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## **Board of Directors Meeting**

November 17-18, 2015

### **PRESENT:**

Brian Elza, Dan Kessler, Debbie Love, Happy Hooper, Jeff Fowlkes, Jim Chadwick, John Newby, John Nichols, Justin Carrier, Kathy Penree, Kristen Rosario, Mike Burgess, Morton Bergue, Roger Schonder, Shawn Smith, Steve Peterson, Tara Harris

### **ABSENT:**

Joelle Antico

### **GUESTS:**

Ali Stangle, Amy Clark, Karen Wilson, Lynn Singer, Mo Duckworth

## **Tuesday November 17**

Jim Chadwick opened the meeting, thanked the Board members for their attendance, and outlined the agenda and process. The meeting began with a review of 2015, followed by the plan and budget proposal for 2016. The Business Unit Managers presented the plan and budget to the USASF Finance Committee on November 9<sup>th</sup> in preparation for today's meeting. The Finance Committee approved the budget as presented.

### **Review of 2015**

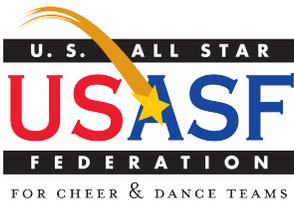
- Funded operating reserve while reducing Worlds bids by 25%
- 150,000 Athlete Members, first full year
- To date: over 8,400 Coaches with a green light background check
- 3,000 Regional Meeting attendees
- More than 8,500 athletes verified at Worlds
- Established team concept for cheer and dance management

### **Plan and Budget**

The budget discussion centered on programs and initiatives that USASF members are requesting through the Regional Meetings, Regional and National Advisory Boards and the NACCC.

Education and resources for areas including safety and rules education, mentoring, community and growth initiatives will be provided for program owners, coaches, parents and athletes. The focus will be on program and athlete excellence and safety and longevity in All Star. Education and resources will be provided through Regional Meetings and online through videos, articles, webinars and courses. Communications and Tech Support departments will work collaboratively to make resources readily accessible to members, create a member community and promote the positive image of All Star. Emphasis will be placed on making resources available exclusively to members through member profile logins. Copyrights and licensing are being obtained for current resources and processes established for the protection of resources developed going forward. The Worlds budget includes additional spending for awards for new categories and divisions, additional judging panels, and for moving dance from Epcot to Coronado Springs.

**Following discussion, the Board unanimously confirmed the budget as approved by the Finance Committee.**



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### **Worlds Task Force**

As a follow up to a Cheer Sanctioning Committee discussion in August, 2015, Jim is putting together a Worlds Task Force, charged with determining the 3-5 year plan for Worlds. Steve will assist and the members include:

- Kristen Rosario
- Ann Lehrmann
- Dan Kessler
- Happy Hooper
- John Nichols
- Kathy Penree
- Jim Chadwick

### **Event Producer Membership Review**

Qualifications for each level of Tier membership were reviewed, and the Board was reminded that cheer event producers must apply for Tier 1 status in order to award Worlds bids and must maintain a minimum of 125 All Star teams at their bid event in order to qualify to award bids. If a Tier 1 company does not maintain 125 teams at their bid event, they will be placed on probation. If they are not successful in raising attendance to 125 teams, they will no longer be eligible to award Worlds bids. Teams must be in legitimate divisions on the USASF age grid and must have received a ranking and results.

### ***Tier 3 Benefits***

Also discussed at the Sanctioning Committee were member benefits for Tier 3 companies. Steve will put together a task force with Tier 3 representation to consider the Points Race concept for awarding bids to The Cheerleading Worlds and other membership enhancements.

### ***Tier 4 Membership:***

It was proposed to create a Tier 4 designation as an option for gyms that hold a competition, fundraiser, and/or a showcase once a year. The membership fee would be \$100 and would allow USASF member athletes competing at their events to be covered by the USASF athlete insurance. Following discussion, the Board approved the proposal. Details will be provided to the Board and members.

### **Athlete Recruiting and Retention**

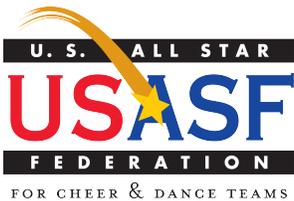
Discussion was opened asking coaches what they considered to be their biggest concerns in All Star. The answers centered in areas including total cost, safety and length of season.

## **November 18, 2015**

Jim opened the meeting.

### **Athlete verification requirement test**

Discussion at the Cheer Sanctioning Committee meeting in August covered the athlete verification process that was used at Worlds, and the possibility of that same process being provided at Worlds Bid events this year. For 2015-16, and at the event producer's request and expense, the USASF will send staff to bid events to verify athlete identities.



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## Credentialing and Education

Priorities for the education plan presented in the budget discussion will be:

- Establishing an Education Steering Committee comprised of three event producer members (1 Varsity, 1 JAM Brands, 1 independent), three coaches, and USASF staff representation.
- Establish baseline credentialing that would become Professional Membership.
- Continue to provide optional educational and credentialing opportunities through Regional Meetings and other channels to support the USASF mission.

## Red Light Background Checks

There is a need for the USASF to establish a review and appeals process for members who receive a red light or pending red light status on their background check. We have researched the policies and processes of several other membership organizations, and has spoken directly to USA Wrestling. A proposal was made to adopt an appeals process that utilizes an outside review committee to ensure member anonymity.

The Board unanimously agreed.

## Cheer Age-Based Rules next steps

The proposal that included new ideas for Division Sizes, Level Rules, and the Age Grid, was discussed at Regional Meetings and in webinars. The most recent survey of those who participated in the webinars found that:

- 80% are in favor of division sizes
- 55-60% are in favor of age-based rules
- 30-35% are in favor of bottom ages

## Next Steps:

- Regional Advisory Boards will meet in January, 2016
- Focus Groups will be developed in each region in January (applications will be sent in December)
- Develop a new team comprised of Regional Advisory Boards, regional focus groups, NACCC and event producer representatives to carry the proposal forward

## The goal is to do one of the following:

- Formulate a concrete proposal based on the current concept
- Develop a new proposal/solution to help with longevity and safety
- Decide that a new proposal/solution is not needed at this time

## IASF Follow up

Following the Board's decision in November, 2014 that the USASF's focus and priority need to be on U.S. members, steps were taken to separate the IASF identity from the USASF. The current conversation centers on support for a separate IASF going forward, to be led by Varsity and other international sport stakeholders. The USASF will maintain its role in supporting the development of IASF and its efforts internationally, and protecting the prestige, strength, and original vision of Worlds.

The USASF will not credential coaches outside of the U.S. after January 31, 2016. International requests for credentialing or other education will be sent to IASF and/or ICU.

**Board of Director Seats and Election** – Jim thanked Shawn Smith for his service as he left the meeting for the discussion of his successor.

- The advisory independent company board seat held by Shawn Smith of ECA/EDA was open for election. Ann Lehrmann of Cheer & Dance Extreme was nominated and elected to fill the open seat.



- The Board would like 3 nominations for each seat going forward.
- The Board authorized the addition of another advisory coach seat to be nominated by the NACCC.

**Next Meeting:**

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

**2016 Annual Meeting**

November 8-9, 2016

Gaylord Opryland, Nashville, TN

**Meeting Adjourned**