

**United States Curling Association
Executive Committee Meeting
September 13, 2002
Marriott Airport Hotel, Minneapolis, MN**

Minutes

Present

Jack McNelly (in the chair)
Grayland Cousins
Phill Drobnick
Bob Fenson
Pam Finch
Peggy Hatch (after 10:50am)
Warren Lowe
Richard Maskel
Chris Moore
Donna Purkey
Ann Swisshelm Silver
Mark Swandby
Jane Thompson

Also present

David Garber, Executive Director
Rick Patzke, Director of Communications
Bev Schroeder, Member Services Manager

1. **Introductions, approve prior minutes, correspondence.** McNelly called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Roll call noted. **Motion by Swisshelm, Thompson second, to approve minutes of Executive Committee meetings held June 8-9, 2002 (including the closed session); June 28, 2002; July 29, 2002; August 8, 2002. Approved.**

2. **Discussion.**

a. Governance. The USCA Governance Task Force meets Saturday morning. Swandby noted that he is authorized to make a motion with a specific proposal on behalf of the Wisconsin State Curling Association. The committee had a general discussion of governance concepts.

b. Regional organization. McNelly addressed the subject of assigning new clubs in new states to regions, and to eliminate the at-large club category? Finch observed that this may be a subject for next Annual Members Meeting. Lowe suggested development of a specific discussion paper. **McNelly appointed Lowe to chair a Regional Assignment Task Force and asked the AAC to name an athlete member.**

c. Citizenship issue. Cousins stated that he will be making the motion to the board on this subject, and Swisshelm will provide the second. The committee held an extensive discussion of motion wording and other aspects of the issue.

d. College curling disciplinary action. Maskel reported, as chair of the Board of Review. The Illinois State Curling Foundation, which shares funding of the College Curling program and provides administration, had last season suspended several participants. Since that time, the ISCF has agreed to have the action handled under the terms of the USCA By-Laws. The disciplinary action taken by the College Curling USA Tournament host committee has been voided by the Board of Review for several reasons, including the following: lack of due process and sanctions not fitting the severity of the offense. Garber will notify the participants involved next week. In the future, College Curling event participants will be required to sign the USCA Player/Coach Agreement to provide the legal framework for behavior and potential disciplinary actions.

e. Format task Force. Fenson reported; he distributed a written report. The Task Force reached consensus on several issues, including raising playdown entry fees. There was an extensive discussion of the concept of “open” regional playdowns, in which teams nationwide could select the region in which they wish to playdown, regardless of residency. The concept of a club (“USCA?”) national championship and funding such an event, was discussed as a way to facilitate increased participation.

3. **Strategic Plan**. Hatch had no new report. She will introduce the Strategic Plan to the new directors.

4. **Treasurer**. Moore reviewed the report he has distributed to directors. He noted that the USOC audit report had no negative findings except to note that the USCA needs to establish USCA Financial Policies and Procedures. A draft document has been prepared for board approval. Swandby noted the need for the USCA to prepare a financial reporting format that clearly illustrates spending on member services programs.

5. **Executive Director**. Garber reported that the two new staff members are doing very good work and off to great starts. Garber reported that the USCA liability insurance carrier is requiring use of waiver and release forms for its insured clubs. Garber and Finch are consulting with counsel on how to proceed.

6. **USOC**.

a. Paralympic governance. No report.

b. World University Games. The USCA WUG Selection Procedure has been submitted to USOC for approval. Upon approval, it will be posted on the USCA web site.

c. Olympic Training Center. Swisshelm and Maskel each spent two weeks in August at the USOC Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. Swisshelm served as an intern for the USOC. Maskel was in for medical rehabilitation. Swisshelm reported that the USCA staff is held in high regard in Colorado Springs. Maskel reported that, when he had time between rehabilitation sessions, he made a point to network with USOC staff in areas such as Sports Science, Medicine, Coaching, etc. Maskel found the USOC folks to be really nice; many of them participated in a curling fun day at nearby arena. Maskel feels curling has turned the corner with USOC, no longer a curiosity, with increased awareness of and respect for curling, especially because curling is a medal contender. Maskel met a representative of the National Scottish Heritage Association, which has about a million members. The USCA should exploit promotional opportunities with this group.

7. **World Curling Federation**. Lowe had no report.

