

# USSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES

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December 5, 2015, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Mountain  
Juniper Room, Beaver Creek Lodge, 26 Avondale Lane, Beaver Creek, CO 81620

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## **USSA Board of Directors**

Chairman: Dexter Paine, New York, NY

Vice Chairman: Greg Boester, Rye, NY (Foundation)

Treasurer: John Bucksbaum, Chicago, IL (Foundation) absent

Tricia Byrnes, Aspen, CO (Snowboarding Athlete)

Vacancy (Snowboarding)

Charles Christianson, Anchorage, AK (Alpine Athlete)

Emily Cook, Park City, UT (Freestyle Athlete)

Bryan Fletcher, Steamboat Springs, CO (Jumping/Nordic Combined Athlete) absent

Cami Thompson Graves, East Thetford, VT (Cross Country)

Jeanne Jackson, Portland, OR (Foundation) absent

Lisa Kosglow, Hood River, OR (At-Large)

Darryl Landstrom, Minneapolis, MN (Alpine)

Dan Leever, Palm Beach, FL (At-Large)

Martina Lussi, Lake Placid, NY (Jumping/Combined)

Andy McLane, Weston, MA (Foundation)

Kipp Nelson, Ketchum, ID (Foundation)

Erik Resnick, Vail, CO (Foundation)

Chris Seemann, Winter Park, CO (Freestyle)

Tiger Shaw, Park City, UT (CEO)

James Southam, Anchorage, AK (Cross Country Athlete/USOC AAC Alternate)

### **Ex-Officio**

Michael Berry, Lakewood, CO (National Ski Areas Association)

Grete Eliassen, Holladay UT (USOC Athletes' Advisory Council)

David Ingemie, McLean, VA (SnowSports Industries America)

Bill Marolt, Paradise Valley, AZ (USOC) absent

Hank Tauber, Park City, UT (FIS)

Guests: Luke Bodensteiner, Calum Clark, Mike Jaquet, Tom Kelly, George Macomber, Brooke McAfee, Alex Natt, Trisha Worthington, Nick Sargent.

Meeting chair: Dexter Paine

## **1. Chairman Calls the USSA Board Meeting to Order: Dexter Paine**

Dexter Paine requested everyone to sit down and called the meeting to order.

## **2. Roll Call & Establishment of Quorum: Alex Natt**

Alex Natt took the roll of the USSA Board of Directors and confirmed the presence of a quorum. Lisa Kosglow asked that everyone put their phones on mute because there was a lot of background noise/feedback on the teleconference. Dexter Paine reiterated that request.

### **3. USSA September 2015 Meeting Minutes' Approval: Alex Natt**

Alex Natt noted that the minutes for the last board meeting were in the packet and he asked for the motion for approval of the September 2015 meeting minutes, if there were no alterations to the minutes.

Motion #1: To approve the meeting minutes as presented.

M/S/C – D. Landstrom/G. Boester approved by acclamation

### **4. Chairman's Comments: Dexter Paine**

Dexter Paine affirmed that it had been a terrific day with great results in Vail and Lake Louise. He said there had been a very successful Board of Trustees' meeting in the morning. He appreciated everyone taking time on a Saturday afternoon to get on the phone for this meeting. There were a number of really important items that we needed to cover. He said that we were in the midst of a lot of work right now. All of the work was very positive and important in driving this organization forward.

He wanted to begin by recognizing some very valued USSA board members who had passed away recently, David Arnold who was the initiator of the gold pass program, which has become one of the most reliable funding sources for the organization; and, second, Bob Dart whom most in this room have worked with as a board member or chair of the Alpine Sport Committee and on multiple committees at the FIS level. He commented that Bob was one of the most dedicated volunteers that he had ever worked with at USSA and he passed away suddenly a few weeks ago. He asked Darryl Landstrom to say a few words.

Landstrom said he was a tremendous friend and mentor and colleague and served as a tremendous ambassador for the sport in the US and on the international level. He will be missed by many and it would be very difficult to replace a man of his caliber. He noted the memorial service that would be taking place in Winter Park the following day.

