

## Minutes

### **American Water Ski Association**

#### **Board of Directors Meeting**

**2701 Lake Myrtle Park Road, Auburndale, Florida 33823**

**Saturday, January 28, 2017 8:00 a.m.**

#### Opening & Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m. by COB Gordon Hall.

#### Introduction & Roll Call

Roll call by introduction. See Attached list.

#### Announcement of Quorum

Quorum declared present by COB Hall

#### Opening Administrative Motions

Motion to treat all action items in committee reports as motions with automatic seconds.  
(Jeff Clark / Pat Byrne) – Passes

Motion to allow all committee chairs and guests in the room who are not otherwise qualified to attend, to sit in on the meeting. (Jeff Clark / Pat Byrne) - Passes

#### Appointment of Parliamentarian

Parliamentarian – Jeff Clark, appointed by COB Hall

#### Confirmation of Voting Roll \*

Voting roll confirmed, as attached, with a simple majority requiring 13 affirmative votes.  
Motion to certify voting roll, as amended to include alternate and substitute directors present – (Bob Archambeau / Pat Byrne) – Passes

#### Adoption of Agenda

Presentation and discussion of Nationals bids will begin at 10:30 a.m., and the agenda will be adjusted accordingly.

#### Presentation of Service Awards Service Awards – VP Barry Young

Service awards were presented to:

Floyd McCreight – Chairing Judges and Scorers committee

Tonya Mauer – EVP & Director and HND staff certificate

Connie Bergmark, Dave Clark, Laura Johnson – thank you certificates

## Review and Approval of Aug. 7, 2016 BOD Meeting Minutes \*

Motion to approve minutes – (Jim Jaquess / Barry Young) – Passes

## Ratification of BOD Electronic Ballots since last Meeting \*

Motion to approve Electronic Ballots – (Bob Archambeau/ Barry Young) – Passes

## Nominating Committee Report

Barry Young: Nothing to report at this time.

## AWSA President's Report & AWSA Executive Committee Report \*

President's report – President Jeff Surdej - See report in Board package (attached).

Online sanctioning: Encourage clubs to add their Lat/long locations of their site; it will add Google maps link to locate tournament sites.

Nationals bids for 2019 are due June 1<sup>st</sup>

Review of the 11 Point Plan:

Special interest group is started back up. Looking for formats to make tournaments fun again. Buckeye Buoy Tour in Ohio, Michigan doing ability based skiing. Working to get Dave Allen to make it easy to run using the program.

Better marketing – not much done yet. Wanting to get a Marketing committee started. Want to get better membership packet first. Ski schools a good avenue

Junior skiing – make tournaments fun for kids again. Motocross as a model. Open ski nights. Wakeboarding Pass the Handle – July 24<sup>th</sup> – getting sponsors, etc....

Mini-course – huge avenue for lowering our entry barriers. Need to get implemented by summer. No spec, 7.5 m with a tolerance of 1 meter. Australia does a 3 point system, 1 for mini, 2 for wider, 3 for big buoy.

Better Membership package – task force started.

Regional and Nationals bids – we have open up the formats, and this has resulted in renewed interest in hosting

Pro-skiing – showcase pro athletes and get them to Nationals

Officials Program – Floyd worked hard last 2 years with his committee. Working to make ratings easier to maintain.

Team skiing – very successful last year. Need to keep the excitement going. Hoping to have virtual team skiing going by the summer.

Executive Committee report (report attached). Highlights:

Senior clinic cancelled

Ability based skiing

Exec Motions

Driving issues

50 % of restricted funds for international events

Motion to mandate HQ to make completion of the auto renewal and digital guest membership projects their top priority. (Julie Kruger / Jim Jaquess) - Carries

Motion to approve action items from Executive Committee report, except for disciplinary actions, to be discussed separately later in the meeting. (Jeff Clark / Jim Jaquess) – Carries

2017 Nationals – what they will do different will be more grass and more shade!  
Regions can rent shade tents – cost approximately \$500.

