

United States Curling Association, Inc.

**Special Meeting of the Executive Committee
February 13, 2003**

Minutes

Present

Jack McNelly, chair
Grayland Cousins
Phill Drobnick
Bob Fenson
Pam Finch
Warren Lowe
Chris Moore
Ann Swisshelm Silver
Mark Swandby
Jane Thompson

Not present

Peggy Hatch
Richard Maskel
Donna Purkey

Also present

Andy Anderson, chair, USCA Finance Committee
David Garber, Executive Director
Rick Patzke, Director of Communications
Ed Lukowich, Athlete Development Director

1. **Call to order.** McNelly called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.
2. **Team Selection, 2003 Continental Cup.** McNelly asked for discussion on the subject of Team Selection for the 2003 Continental Cup. Patzke noted the views of the event owners, the Canadian Curling Association and the World Curling Federation, regarding the importance of television marketing related selection criteria for this event. Lowe and Anderson reported similar discussions with the CCA and WCF. Extensive discussion. **Motion by Moore, Silver second, to select the 2003 USCA National Champions as 2003 USA Continental Cup participants; if a selected team cannot participate, the runner-up will be selected; and third, that the USCA president appoint a Task Force to develop a proposal for selections after 2003 to be presented to the Executive Committee in the Fall of 2003. Approved.**
3. **Governance Task Force report.** Anderson reported that an initial proposal will be distributed to directors prior to the April board meeting. The Task Force will research the structure of other organizations. Cousins and Swandby reported on the governance proposal that the Wisconsin State Curling Association intends to have placed on the agenda of the 2003 Annual Members Meeting. McNelly suggested that the report be published on the USCA Web Site.
4. **Drug Testing, World Seniors.** Silver reported. The USCA was notified in January that the World Senior Championships will be subject to drug testing. As a result, a conference call was held by Silver,

including the Senior World teams and Garber, on drug testing education. No action was taken, except that Garber was directed to initiate the “IOC waiver” request process if asked by a senior athlete.

5. **Drug testing, Utica, venue.** Silver expressed concern that Utica Nationals drug testing was currently scheduled to take place at a hotel, rather than at the venue itself. The latter is normal protocol, as is a one-hour time limit between “tagging” by the athlete escort and the deadline to report to the testing room. After discussing several options: **Motion by Thompson, Finch second, that the Executive Committee direct the Utica Committee that appropriate arrangements be made to ensure that the drug testing at the Utica Nationals can be held on site, in the permanent club bathroom facilities. Tabled to agenda item number six, below.**

6. **Utica Nationals TV: expenses and status report.** Patzke reported that it looks like the USCA will end up spending much of or all of the \$20,000 previously committed to the World Curling Federation towards the incremental costs for venue preparation for the NBC television production. Patzke reviewed the extensive preparations being made by the host site, as well as current concerns such as parking, and the impact of the TV production on other aspects of the event. McNelly related that he had reviewed a letter received from the Host, and that the TV production, coupled with other factors, had a severe impact on available parking plus the Host’s workload. **The motion tabled in agenda item number five, above, was removed from the table on Lowe’s motion. The motion was then approved.**

7. **Funding publicity.** Thompson reviewed a request made by an athlete to review the longstanding USCA practice of disclosing specific athlete and team funding in the *U.S. Curling News* and elsewhere. After an extensive discussion of the pros, cons and principles involved, McNelly requested that the AAC review the issue and offer a recommendation to the board or Executive Committee. McNelly also requested Garber to inquire as to the policy of the USOC and the practices of other NGBs.

Moore left the meeting.

8. **Funding, 2003 summary.**

Thompson reviewed the 2003 National Team Funding program. The committee faced some timing challenges due to the November date for final approval of the USOC budget and final notification of the USCA Performance Funding Grant. The Elite Programs funding sub-committees engaged in several reviews and allocations of dollars (in September, November, December and February). The reviews comprised assessments of each funded team’s actual competition and performance versus their previously stated commitments. The last review, in early February, was later than previously communicated to the teams. A total of nine teams have received various levels of funding for 2002-2003. Six of the nine more or less met their commitments, while three fell short; this affected their funding. In response to a question, Thompson discussed some suggestions for improving the program in the future. The new Code of Conduct, required of each National Team member, had given the committee the ability to evaluate performance and require accountability for the dollars. Lukowich discussed various suggestions for consideration for future funding programs.

Junior women’s funding was allocated by the Athlete Funding Committee and has been communicated to the athletes along with an explanation of the decision-making process. Junior men’s funding was used toward the expenses of the World Junior Curling Championship “B” Competition team selection and championship events.

9. **Format Task Force report.** Cousins reported. After his Format Task Force posted options on the USCA web site several weeks ago, Cousins has received comments direct from about 60-70 curlers. Cousins was surprised by the results: 1. Overwhelmingly, there is no support for an open format. 2. There is strong support for keeping the regional format. 3. Regions want their annual regional championship to be part of a process that leads to Worlds. 4. There is no support for the new club nationals. Cousins is on schedule to present a proposal to directors at the April board meeting. Cousins noted that Minnesota, which had initially expressed support for an open format, had, after comment from their member curlers, changed to a position of opposition to an open event. Cousins encouraged further comments. The committee was concerned with the apparent lack of curler interest in the new “club” event.

Fenson left the meeting.

10. **World Winter University Games report (WWUG).** Patzke attended the WWUG as one of four USOC press officers, working for curling, speed skating and figure skating. He noted the WWUG was an exciting event. The curling event was well run. Many sports bodies, such as speed skating, take the WWUG very seriously as a high-level international competition. Lukowich noted that many of the curling teams had high caliber players. Security was tight. The curling venue was excellent, with keen ice. Curling had benefit of a great attaché/support person. USA teams performed reasonably well, especially in view of the limited preparation time between selection and departure for the event. Lukowich discussed possible changes to future selection procedures to improve performance. **Motion by Silver, Drobnick second, that McNelly communicate USCA support for a curling presence in future Winter World University Games.** Discussion of benefits and complications, such as playdown scheduling. **Approved.**

11. **Elite Programs meeting.** Thompson noted that the USCA Elite Programs Committee may conduct an all-day meeting April 24, the day prior to the regular committee meeting schedule. This will require some added USCA expense. McNelly asked if there were any objections, and there were none.

Cousins left the meeting.

12. **Web database project report.** Patzke was asked to give a brief report on the new USCA web database project, designed to make it easier for clubs and staff to report and maintain the club member roster and *U.S. Curling News* mailing list. The project to convert from the current “Access” database to the web database is underway. Patzke recruited about 10 clubs to be early participants to help de-bug the program. Garber commended Patzke and sponsor Dan Field for their efforts on this needed project, and noted there will be “bugs” in any new data processing project.

13. **Other business.** There was no other business.

14. **Adjourn. Motion made, seconded and approved to adjourn at 1:20 p.m. CST.**

Respectfully submitted,
David Garber
Recording Secretary

Reviewed and Authorized
R. Chris Moore
Secretary