Paine also revealed that David Ingemie would be retiring after many years of service as President of the SIA. He had represented our industry incredibly well and seen it through an unbelievable transformation. He thanked him for all that he had done for skiing. He also noted his successor Nick Sargent was present and would take over the board position in February. He noted that prior to this job he was director of Sales & Marketing for Burton and had been both a skier and snowboarder and will bring great energy to the organization.

Paine noted that he had a long list of items to discuss. He stated that we might have too many initiatives going on at the USSA at the foundation and board level. The first was the governance and a great deal of time would be spent on that today. Lisa Kosglow and Eric Resnick were working with Charlotte Moats on the entire governance structure. His goal was to maintain the USSA as a leader in governance among the national governing bodies but also for all other non-profits and all the international federations. He wanted USSA to be at the forefront and have all the best practices in the industry.

We were working on some things which were quite controversial. It was all about upgrading the board and upgrading the people who were driving skiing and snowboarding forward in the US. It's all about being best in the world. Given that everyone seems to be upset with us, we are relatively close to agreement on new terms. There was no one quite happy which he felt was a good place to be. That was where we wanted all the constituencies to ultimately get to.

The next is an area in which we are leading and is being driven by Chris Seemann as well as our staff. We will come to this board and ask to evolve the freestyle and snowboarding committees and turn them into the freeskiing, freestyle and snowboarding committees. Freeskiing is becoming something that is incredibly important to our industry and can drive us forward. We are currently best in the world in that sport and want to continue to be. There is a very similar conversation taking place at the FIS level and we are at the forefront of driving that discussion. It is what is best for the sport. In May, we will have a robust discussion of that and ask people to approve that. It will be folded into our governance changes that will go into the bylaws. He thanked Seemann for his help in driving that forward. Lisa Kosglow, Abbi Nyberg and Jeremy Forster had all been very helpful as well.

He disclosed that the next one was very important and that was that everyone be completely engaged in this process. He wanted everyone to speak up and disagree wherever there are reasonable reasons for thinking that we are wrong. It's really important to hear more voices on the board than we have historically. Part of the solution to that was we would have more board meetings. The executive committee would meet more often and this would become a more active governance board than it had ever been.

He noted that Tiger and his team were in the process of working with the board on revamping the mission and goals. Brooke McAfee and Luke Bodensteiner would spend time talking about where we were headed with that.

The next item was one of the tougher ones, which was managing through our tiered sports. There were a number of sports which we were not funding and we have spent an enormous amount of time on how we use the resources of USSA to help those sports, such as with Trisha Worthington on the Foundation side or with Mike Jaquet on the sponsorship side. We need to make sure that even when we decided to reduce the funding for nordic combined, jumping, and PGS that we continue to help those sports to be successful at the grass roots level.

Paine communicated the final area in which a lot of time was being spent was in Athletics as we continued to be driven to succeed across multiple sports. We keep getting additional sports and we continue to be at the forefront of this and Luke will discuss this further. Today's results, as well as our training this summer, indicate that we continue to be best in the world and that will continue to be the theme of this organization.

Finally, he disclosed the work that Dan Leever was doing on the development side. There was a lot of work to be done there. And that was an area in which we were not best in the world right now was alpine development. He has personally taken on working with Luke Bodensteiner, Patrick Riml and Tiger Shaw to start with a quantitative assessment of where we are and to figure out how to do a much better job driving alpine development on both the men's and women's sides. He was instrumental in putting together the university team which has been a huge success this year. We will continue to ask him to play a prominent role on the alpine issues as we strive to drive this organization forward.

In terms of priorities, our financial health is number one. We continue to have to raise our revenue levels, control our expenses and get our balance sheet under control. He asked that Greg Boester discuss what we were doing on the balance sheet side as soon as he finished.

He divulged that in events, it was important for us to continue to hold world-class events. We have the World Cup finals coming up in Aspen in 2017. We have the Jr. Nordic Worlds coming to Soldier Hollow in 2017. We have the World Championships in freestyle, snowboarding and freeskiing coming to Park City in 2019. We are focused on the mid 2020's of bringing the World Alpine Skiing Championships back here as well as hopefully getting a shot at the Winter Olympics again. These are all important to drive snowsport in

the US. As the largest NGB in this area, if we don't drive it, no one else will. He noted that was an important part of our mandate at the USSA.