8. **U.S.Women’s Curling Association**. Purkey had no report.

9. **Athletes Advisory Council**. The AAC met last evening. The AAC amended its By-Laws to assure that AAC members are athlete elected (by eliminating the ex officio national team reps. The AAC will consist of four male and four female athletes, plus the USOC Representative and Alternate.

The AAC reviewed 12 applications to represent the U.S. at the World Junior B competition, and will send their recommendations to the USCA Selection Committee. The AAC discussed the citizenship eligibility issue, and reaffirmed its support of a citizenship only requirement for any USCA event leading to world level play. The AAC supports the new Code of Conduct.

Maskel, who chairs a Task Force to select a new USCA Head Ice Technician, reported that the subject of replacing the retired USCA Head Ice Technician has been a complex and difficult subject. No

applicant fully fulfills the criteria. One candidate has all criteria but the training. An apprenticeship program is needed, as well as a development of a proposal for ice making expenses. As for ice maker expenses at the 2003 Utica Nationals, **Cousins was authorized to handle the discussions with the Utica host committee.**

10. Marketing & Operations.

- a. Merchandising. Finch reported on her work regarding the renewal of the USCA merchandise contract. The current contract with High End Concepts expires December 31, 2001. Bids have been submitted from High End and one other company. The USCA is looking to expand opportunities for merchandising revenue, for example, in retail outlets. There is a need to further define the merchandising relationship between the USCA and USCA event host sites.
- b. Internet Collaborative. Activation of the contract through provision of funding is still pending.
- c. Television update. Patzke reported that World Curling Federation has indicated the WCF will continue to support the USCA efforts to develop additional curling broadcasting properties during the 2006 quadrennium. The USCA goal this season is to produce and broadcast two one-hour programs, one for the Nationals, one for the Worlds. The WCF Executive Board meets later in September, and Patzke expects further news then. Patzke noted that development of TV programs requires extensive planning and discussions with potential TV broadcast partners, including NBC.

11. Member Services.

Regional officers meeting. Swandby reported that the September 7-8 Regional Officers Meeting had been a great success. The meeting was attended by 11 regional officers from 10 regions, plus selected invitees from new USCA clubs in Dallas, Florida, Tennessee (2 clubs) and Utah; Ak-Sar-Ben in Omaha; and also two people from the St. Paul Curling Club. In addition to covering the USCA's member services programs, the group reiterated the continuing need for the USCA to communicate with dues paying curlers. Swandby noted a USCA membership card as a possible communications vehicle. The meeting had been a very positive experience for the attendees.

Swandby noted that USCA Member Marketing Seminars were held this fall at the Kettle Moraine and Copper Country Curling Clubs. Hatch reported briefly on activities of the USCA Training & Instruction Committee. More information will be provided at the board meeting.

12. Competitive Programs.

- a. Performance Funding grant. Thompson reported on the process, with our USOC Performance Partners, that led to the USCA receiving a Performance Funding Grant of \$171,000 for 2003.
- b. Elite Programs. Thompson noted that the ADD contract will be signed this weekend.
- c. Athlete funding status. Thompson noted that 2003 season athlete funding applications are due in the USCA office today.

13. Championships.

- a. Championship sites, dates. Cousins reported that much progress made in securing sites for USCA events a few years in advance (from two to eleven events). Cousins lauded Lisa Schoeneberg for her efforts as chair of the USCA Event Site Selection Committee. It is likely that the playdown for World Senior Championships will be held in December.
- b. Schedule conflict. Cousins will be discussing, with affected regions, a schedule conflict between the start of the 2003 Junior Nationals and the men's/women's regional playdowns in some regions. There was extensive discussion of how best to avoid schedule conflicts in view of an increasing number of competitions that are "protected" under the Amateur Sports Act.

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

15. **Unfinished business.** There was no unfinished business.

16. **New business.** Maskel noted that the USCA needs an alcohol policy for the WUG. He also noted that he had had discussions with Ed Ryan of the Olympic Training Center, and felt that the message was: curlers can benefit from USOC performance services, but that requests must come from curling (USCA). "Do not be a silent partner."

17. **Adjourn. Motion by Moore, Swisshelm second, to adjourn, at 12:08 pm. Approved.**

Respectfully submitted,
David Garber, Recording Secretary

Reviewed and Authorized,
R. Chris Moore, Secretary