

2024 Winter Meeting Minutes

Start time – 9:02 a.m.

Appointment of Secretary – (Karen Melnik) –

- recording meeting – housekeeping matters: MUTE unless you're speaking. Put your hand up or signal in chat – lots of folks on meeting so let's do our best not to talk over one another as I'm going to be listening to the meeting to create the minutes.
- Welcome everyone
- Thank Councilmembers, National Directors, and Committee Reps for their time; thank you for submitting your reports in advance of this meeting.
- Welcome new Council Member from VA (John Wilson)
- Exciting announcements: Chief Driver Dan Warner, Chief Judge David Knight, AWSA Vol of Year Chip Shand; USAWSWS Volunteer of the Year Dave Allen.
- Passing of Paige Miller & Dave Hunter
- Looking forward to the 2024 Regionals at Timberlake, etc. Avon in 2025, and perhaps several bids in 2026 (so pleased that that LOCs are thinking and working ahead, and volunteering! It's wonderful for the whole Region to know in advance by years where the tournament will be – let's keep it up!)

2) **Roll call** (see list from State Reports)

3) **Review agenda – motion to waive reading of minutes:** mtn to accept minutes: Matt Byrne, second Becky Barlett; no objection, motion passes.

4) **Treasurer Report** (Adele Caputo) - see report

a. Review 2023 year-end: budgeted for deficit (\$2510), actual deficit (\$1734.97); driven by higher revenue, junior fundraising, interest income from CD. Had higher expenses (Jr travel, Jr party, officials' clinics). Cash position is strong (just under \$47,000 cash on hand); supported 131 officials for clinics, and 49 Jr Dev. clinics; 60% revenue went to Juniors. Motion to accept report: Matt Byrne; second Dave Allen second; no opposition.

b. Budget Items for 2024: similar to revenue as in 2023 (sanction fees, interest income, Jr Dev fundraising). We are budgeting a deficit (about \$3000); biggest driver is Winter Meeting travel; stipend is the same. Jr. Dev. is expected to be less, but budgeting for six participants. In future, will have to revisit some expenditures because in the long term, can't continue to operate on deficit. Might be fundraising opportunity on Regional level. Tonya Mauer suggests a task force to come up with fundraising or lowering expenditures at the Regional level. EVP will move forward with that recommendation. Discussion about Jr Travel to international tournaments for

several skiers who do not reside in the Eastern Region. Every USAWSWS member has to provide an address. Jr. Travel will likely be cyclical; right now we have many elite skiers, but that might not be the case in three to five years from now. But if it stays the same, we'd need to increase our sanction fees a certain percentage. Decision not to change allocation to the Jr Skiers who ski at Eastern Regionals and long familial connection to Eastern Region.

- Motion to acknowledge 2024 budget – Tonya moves; Doug seconds; no objection; motion passes

5) **Rules Committee** / Rules Proposals (David Allen) –See Rules Committee Report. ER supports rule changes; Rules Committee approved Jim Powell's proposals for announcers (it did not pass at the AWSA Board meeting); motion to accept report: Matt Byrne; second: Doug Robbins; no objections; motion passes

6) **Regionals**

- a. 2024 – Timberlake: Jim recognized support in 2022 Regionals of LH members and greater Sparta skiers; thanks everyone on advance for support of 2024 Regionals
- b. 2025 – Avon
- c. 2026 – Ralph Hall reports that Lake Holly voted to put in a bid for 2026

7) **Vote on Officials** –

- a. 2024 Regionals Officials (in addition to Chiefs):
 - i. Drivers: 3 app't: Doug Robbins, Dan Warner, Matt Byrne, Cole Mauer (aspiring driver – Senior); motion to approve slate: Dave Allen; second John Wilson; no opposition; motion approved
 - ii. Judges: 6 app't: Jon Thacher, Dave Allen, Dave Knight Evan Robbins, John Wilkins, Ralph Hall; motion to accept roster: John Davis; second: Becky Bartlett; no opposition; motion passes
 - iii. Scorers: 2 app't: Becky Bartlett, motion to accept: Dave Allen; second: Matt Byrne; no opposition; motion passes
 - iv. Ass't Safety (1 app't: *aspiring official: Cole Mauer

CHIEF OFFICIAL

CJ: Sara Lemley

CD: Marie Fields

CS: Jennifer Kelley-Frederick

Csafety: Jeannie Rivers

TC: Chip Shand

Motion to accept slate of chiefs: Matt Byrne; second Doug Robbins; no opposition; motion passes.

b. Nationals Officials

- i. Judges: 2 app't: Dave Knight (Chief Judge!), Dave Allen
- ii. Scorer: 2 app't: Becky Bartlett
- iii. Drivers: 2 app't: Doug Robbins, Matt Byrne, Dan Warner (Chief Driver!)

Motion to approve National officials: John Wilson; second Gary Noll; no objection; motion passes.