We will also continue to focus on growing and developing our senior team. Tiger has made a couple of changes which made the senior team evolve and get better. It's important, under Tiger's leadership, that we make sure this is a rewarding, exciting, fun place to work and that we compensate people correctly. We will do more work on the compensation side to make sure that we can pay people what we need to pay to bring them to work for us.

He asked Greg Boester to say a few words about the foundation meeting that had taken place in the morning as well as then moving on to Tiger Shaw's review of the organization.

Boester discussed the proposal to restructure the debt of USSA in May with respect to the outstanding debt on the Center of Excellence, line of credit and sundry others on the liability perspective. The go ahead was provided by the USSA Board in May to get that done with Wells Fargo. We are in a position now where we have significantly lowered the operating burden. This was something that was forced upon us by Wells Fargo, who underwent a change in their operations, which compelled us as an organization to take a fresh look last January, which had been trial by fire for Brooke McAfee as she was new to the organization.

Ultimately, the terms that we presented to this board in May remained intact and that's what was approved and transacted. If anyone needs more detail, they can refer back to the materials that were presented in May. We spend a fair amount of time this morning in executive session at the Foundation level on a more holistic level discussion about the state of the balance sheet.

The take away from the USSA Board perspective is that the Foundation Board of Trustees has taken it upon themselves in a small select group to really improve the financial standing and provide more or as much financial flexibility for the future as possible. As Bill Marolt would attest, we are never about maintaining, but always about moving forward and looking for ways to improve, to do things bigger and better than the competition. That is the goal of this group that is coming together and we will keep you apprised over the next 12 to 18 months on its progress. We hope to make a serious dent on the debt load and that will translate directly to more flexibility for Luke and Tiger and Brooke and Trisha and everybody else to find a better operating platform, more opportunities for bigger and better. That is the take away and that's where we ended up.

## **5. Chief Executive Officer's Report: Tiger Shaw**

Tiger Shaw thanked Dexter Paine and said he had been amazed by our athletic success over the last couple of weekends in Beaver Creek, Aspen and Lake Louise. Luke would be discussing more about the teams shortly. We've had some great early-season results from cross country and next week the Rev Tour begins in Copper Mountain and we are in full swing, full season. He would defer to Luke on where we were but he wished to make a couple of comments on where we were with alpine development.

We've made significant changes with the hiring of Chip Knight to fill in and focus on the alpine development programs which are so critical to our sports. He said it had been tricky for Patrick to lead this effort while running the alpine program from top to bottom. A number of people are involved in helping us. We are not making any quick changes, but making sure that we know what we are doing is right for us here in America, is sustainable, is predictable and parents and kids know how they make the team. This type of system is paramount in all of our sports.

We made a lot of changes to our membership this summer. We are slightly behind in revenue but ahead in membership count, which was our goal. We dropped some of the costs for cross country and we knew that change would drop revenue by \$90K and it did. But we will see an increase in cross country membership that will compensate for that. We continue to work closely with USA Nordic and all the sports that receive less unrestricted funding – the restricted model where we focus on the sports and Foundation's team across the country can allocate from unrestricted with restricted funding, Liz Arky has led the charge in cross country. She has raised almost \$200K in the last two seasons. It's a great example of focused fundraising from people who are advocates from all of those sports.

We continue to evolve the organization and I have an outstanding team that is making huge efforts – we were extremely busy this summer and fall but it's allowed us to make huge progress.

As Dexter alluded to, we've made some headway in revenue generation but also met headwinds, primarily in marketing, and it will create some shortfall in this budget and we are reacting and facing those challenges immediately by making adjustments now midstream so that we don't have to face large cuts in programs at the end of the season. We've found some additional areas, none terribly large or crippling to any event or program such that we can adjust our bottom line this year. We've made some great progress there.

As a company, we are really good at some things and behind in others. We're great in Athletics and sport science, there are a number of things in which we have the leading edge, but we're behind in digital, some of our information technology systems and this is why the new system of task forces vs. committees have made a difference. We have been able to have a focus group look at a challenge that we have and find a solution that we can implement at the staff level. Those continue to run well, branding, digital, planned giving, and I reported this fall on the branding task force which has been an interesting beginning of a process where Jeanne Jackson has made it clear to us that we have to make a decision – are we a branded house or a house of brands.