#### [AWSA Treasurer's Report \\* - Robert Rhyne](#)

Motion to receive the Treasurer's Report – (Jeff Clark / Julie Krueger) – Carries

#### [USA-WS MTF Committee Report](#)

President Surdej reports that this report will be given to the USAWS Board of Directors at its next meeting.

#### [USA-WS Executive Director's Report – Bob Crowley](#)

Review of current staff members. New members:

Kristina Jervik - Marketing and Partnership director. Comes from show ski world.

Michael Newth – Comes from collegiate world, 3-event skier. Membership, Collegiate Board of Director. Sales force is ready to rock and roll and Michael is suited to help move that forward.

Auto-renew function is moving along well, guest membership online – looking at the detail to get that going.

Financial – some last minute changes. A lot of unknowns. 2016 was a break-even year.

Offices are still at old location, will be there for another 6 months to 3.5 years.

#### [Pan Am Confederation IWWF Report \\*](#)

Jim Jaquess would like to commend Jeffry Armstrong's service.

#### [International Activities Committee Report \\* - Jeffrey Smith](#)

Would like to think each of the regions who have people on the committee.

Have extremely important volunteers; Mark Crone.

Largest challenge this past year was substitutions. Changed the selections to reduce that possibility in the future. Doing paper selection, allows them to pick teams more in time with events, team members are in closer proximity. Team selection Q&P, always open to suggestions on how to make that better.

Highlight – National Jr Team – struggled over time with what it means to be on that team. Hutch initiated a program to have some real benefits for the team members in addition to the honor of being on the team.

2017 Can Am tourney will be at Paul Melnuk's site, last weekend of August.

In addition to the action items in the report, Jeffrey would like to add the Q&P for selecting the Can Am teams to the approval motion.

Motion to approve all actions items, and the Can Am Q&P: (Bob Mayhew / Dennis Downes) - Passes

### [Athlete Advisory Council Report \\* - Alex Lauretano](#)

Jim Jaquess suggests publishing minutes from future meetings and using GoToMeeting.

### [USOC Report](#)

No report.

### [2018 Nationals bids \\* \(10:30 a.m. start time\)](#)

California – Owen Letcher & Tim Vaio – (Bell Aqua, by speaker phone) – See report for proposal

Discussion

Kansas – Dennis Downes – Mystic Lakes – See report for proposal

Discussion

Florida – Charlotte Melchers– West Palm Beach WSC – See report for proposal

Discussion

Call to question (Jim Jaquess / Bob Mayhew); passes.

Vote, by secret ballot. The Kansas bid received a majority on the first ballot, and is awarded their bid to host 2018 Water Ski Nationals.

### [Other Standing Committee Reports](#)

#### [Announcers Committee – Hank Longo](#)

Those on Announcers Committee received a newsletter from Hank. Will help know who want to go to tournaments and hopefully get more announcers at tournaments.

#### [Awards Committee\\*](#)

Discussion on the number of awards given to AWSA athletes. We recently lost several awards that were historically presented at the Awards banquet, namely the juniors: slalom, trick, jump and overall skier of the year.

Motion to direct AWSA Awards committee to reinstate all past AWSA awards and award the nice trophies, to paid for by AWSA – (Jim Jaquess / Lyman Hardy) - Carries

#### Boat Driver's Committee – Ham Wallace

Discussion of boat driving issue at Little Mountain and related implications with respect to drivers. Drivers committee is working to simplify process of recording and monitoring boat driving.

Jerry Jackson – every region needs to have a Dropbox and a committee to spread out the responsibility of monitoring driving.

Plotting software is (or will be) available on the USAWS website.

Splash Eye has the plotting software. Other program, Digital Video, takes a picture, then needs plotted.

Jeffrey Smith – Seems to be inconsistency and lack of clarity in what the procedures are when a challenge arises. We need clarity in the process and what should be brought to the table. Someone needs to tackle making the process simple and more efficient. There's no easy button.

Jeff Surdej – Priority one, when we leave this meeting is to figure out the bylaws and get them fine-tuned, come up with an auditing system to fix what happened this year.