8) **AWSA Eastern Region Committee Reports** (Council Members in italics)

a. Regional States

- i. CT *Matt Byrne*, Tonya Maurer, Hutch Haines, Pat Byrne, Dan Warner, Bill Cirilli (hosted Regionals; hosted E/L/R tournament; 4 other tournaments; also planning to host a Jr. Dev. clinic)
- ii. DE *Don Nichols* (Silverlake (water level stable, but dwindling membership) & Givens Pond (good jump & slalom course); Silverlake jump available for those in the area.)
- iii. MA *Dave Allen*, Mike Tilton (lots of skiers, but no sites within State; Dave thinking about State tournament in Plymouth, MA at new site.)
- iv. MD *Diana Olinger*
- v. ME
- vi. NH *Scott Behner*, Becky Bartlett
(7 sanctioned tournaments in 2023; only 1 jump (Wolfeboro); Jr. Dev. clinic and quasi-tournament; hosted VT tournament in Dubes Pond; Concerns about legislation relating to water sports (200 set-back for wake surfing), but legislators are unfamiliar with boat types and activities. Membership in USA-WSWS is a statistic the legislators look at. Amy Craig has communicated with the AWSA Waterways Chairmen (Leon Larsen). Doug Robbins to draft Regional Recommendation for USA-WSWS BOD meeting for the NGO to come up with definitions/form letters to help oppose or support legislations.)
- vii. NJ
- viii. NY *Erin Peckam*, Dean Rudy, John Wilkins (part) (new lake near Potsdam (first tournament last Fall); looking for a place to hold States; will likely hold about 7 tournaments, including several "pop-up" tournaments. Hosting Northeast Slalom Series (NESS) tournament at Peck's Pond. NESS: waterskitheeast.com; Jason Peckam's handle design is going through the approval process.)
- ix. PA *John Davis*, Doug Robbins, Gary Noll (4 tournaments in 2023 and same in 2024, including States. Hosted "pop-up" tournament in 2023 and may do it again (Dave's Pond is the only active site).
- x. VA *John Wilson*, Adele Caputo, Chip Shand, Ralph Hall, Al Harris, Jim & TJ Powell, Jamie Crissey (Amy Craig is now Va Federation President; Class R trick tournament at Lohr's; successful (over 30 participants) in Jr. Dev. Clinic; State tournament at Timberlake (over 35 participants); new tournament Pioneers & Legends (Class L) at LH, honored in 2023 was Bud

Raley, Gerry Stansberry, and Tiny Richards;; 2024: 9 tournaments planned (including those after Nationals).

xi. VT *Justin Campfield* (severe flooding so couldn't host States in VT, so Dubes hosted in NH; honored Becky Barlett at Alan Rossi Award; considering moving State tournament to June from late August.)

xii: WVA *Kacy Craig* (mostly college kids skiing; trying to encourage them to attend AWSA tournaments; tied for 6th at first Regionals; looking for jumpers.)

b. Regional Jr Development (Rebecca Bartlett) See report

(several Jr. Dev. tournaments across the regions; many new 3-event skiers; discussion of proposals for Jr. Dev. budget; more Jr.-only tournaments (allows adults to upgrade their officials' status without worrying about their own skiing); budget to include Jr. Dev. party at Regionals; add \$10 to Jr. Dev. clinics (matching the Region's \$10 contribution); goal of fundraising of \$1000; recommendations are for spending surplus funds; goal is to keep juniors involved; never had a budget before. Lively discussion regarding how to recognize All-Stars (backpacks or something else). Agreed that Jr. Dev. Committee can spend money as it chooses on the money that Jr. Dev. raises, as long as the fund balance in P&P 7.1 is maintained. Intent of the fund balance is not to deplete the funds by outgoing juniors. LOC would have to request reimbursement for Jr.-only sanction.)

c. Regional Nominating (John Wilkins) See report

d. Regional Records (Chip Shand) – Darlene posted them on the AWSA website; you can submit records through the website

e. Regional Search/Site (John Davis) See report

f. Regional Tournament Coordinator (Bill Fosbenner) – get tournaments sanctioned!

9) AWSA National Committees

a. Executive (Karen Melnik) – size of Nationals moving forward; asked for people to send thoughts by email. Do we want it to be more elite? Should qualifying be made more difficult? (Justin made two points: (1) vendors participation is precarious, if you reduce the numbers, vendors will diminish; (2) as parent, child's participation, and thus parents, revolves around getting ready for Nationals. Doug Robbins raises issues related to size of Nationals venue (4 lakes v. 2 lakes); e.g., criticism if 7 days (too long for parents/kids); Palm Beach is so spread out it's like 4 separate tournaments, etc.