Nike being a branded house where everything else falls under that brand, and a house of brands being something more like a conglomerate where you don't necessarily know who the holding company is but there are a lot of individual, strong brands. We are somewhere in the middle. Proctor & Gamble is a good example of a company that is in the middle. We have to understand where we want to be and pick that. Then, we have to go down that road.

That is where we are right now with the process of surveying our constituent groups, our stakeholders, our athletes, donors and trustees, members and our commercial partners. It will be very interesting when we start to see what they care about. Where do they see their allegiance, their alliance? All of this is very important to understand so that we know where to go with that and not let the market push it around and define itself.

The planning process that we went through this summer was revamped in terms of the way we work and think. We'll review that later on today in the review of the strategic plan. That has changed the way we do our short- and long-term planning, where we've been able to focus on what it is exactly that we are trying to accomplish. It is clearer to me now than in the two years that I have been here. It's very helpful to know exactly what it is that we are trying to work on and achieve and not take our eyes off the goals. We are a broad organization and there is a lot that we could do every day with a lot of busy work and people trying to grab our time but if we don't focus on what we need to achieve by the end of the year, we'll be wondering what happened to this, that and that.

Shaw asked Luke Bodensteiner to provide an overview of the teams and how we are doing. Bodensteiner said that we'd had a successful start so far to this year. All of our teams over

the next two weeks will be in action. We have five wins in 11 races in alpine and four more podiums on top of that. He explained that this was a year without a world championship so this year the team would be focused on the World Cup. The way we are managing much of the team is to use this year to lay the groundwork for our Olympic campaign. There is a lot of focus on volume and fundamental skill development. It is less about peak performance and more about consistent performance, and good focus on team management.

A number of injured athletes are now coming back to return to snow. We've focused on that and other things that are helpful to add for an Olympic campaign in terms of what we do on site at the Olympic venue for training opportunities for our athletes. That's it on the elite side.

We have spent a lot of time focused also on development. That's been a classic tradeoff, chase elite success now and providing those resources, but at a cost to the future and how you repeat that success, sustain that kind of performance. Based on the financial health of the organization, we've been able to expand what we are doing on the development side and we are beginning to see some progress there, particularly on the alpine side.

However, we need to see better performances at the Jr. World Championships but he said he felt good about where the organization was right now in terms of leveraging all the athletes that are available to us. We have a solid club program that has really taken off and is providing value to the clubs and driving quality in those clubs. We are seeing the power of the community coming together. We can't shoulder the full burden of development – it's about partnership and community. We will continue to do that.

Shaw noted Dan Leever's project that will help to define a good pathway to all of our clubs across the country. We will keep plugging away. We have the goal to be the best in the world in 2018 and we are the underdogs so that will take great effort over the next few years. We have the athletes to do it, but we will have to stretch ourselves to achieve it.

## **6. Financial Report: Brooke McAfee**

Paine asked McAfee to provide the financial report. She began by commenting that in the board materials there is a narrative of the discussion and a budget comparison in the materials. She asked that everyone read that and to let her know if there were any follow-up questions.

She communicated that there were four takeaways from today. One, we were forecasting a balanced budget and with the debt restructure to reduce our line of credit. Even with the marketing constraints that we have we were still working toward the \$750K net income to use that to pay down our line of credit. There were challenges in marketing tied to corporate sponsorship. Foundation is on track to meet their budget goals with some opportunities to exceed the goals. On the expense side, we still invest 80% of our total operating budget on conducting these activities.

Both revenue and expenses are trending above goal, which is largely due to NASTAR. We acquired that property after the budget was locked so now the revenue and expense are built into the year-end forecast.

She discussed that the total revenue projection was \$33.6M. There were a few categories trending above budget and a few trending below budget and she provided a detailed explanation of these variances.