#### By Laws Committee \* - Jeff Clark

Jeff, speaking to the board as the Chair of the USA-WS Bylaws Committee, brought up the issue of how our declining membership numbers are likely to affect our representation on the USA-WS board of directors. Sports disciplines need to keep 50% of their inaugural numbers in order to keep their current number of directors on the USA-WS board.

Therefore, we need to get the AWSA membership up to 8,000 or we will go from 5 USA-WS directors to 2 on the USA-WS board. However, the number of votes allocated to our sports division does not change, i.e., it will remain at around 36 votes.

Can the inaugural percentage be lowered? Jeff Clark - No, because AWSA was given 5 guaranteed seats as long as they maintained 50% of their inaugural membership. If they fall below that threshold, then, like the other Sport Disciplines, they will be subject to the sliding scale based on membership and the guaranteed seats will be gone forever. Jeff pointed out that Article VIII of the AWSA Bylaws addressed how the Director seating would be handled if there are less than the 5 Director seats now in effect.

All of Jeff's information to the board was informational; there was not any action item involved.

#### Judges & Scorers Committee \* - Floyd McCreight

There are 22 action items for approval on the attached report (they are the items in blue) – (Auto) – Motion carries

In the report, the Fast Track Summary for Judges should all be in black, not blue. This was approved last year.

### Junior Development Committee \*

Question on schedule of activities due to the shorter Nationals. Schedule of evening activities is still TBA.

### Rules Committee \* - Richelle Muhlitner

Rules proposals to pull out for further discussion: Proposals #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 20, and 24

Motion to approve/auto 2<sup>nd</sup> all other Rules committee proposals – (Kate / Bob A) – Carries

Discussion of each proposal, not on the consent list:

Proposal 1 – (allow moving to younger age divisions) – Fails (0 affirmative votes)

Proposal 2 – (Elite division competition L10 mandatory/optional)

Discussion of proposed change - Call to question – (Bob M) – Fails

Motion to Approve – Carries (18 affirmative votes)

Proposal 3 – goes away, since Proposal 2 carried. Withdrawn.

Proposal 4 – Motion to approve 4a-c (Owen / Barry) – Carries (18)

Proposal 5 – A skier may qualify for that event or overall in the National Tournament by placing 1st through 5th at the current years Regionals or previous year's Nationals. ***The top 5 non-elite qualified skiers in each age-division event and overall at the current year Regionals or previous year's Nationals shall qualify for Nationals.*** Motion to approve, with adding Overall to wording – (Jeff C/ Bob M) – Carries (17)

Proposal 6 – If written as a procedure wouldn't need to get a rules exception of change....put into the appendix. Motion to put into the appendix – (Bob M / Jim J) – Carries (18)

Proposal 7 – delete Rule 5.04C – Carries with proposal 6

Proposal 8 – goes away because of prop. 6 – Withdrawn

Proposal 9 – 6.01E Additional drivers shall be chosen by the AWSA President at his discretion from alternate drivers proposed by the Executive Vice Presidents.

When an adequate number of Appointed Drivers and Alternate Drivers are not available, the Chief Driver may choose other Senior two or three-event Drivers to drive an event. ***For the Open division only, non-appointed drivers may be used, at the discretion of the Chief Driver, in consultation with the LOC, with approval of the AWSA President.*** - Carries (18)

Proposal 12 – ZBS. Discussion. - Carries

Proposal 20 – Rule 15.06.D.1, Technical Requirements, slalom. Discussion, Call the question (Kate / Bob) – Carries (17); Motion to Approve – Carries (18)

Proposal 24 – Turn and burn clarification w/ 4 rounds - Carries (17)

Motion - Retain age division maximum speeds for the purpose of records. (Hutch / Jim J) – Carries (14)

### Safety Committee \*

No questions or comments.

### Seeding Committee – Kirby Whetzel

System updates every day, with any scores provided since the previous night's run.

### Skier's Qualification Committee \* - Brandy Nagle

Proposal 1 – Covered by rules change earlier in the meeting, so not necessary now.  
Withdrawn.