Doug Robbins to formulate Regional recommendations regarding Masters division/Level 10/skiing in Masters if you've placed in Nationals – based on comments/concerns raised by Amy/Erin)

b. Awards (Rebecca Bartlett) – no report available; Jake Abelson received best male trick skier; Erica Lang tricker of the year; Chip Shand volunteer of the year (AWSA); Dave Allen volunteer of the year award (USAWSWS)

c. Boat Drivers (Al Harris) see report; driver testing/upgrades now requires BPM (SurePath). IWWF driver portal, everyone who is an AWSA rated driver should've received an email; will store SurePath data; drivers will be able to see their own driving. Rollout faze now. Need to be an AWSA member to log into system. Updates to Driver's Policy Manual (only need two Senior drivers because using SurePath too). Movement to align AWSA drivers' names with IWWF designations. For record tournaments, SurePath will be required – trying to accumulate data for Jump. Doug Robbins asked if portal will contain the “best” drivers' data so all drivers could look at the “ideal” path. Al hasn't heard discussion of this topic, but made a note of it. Al encourages aspiring drivers to get their SurePath information (to see if you'd pass the test for upgrading). Dave Allen states that even for practice sessions, if driver enters his/her pin, the information will upload.

Thank you Al for his 12 years of service as the ER Rep to the AWSA Board Driver's Committee; Doug Robbins noted that Chris Eller mentioned Al's service to rewriting the policy manual. Announced the appointment of Dan Warner as the new AWSA Rep.

d. Bylaws (Mike Tilton) nothing to report

e. Insurance Advisory (Jeff Hardin) See report

f. IAC (Doug Robbins) (Hutch) – two international tournament U-17 Worlds (same as ER Regionals); Senior Worlds in Spain; Q&Ps out in the next month; If anyone is interested in participating in international tournaments, Hutch and Doug will put names on list (takes some time); Looking at Can/Am – trying to bring it back. Involves junior skiers who haven't made a country team yet.

g. Judges & Scorers Qualifications (TG Powell) – see report; fast track to judging to high level skiers; congratulates everyone who upgraded; would like to see more in-person judge's clinic; putting one together for Timberlake on June 16; Kevin Jack will be coming to help. You can use online modules for a judge's clinic. Thank you to Dave Allen to updating testing materials. New slalom video test if coming; looking at having a test imposed for online clinics. National Committee looking to eliminate using paper for assistant officials. Drivers must remember to login when they get into the boat and logoff, so correct information goes to waterski connect and reported into WSTMS. Region pays for online clinics. Tonya Mauer suggests reaching out to officials that qualify for Pan Am as ER is without a 3-event Pan Am judge.

h. Safety (Pat Byrne) – need more safety instructors, especially in Northern part of the region. Need to be at least a Regional safety to become an instructor.

i. Seeding (Jennifer Frederick-Kelly) See report

j. Show Skiing (Pat Byrne) – no report

k. Skiers Qualification (Dana Hinman) – no report

l. Technical (Chip Shand) See report: we need more TCs; we're having more record tournaments. Clinic will be offered at 2024 Regionals. AWSA is working on standardization of TCs (e.g., level I, II, III); IWWF is working on a test to standardize. Jason Peckham's handle design is getting favorable feedback in IWWF committees.

m. Towboats (Matt Byrne) – push to get reimbursement of towboat usage at Regionals and Nationals; did not pass through the AWSA Committee.

n. Waterways (Amy Craig) – see report; Regional Recommendation for boat type/activities so it can be referenced when legislative issues come up; create boilerplate for letter for state and local governments for opposition or support of legislation. AWSA Waterways committee hasn't had much communication. Amy goes directly to Leon Larsen. EVP to let Region know if any legislation comes up in any ER state which impacts water skiing.

o. Announcer's (Jim Powell) – see report: goal to bring more attention to "joys" of announcing. AWSA website under announcers had added "tips" to announcers. Jim is developing announcer training to establish levels/organized.

10) **USA-WSWS Executive** (Doug Robbins) – see report: interviewing for new Executive Director; 3 finalist are all USA-WSWS members; recruitment committee believes any of the three could do the job. USOPC National Governing Body Counsel meets on regular basis. Doug has been attending in place of Nate. Two letters went out recently from the Chair to the Center for Safe Sport and USOPC Exec. Director; we're not the only sport impacted by SafeSport requirements/investigations/disciplinary process. Program compliance was impacting ability to recruit new folks to the sport. Host countries of next Pan Am games are pro waterskiing, so US will still get to participate in the near future, but long range is unknown.

11) **Old Business – Update:** Regional awards (the physical awards) – Karen sent individual plaques to Regional award recipients; retired bigger trophies. There was a motion last year to amend P&Ps to give EVP authority to appoint reps to National Committees; later determined that any change would be better suited to be in the Bylaws; however, there's language in the Bylaws already that gives EVPs the power of appointments.

EVP did not appoint Special Committee to consider how to spend cash reserve pursuant P&P 7.1 Fund Balance Policy. EVP appointed JR. Dev. Special Committee.

12) **New Business**

a. Funding Directors' travel to Winter Meeting- budget for 6 people; motion by Tonya Mauer to have officials up for appointment to Regionals/Nationals, and family members, and teller, not vote on the slate. No second for the motion.

b. former member of ER Chris Goodhue appeared on Shark Tank

13) **2025 Eastern Region Winter Meeting** – location? Agreed to take place on Zoom

14) **EVP Awards**

Super Beast Award – nomination? Email me.

Adjournment Motion: Doug motions; second John Wilson; no objection; 2:39pm