Marketing revenue is trending below budget, earlier in the week, we revised this projection downward again so is now estimated about \$1M under goal. We are making adjustments to the expense budget to make sure that we reach the net income goal. Foundation is on track

and has some opportunities that will be discussed a little later. Other revenue came in at \$338K above goal. This was in large part medical pool suppliers due to Luke and Kyle's work on the medical side. Membership as was mentioned is trending below budget income but they are trending upwards on number count growth of about 7%. These are due to the changes we made to the membership model. We hope that will pick up in the coming months and will be tracking that closely.

Shaw added that sponsorship revenue is still a huge part of our revenue on the marketing side and it is shifting at a very rapid pace over to less sports sponsorship and more digital integration with all the different social media and video players, and apps and less watching TV.

Shaw explained that the TV viewership is aging and more and more young audiences are using computer screens, phone screens and iPad screens to engage so now there is a shift into these channels away from pure sponsorships. We are seeing that impact now. We are not out in front here and we need to get into the middle of it all to keep our marketing revenue up. It's shifted already and Mike Jaquet is making adjustments for that.

Mike Jaquet noted the sponsorship number is net after some expenses so we can adjust some money that we were going to spend against the estimated higher revenues that the general public will not see. It's a miss for this year but we are in positive discussions right now on a number of fronts to replace wireless, to add an auto partner for the Grand Prix and a number of others.

McAfee returned to the Foundation numbers with total revenue at \$9.2 m. The net revenue is \$7.5M. In addition to their annual fund goal, there is also partner organization funding and the endowment campaign. The FY15 amount of \$1.2M raised is largely for the Utah Olympic Park project. She commented that the revenues were shifting by category but the net was on budget.

Worthington stated that they had some great momentum with a very strong team of fundraisers who are getting close to having a year under their belt so they will only get better and more efficient.

The two areas they need to focus on to hit the numbers are the gold pass program, with 21 yet to sell this year and the other is Champions Club or world hospitality program. We are trying to secure additional donors to that program.

McAfee reviewed the chart of expenses. She added that 80% of the operating budget is spent on athletic programs, 11% is fundraising and marketing and 9% is administration. McAfee said that we would not want to see administration go above 15% nor the program activities drop below 75%.

Paine identified Swimming and Track and Field as the other large NGBs but that it was difficult to compare among these. The amount they invest in sport is not similar to our investment, they actually have a huge budget. They essentially have one sponsor, Nike, it's really efficient to run but when Nike goes away, there is a challenge. On a not-for-profit, this number of 85% is fairly typical. What non-profits don't have is the marketing and sponsorship piece which is what makes us different from St. Paul's Academy, as an example. The USOC runs at 78% and they are larger than we are.

## **7. Ratification of the Executive Committee's Actions: Alex Natt**

Paine turned the agenda over to Alex Natt for the ratifications that we needed as part of this meeting. Natt said that the board had approved an action in May that dealt with the alpine

equipment matrix (Addendum 2). This was in the packet and essentially what was anticipated by the Alpine Sport Committee was that they wanted to make some rules regarding the alpine equipment and identification to fill in some gaps for USSA racing where the FIS had not published standards.

A proposal had been adopted by the Alpine Sport Committee and the Board in May and as the summer wore on it became obvious that there were some assumptions in that table that would not be sustainable in the current year. The alpine executive committee came to the executive committee of this board and asked that it rescind the prior equipment matrix and replace it with the matrix that was published in the board materials. The executive committee agreed to that action and the bylaws require that actions taken by the executive committee be ratified at the next meeting. He asked for a motion.

Motion #2: To ratify the Executive Committee's Action

M/S/C – E Resnick/D Paine approved by acclamation

## **8. Old/New Business**

Paine said that a year ago with everything going on with FIFA, and international track and field, and some challenges among some NGBs in the US, Tiger and I felt it was very important that we set a benchmark for ourselves on the governance side of also being the best in the world in terms of how we pick, educate, and work with all of our board members at the USSA level and the best composition for the board – how do we make sure that we have really passionate knowledgeable people who will be actively involved in USSA and at the board level. We asked Eric Resnick and Lisa Kosglow to put together a group to take a look at this. He acknowledged that this was one of the most important things we had in front of us as a board.