Proposal 2 – Pass / 4 – Opposed - 15 – Fails

Proposal 3 – Carries (20 in favor)

Kudos to Brandy and committee for their work on Ability Based Skiing

### Technical Committee \* - Jerry Jackson

Issued a request to IWWF to evaluate our boat guide tolerance, since boats are now wider.

Working on a document to go out to every judge and driver, to list and explain everything needed for a record tournament.

Trick wakes – weights are now listed with tow boat approval.

Scoring program – working to get the course survey in the program so it can be downloaded.

### Towboat Committee \*

Discussion of current issues: Power factors need to be documented

Closed event issue – events marked open but when boat gets there, they are not allowed.

Make sure when using private boats in tournament they are covered by insurance that will list USA Water Ski / AWSA as an insured so all claims are covered.

Jeff Clark: Some insurance companies are not giving a certificate of insurance, instead they are just giving a boat coverage report and the correct wording for liability issues are not there. So it is hard to tell if the right coverage is there. Global and Boat US (Geiko) issue USA Water Ski coverage at a sanctioned event.

### Special Committee Reports

This agenda item was covered in the President's report, above.

### Regional Recommendations

East: - Pat Byrne, EVP East

For the AWSA President - the assignment of Chief Officials for the AWSA National Tournament should continue to be rotating assignments among the Regions. One of the bids for Nationals indicated that the Chief Officials would be assigned by the LOC.

For the Towboat Committee - Promo Boat Manufacturers should be required to pull more events than are required today in order to qualify their boats for Regional and National Tournaments.

For the Towboat Committee - Promo Boat Manufacturers should be given tournament "credits" only for true Promo Boats that travel from Tournament to Tournament, not for non-Promo Boats or for boats that are used exclusively at one site.

For Headquarters - Automate the paperwork and tracking of aspiring officials work toward achieving the Assistant Rating - Judges, Scorers, Drivers, and Safety.

For Skiers' Qualification Committee - Allow State Championship Tournaments to be completed at multiple sites (typically Slalom & Trick at one site and Jump at a different site where a jump ramp is available) with results combined for Overall Scoring to qualify for Regionals and Nationals.

For the Technical Committee - Review the issue that allows a record to be set with a fast time out of tolerance.

Midwest: - Kate Knafla, EVP Midwest

Skiers Qualification Committee – since the “bonus” ranking proposal failed, recommend a test ranking list to experiment with this concept.

South: - Bob Archambeau, EVP South

None

South Central: - Julie Kruger, Director SCR

Send out monthly flyers throughout the summer, instead of one regional guide that is quickly out dated.

Push IWWF not to take all scores from a tournament when there is complaint of abuse of tolerance rule.

Email module for online registration – can we add the capability to add attachments.

Publish a “Fun Format” document instead of putting mini course rules in the rule book.

Provide free memberships to new ski boat owners. The free memberships could be a modified version that does not included sending out printed materials to cut cost.

West: - Owen Letcher, EVP West

None

## Old Business

None

## New Business

Date & Time of Next Meeting – 8/8/2017 – San Marcos – More to follow



## Budget\*

Discussion of the 60% rule for team funding

Motion to approve 2017 AWSA budget (Barry / Mike) – Carries (18)

## Disciplinary Actions (3:48 p.m.) – Jeff Surdej

Present Surdej states that in order to afford due process the presentation part of this item is open and will be recorded and published in the minutes. There will be 20 minutes for each side. Once the presentations have been made the floor will be opened for questions from the board. Once completed the board will go into Executive Session for deliberations. Under the bylaws, only members of the board (including voting members and HND's) may attend the Executive Session. Since any appeals would go to USA Water Ski, USAWS COB and AWSA HND Doug Robbins will not attend the Executive Session. Jeff Clark recommends that Ham Wallace and Jerry Jackson stay in due to their involvement with the matter.

From President Surdej – Apologizes if something was handled incorrectly, tried to handle as best he could with information he could find. Will be ready to handle things like this in the future. Major issue with emails and information being leaked with accused.

