeting with the CEO group of the Steward Group.
  - iv. Women's Worlds Championship organizers had been given little to no indication that there was a potential problem with this event. Concerns were raised as to why there was no backup plan, communications were last minute, and there was no indication earlier that there could be a problem. There has been a perception that the WCF has been reluctant to share negative news. Board comments regarding the lack of backup plans from the WCF.
  - v. Concern regarding the process of the date selection for a possible rescheduled event in the Calgary bubble.
  - vi. WCF Annual Congress will be held in September in St. Petersburg.

f. Human Resources (Stopera/Smith)

- i. The committee has been working on solutions to problems we have had regarding employee benefits as we move out of the Stevens Point offices. The employee benefits plan has been expensive, wasn't covering employees in areas where they are working remotely. We need a plan that can cover the entire country. The committee explored the PEO (Professional Employer Organization) marketplace. We are moving our benefits and payroll management to Insperity. They provide Fortune 500 level benefits. Insperity takes care of the benefit plan management, payroll processing, compliance, and mandatory notifications at a lower cost than we have had. Insperity also provides recruitment and management opportunities. This move should be beneficial for our new CFO moving forward.

8. **Old Business –**

Lepping voiced expressions of appreciation for what the CEO has been able to accomplish during the past year, given the circumstances. There is a need for financial support from some of our curlers who can provide it. We are going into an Olympic cycle at a disadvantage and looking at building a financial foundation for curling in the US and exploring what other NGBs have done.

9. **New Business –** None.

10. **Key Items of Agreement –** Whistle-Blower Policy and Governance 3.0 process.

11. **Next Board Meeting –** May 11, 2021, 8:00 pm Eastern Time, Teleconference.

12. **Adjournment –** Motion by Potter 9:18 pm ET

## Appendix A

## UNITED STATES CURLING ASSOCIATION

### Policy 21-01

### Whistle-Blower Policy

Adopted February 23, 2021



### 1. PURPOSE

This Whistle-Blower Policy (the “Policy”) is intended to support a strong culture of integrity and ethical conduct at the USA Curling by encouraging, valuing, and protecting good faith reporting by athletes, coaches, directors, officers, employees, members, committee members, task force members, hearing panel members, and volunteers (“Affiliated Individuals”) of USA Curling of any alleged violation of any applicable law or policy or any potential ethics issue.

The freedom to speak up means being able to raise concerns in whatever way is most comfortable and effective and feeling free to cooperate in investigations that follow. It also means that USA Curling has zero tolerance for retaliation of any kind against people who speak up in good faith.

### 2. VIOLATIONS COVERED BY THIS POLICY

This Policy is for use where there may be a violation of:

- any applicable law, rule or regulation
- any USA Curling policy
- principles of ethics
- accounting or financial practices (e.g., fraud)

If an Affiliated Individual is unsure about whether a matter might be a policy violation or is unsure about their reporting responsibility for a particular type of matter, please start by reviewing the particular policy involved. USA Curling staff should refer to [www.usacurling.org](http://www.usacurling.org) or reach out to the Chair of the Ethics Committee for more information.

Also, keep in mind that some violations **must** be reported. Specifically, please be familiar with the requirements in the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Policy, the Code of Ethics and Fiduciary Responsibility, and the Code of Conduct. And of course, if an Affiliated Individual suspects any criminal activity against a person or property, they should report this directly to law enforcement immediately.

**Nothing in this Policy changes or replaces any mandatory reporting obligations under the SafeSport Code for the Olympic and Paralympic Movements – talk to the Director of Growth & Development if you have any questions about those obligations.**

### 3. REPORTING

#### No Retaliation

USA Curling has an open-door policy and encourages Affiliated Individuals to share questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints in the way and to the people with which they are most comfortable. This means Affiliated Individuals have options for how to report any concern about a potential ethical, policy, financial or legal violation.

USA Curling has zero tolerance for retaliation against people who make good faith reports of potential ethical, policy, financial or legal violations, or who cooperate with investigations of those reports. That means no Affiliated Individual may threaten, harass, discriminate against, or take any negative employment (where applicable) or participation related action (e.g., discharge, demotion, suspension, non-assignment, negative review) on that basis.

Any such retaliation can be reported as described above in the same way as any other policy violation. It will be treated as a violation of this Policy and USA Curling's Code of Conduct and may lead to serious consequences including, and not limited to, the termination of employment or participation for anyone involved in retaliation.

#### How to Report

Affiliated Individuals may always report to an USA Curling staff member or their supervisor (if applicable). Or, the Affiliated Individual can make a report to the Chief Financial Officer ("CFO"). These are people who can also discuss the concern and help make sure it is addressed. Affiliated Individuals can also make reports directly to the Chair of Ethics Committee.

Please remember that as a reporter, Affiliated Individuals do not need to (and should not) investigate the matter of concern or determine fault or how to fix it. The Affiliated Individual does his or her part by making it known so the right people can take action. Investigations or of reports are discussed below.

#### Acting in Good Faith

Just as we need to make sure that no one in our community is fearful of speaking up, we also need to make sure that no one in our community is fearful about false reports that might harm them.

With that in mind, anyone reporting a perceived ethical, policy, financial, or legal violation must be acting in good faith and have some basis for believing there may be a violation. Anyone that makes a false report knowing that it is false or that it has no basis is violating this Policy and the USA Curling Code of Conduct in the same way as someone retaliating against a good faith reporter. Such a violation may itself be reported under this Policy and it may lead to serious consequences, including termination of employment or participation.

#### **4. INVESTIGATION**

Once a report is made in one of the ways described above, the person receiving the report is responsible for getting it to the person who can best address the concern, based on the matter reported and in keeping with other appropriate policies. In all cases, USA Curling is committed to ensuring that no good faith report goes unheard or ignored.

The CFO is responsible for coordinating among these people so that reporters can be confident that reported concerns get to the people best positioned to act on them. The CFO will report regularly to the USA Curling Ethics Committee on the existence and resolution of all reports made under this Policy.

#### **5. CONFIDENTIALITY**

In many cases, a reported matter will need investigation in order to reach the right resolution. Cooperation as a reporter or otherwise may be very helpful and much appreciated. Reports will be treated as confidentially as possible; some information may have to be disclosed to certain parties in order to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law, and to provide accused individuals access to due process.

If a matter is reported anonymously and the reporter chooses to remain anonymous as it is investigated, USA Curling will respect that to the best of its ability.

#### **6. FOLLOW UP**

If an Affiliated Individual reports an alleged violation of ethics, USA Curling policy, or applicable laws, USA Curling will report back to the Affiliated Individual on the progress and investigation results as appropriate. And of course, the Affiliated Individual is always free to follow up to learn more from the person they reported to. Confidentiality and legal obligations may affect the details available.

[NGB Policy should refer to the applicable other NGB policies and/or Bylaws to note that follow ups to Speak Up complaints will be handled under the auspices of the appropriate policy (Conflicts of Interest, Code of Conduct, etc) and that those policies have appropriate investigation procedures and appropriate checks to ensure that conflicted individuals are not involved in the decision making process.]

If the investigation of a report that was made in good faith is not to the satisfaction of the reporter, then the reporter may report that, too.

Thank you for helping to ensure that USA Curling is a safe zone for speaking up in good faith on important matters.

As adopted by the USCA Board of Directors on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of February 2021 via teleconference.