### **USSA Governance Task Force Report: Eric Resnick/Lisa Kosglow**

Eric Resnick revealed that the USSA Congress in May 2015 is when we kicked this effort off. We established a committee and the idea of this was to focus initially on both the overall composition of the board, rules, term limits and so forth and then to dive into the Alpine Sport Committee, being the largest of the sport committees, to think about how did that work, what bylaw changes would we recommend as a committee and then, ultimately, when we have unanimity on the types of changes we were recommending that might affect alpine, then to extend that and involve a broader group of constituencies such as snowboarding, freestyle, freestyle, nordic, etc.

The initial task force is comprised of six members; Lisa and I co-chair; Darryl Landstrom, Lynn Dorsey Bleil, Charles Christianson from the athlete side, and Cami Thompson Graves; then we have five ex-officio members; Dexter Paine, Dan Leever, Alex Natt, Tiger Shaw and Charlotte Moats. We've had two in person meetings and a couple of phone calls to this point. We've had a lot of robust discussion.

We started with an outline trying to think not so much of what may be working phenomenally well or not within USSA but starting from an outline of theoretically for a non-profit what would be the key questions we would ask in terms of size of board, how all the constituents are represented; how everyone is nominated from those constituent groups; the role of the nominating and governance committee in those selections; the role of the board in approving those nominations. We went through a whole list of best practices of term limit, composition of the executive committee, how the exec committee was selected – a broad range of topics.

We've now started to dive down into more detail looking specifically at the Alpine Sport Committee and a broader conversation about the interaction between staff and the sport committee itself, the role of staff in driving the agenda, and being a partner with the existing chairs. We spent a lot of time talking about how do we identify prospective board members for the future and how do we insure that we have active, engaged board members with relevant expertise and that we continue to always try to make this organization better. And from a governance perspective how to insure that the people around this table are always equally committed and best qualified to best direct the affairs of the organization, to provide the strategic advice to the CEO and the management team.

One of the things we looked at through this is that we felt the USOC had done a pretty good job in some of these areas. We looked at how they are managing similar processes, specifically as to how they select directors. Right now our job is probably about half done in terms of reporting back to you with a set of recommendations. We are looking at being ready with this in the March-April timeframe with enough time to prepare any necessary bylaw amendments in advance of the May Congress to get those approved. Originally this was a two-year effort but Dexter Paine requested that it be done in one year. We will do our best to achieve that goal. We should achieve it with respect to the overall organization and the ASC. We will need enough time to give the same amount of critical thought to all the other sports once we get through the conversation at the top level and the ASC.

Right now, the areas on which we have reached agreement include term limits for directors. We would recommend a four-year term with a two-term limit. If it's good enough for the presidency, it is good enough for us. The board could vote to overrule term limits as we recognize there are some very longstanding volunteers and we are not trying to force anyone off but we do want to plan for succession and we need to have the flexibility to deal with situations that we don't have as able directors to replace existing directors if that is the case. The directors can have a four-year gap in between, once you have the four-year gap, you are eligible for another two four-year terms.

We have also term-limited the chairman, which has nothing to do with Dexter. We want to make sure that they have enough time in the role to be effective, given the critical nature of that. We have fairly broad consensus for that.

We are looking at how that same paradigm would make sense to push down to the sport committees and the other committees as well.

Another area where we are fairly well along is the executive committee. That will continue to be in our recommendation a five-person voting committee. We changed slightly the composition, the chair and vice chair and athlete position would remain, the other two would be selected by the chair and be reviewed every two years for potential rotations. The CEO is on that committee, ex-officio, non-voting member. The two being selected by the chair is a bit different from today. Today the treasurer is automatically on and there are more bodies potentially qualified and so we want to have the option of rotating that through the chair as appropriate.

We looked at the USOC model thinking about how directors are recommended from each of the constituent groups. The USOC method, for example, the snowboard rep, not the athlete rep, the USOC method would be for that snowboard sport committee to put forth two candidates they felt were qualified to the nominating and governance committee; the committee would vet both candidates with the job description, expectations, etc. of the role and then put forth, based upon those conversations, a candidate for the board to approve or disapprove. That method is one that we are still debating within the task force. There are some real benefits to that, of a more vigorous vetting of potential board members. In the past, we have had some challenges. Some had been selected who weren't really prepared

for the time commitment to contribute as an active member. This is an option to help insure that is not the case. This is still very much open to discussion.