**Cottonwood matter** – An invitation was extended to Cottonwood Water Ski Club (Joe Darwin) to attend this hearing. They have elected not to attend. The matter transpired as follows: On October 22, 2017, regional record performances were made at a Cottonwood tournament and the TC would not sign off due to driving that he witnessed. Jeff's actions: At first he did not form an investigative committee, went to Rule 1.14 and sent to Ham with drivers committee to see if they would want to initiate any disciplinary actions. Jeff took the scorebook down and had people come to him to say that it might not be fair because to all skiers, so he put it back up. Shortly thereafter, the Pan Am confederation (IWWF) pulled the whole scorebook of the world rankings database. Recommendation were made from Drivers Committees, Rules, and TC Committees which the AWSA exec committee then took into consideration to recommend a final recommendation to the AWSA Board. The recommendation was 1 year probation for Joe Darwin with end course submitted in all classes of tournaments and a downgrade of skiers that were pulled by Joe Darwin to a Class F. The accused were informed of this decision shortly after the Exec meeting. After consultation with Jeffrey Smith, Jeff then decided to re-investigate, using an investigative committee per bylaw Article XIV comprised of 11 members, none of which were from the same region as the accused. On Dec. 1, 2016 the AWSA Executive Committee reviewed the findings of the Investigative Committee and approved the following:

*Final Recommendation by the Investigative Committee: Due to a violation of rules 10.17 and 1.12 we recommend:*

*1 – The driver be put on probation for 1 year effective from the date the AWSA Board approves the recommendation. During that 1 year probationary period, any tournaments driven in AWSA class C or higher, he must turn in end course video of all skiers he drives within 7 days after the event concludes. This video shall be turned into the South Central Region driver's committee representative who will then write a report to the National*

*Drivers Committee.*

*2 - Downgrade of skiers pulled by the subject driver for sanctions 17C011R and 17C012R to class F due to a violation of rule 1.14. A list of the affected skiers was provided.*

*No actions to be taken against any other officials.*

Executive Session: (4:14)

At this point the board entered into Executive Session, and remained there until 4:28.

Results of the executive session: Board approved both recommendations of the

Investigative Committee.

**Little Mountain (4:30)** – June 13, 2017 –Joining the meeting for this item were Jeff Gilbert, Little Mountain WSC, and John Wilkins - Member representative. A five member investigative committee (Dave Clark, Will Bush, John Thatcher, Jerry Bautsch, and Jeffrey Smith) were sent the data for analysis. This analysis took a bit of time, meanwhile Pan Am did their own analysis and pulled the sanction from world rankings. Deadline was given to the exec committee, Dec 1. Their recommendation was to further downgrade the tournament to a C and any officials discipline would be send to respective committees. After exec meeting Little Mountain was informed of the results. Little Mountain took issue that things were not handled with due process. Committee formed to reinvestigate. Judges and Scorers committee felt no need to discipline chief officials. TC Committee recommended no action for the Chief TC. Drivers committee recommended no discipline on the subject Jeff Gilbert, just a notice to tighten up the tolerance. The central question is: were tolerances being used to enhance skier performance? New investigative committee looked at these recommendations to form their opinions. Issues; data comes from an unapproved system, video quality was bad, not definitive this was intentional.

*Final Recommendation: No action on Jeff Gilbert or any officials regarding the little mountain sanctions. Letters should be sent to the CD, CJ, TC and drivers of the event reminding them of the rules and why tolerances are there and to tighten up the tolerances. We also recommend no further downgrade of the score book from a class E. There was not sufficient evidence to discipline any officials for a violation of rules 1.12 or 10.07 or 1.14.*

John Wilkins was then given the floor to reply to the accusations. He stated that – In summation, 4 different committees have looked at the data and there is no recommendation to discipline or further downgrade. They have nothing to add and will accept the decision sent in the letter. Records were not awarded since the Pan Am downgraded the tournament. They plan to appeal this decision with Pan Am.

Discussion as to whether this was skier friendly driving.

Executive Session: (5:12)

At this point the board entered into Executive Session, and remained there until 5:20.

Results of the executive session: Board approved the final recommendation of the Investigative Committee.

## Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss a motion to adjourn (Pat Burns / Bob Archambeau) was approved and the meeting was adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

\* Supplemental information provided in Board Package