There are other open areas with robust discussion taking place; the role of staff on committees from the existing model to a strengthened model as a staff liaison to having staff co-chairs with a volunteer chairman. The athlete election process is one in which we've had a lot of dialogue. Charles Christianson has been very involved in this. How can we help to enhance that process so we have more qualified athletes like James Southam and Charles in the future? And would it be possible to get to two nominees in the athlete election process that then went to the nominating and governance committee.

We are discussing the relationship between the audit committee and the board of directors and how that works. We are moving toward common discussion topics of the onboarding process so that there are clear expectations and understanding of what is expected as a board member.

And lastly, more administrative in nature, we wanted to ensure that we have clarity around expectations of the frequency of board meetings, executive committee meetings and in-person vs. telephonic meetings; proxy voting vs. non-proxy voting. How do we encourage in-person participation and so forth as the best type of meeting is in person where we are all together. This should give you a sense of the types of processes that we are talking about. He said Dexter said it appropriately when he said that not all of us are happy with every point in every conversation, but we are working toward good outcomes that will set us up with best practices 21<sup>st</sup> century governance over time.

Eliassen asked if there were ever a meeting taking place at a Grand Prix or other competition. Resnick replied that the Board of Trustees is always here for their meeting, but the USSA board generally does not meet at a competition.

Paine replied that the organization had one in-person meeting a year and one telephonic meeting. We've gone from a couple of sports to six or seven and have 55% of the OWG medals. We have over \$30 m in revenue. We have a huge facility and we just simply need to meet more often. We need to have the most qualified people sit on this board to help drive the organization. This is all around how do we make ourselves better? (And he acknowledged Eric, Lisa and Charlotte for their efforts so far). We need to get better and we need to meet more often and we need to deal with these more complex issues and it's important that we get these things right.

Eliassen referenced that she'd like to see this take place at more than just an alpine event. Paine concurred; he could not agree more. It was important to make this group understand all the various facets of the organization. The issues of nordic combined, jumping and PGS are probably more familiar than development and funding; on the other hand, alpine and freeskiing are enjoying popularity and the funding levels are different. That may be the greatest distinction between the sports these days and we need to pay attention and figure out how to provide some resources across the board and yet we focus on places where we can win Olympic medals because that ultimately drives this organization.

Boester indicated that he served as the liaison to the trustees and he applauded this board for leading the charge on governance to be ahead of what is mandated and, more importantly, we identify issues and this board is not only responsive but pro-active in thinking about these issues, thinking through and get ahead of them. What we've learned certainly at the USOC level is the more success we have in defining the right way to approach management, if anything, we become the model that everyone else wants to emulate. We have plenty of things we have to work on, but it's been a good conversation to have to get ahead and deliver back to the trustees that we are ahead of the issues and are

not having to be reactionary – waking up and reading something in the press and having to be reactive so I give this board a lot of credit on that front.

There was a question as to how many in-person meetings to schedule in a year. Resnick replied that this was under consideration but was not yet finalized.

Paine disclosed that we asked a lot of people to participate who frankly did not have the resources. One of the things we are addressing is paying for members of the board to come to the meeting; those who cannot afford to attend without a subsidy. I'd love to have four in-person meetings a year and monthly executive committee meetings, but there are interim solutions that we come up with so we don't say we have four meetings a year and no one shows up. If we start with two meetings a year, let's make sure people have the resources to be here if they need them, then let's get to three and then four.

Ingemie stated that they had had that problem and the solution was to cover the cost of two meetings a year, one at the Trade Show. 70% of the board take care of the expenses themselves and make that a donation but there are several people we would like to have as board members and they could not afford to go to that many meetings.

Resnick shared that he had been on a number of task forces, with Charlotte largely, and found that if you have two or three in-person meetings, the follow up teleconference meetings become a lot more productive. The more robust dialogue when we are in each other's faces, there is better conversation on the phone after. If it's disproportionately telephonic, it is less productive. So, these are some of the things that we are thinking about.

#### **SafeSport: Alex Natt**

Paine communicated that at the end there was an executive session that needed to occur, so we need to leave some time for that session. It's an issue that is timely and requires attention so with SafeSport as a background, did you want to discuss what the USOC is doing and how that is impacting us?

Natt said that the board was aware that he was a member of the USOC's SafeSport Working Group for the past few years. It started under the auspices of Nina Kemppel, who is a retired nordic athlete. Just last week, the USOC announced the empaneling of the first board of directors of the new National Center for SafeSport. That entity will be up and running in the first quarter of 2016. It is essentially a USADA type entity which will be charged with educating, investigating, and adjudicating any claim of sexualized conduct within the Olympic family. So we will no longer have jurisdiction over investigating any sexualized conduct claims within our organization.

National Governing Bodies are tasked with funding one third of that effort. For the first five years, USSA's share of that will be \$55k/year. One third will be borne by the USOC and another third through grant funding. If they don't receive those grants then the USOC will likely be supporting two thirds.

It's a great board that contains subject matter experts as well as child protection advocates and law enforcement. They will hire a professional staff and will investigate and adjudicate any claim of sexualized conduct within the Olympic family. The other types of conduct prohibited under SafeSport which include bullying, hazing, emotional and physical abuse that do not involve sexualized conduct will remain the responsibility of the NGBs to investigate. As this national center becomes more and more vocal about conduct that is prohibited we can expect a spike in the number of cases that we see and are required to investigate and adjudicate. That should flatten out over time. So be it. We will find the resources to do it. But we should expect a growth industry over the next few years. The

other types of conduct are also damaging to athletes and will continue to be our responsibility to investigate.

Paine reported there were two ratifications that he would like Natt to take care of;

Natt stated that the rotation schedule for Foundation members of the board – a note here; Mr. Leever had been an independent member of the board and he's been asked to join the Foundation slate so that leaves two at-large vacancies on the board. If there were no questions, he would request a motion to ratify.

**Foundation Board of Directors' Rotation Schedule: Alex Natt**

	Year Joined	Term Expires
Dan Leever*	2015	May, 2017
Kipp Nelson	Spring, 2006	May, 2016
Greg Boester	Spring, 2010	May, 2016
Eric Resnick	Spring, 2014	May, 2016

\* Moving from At-large to Foundation position on the board.

Motion #3: To ratify the Foundation Trustee nominations as presented.

M/S/C - D. Paine/T. Shaw

**Investment Committee Membership Change: Alex Natt**

Brian Leach has agreed to be on the Investment Committee as a voting member and we'd ask for a motion to ratify that appointment.

Motion #4: To ratify Brian Leach as a voting member of the USSA Investment Committee.

M/S/C - D. Paine/D. Landstrom

**USSA Events Cancellation: Dexter Paine and Calum Clark**

Paine queried if Chris Seemann was on the phone. He confirmed he was on the call. Paine said that Seemann had a concern around the discussion of potentially cancelling certain events, given our shortfall; but there is concern from some of our athletes, coaches and staff around the ability of our athletes to be competitive if we cancel events that may be our only event in the US in a certain discipline. He asked if there was anything else Seemann wished to add to that commentary. Seemann replied that we have had two competitions cancelled – a World Cup team aerials event and a Grand Prix slopestyle and it definitely puts a burden on our athletes to get results when you can't have the home court advantage. It's definitely a concern for us.

Paine responded that we cancelled a World Cup Team Aerials event and a slopestyle event. He asked staff to address this issue.

Shaw added that we were in a position where we needed to go through the entire budget and look for ways in which we could create some savings. Because our event budget is \$ 5 m and there are a plethora of events on which we lose money – each one is a major cost center. That caused us to take a look at this. The slopestyle event referenced is the Park City event and it became very complicated when Park City told us they weren't going to allow us to use King's Crown anymore and they offered what we considered to be a less than desirable trail in replacement.

Calum Clark said it would be difficult to explain to the board without going into an incredible number of nuances. The mission of the events department is to support athletic programs around events but not at the detriment of the entire organization. When Tiger, Luke and Brooke approached me on trying to meet budget, there were changes with the FIS, there were changes with Park City, which made for a very challenging environment and forced us back out into the market to find an alternate site for a Grand Prix, which didn't bear fruit at the level that we needed. We had to make some hard decisions and we came to the conclusion that the Park City Eagle halfpipe event is of such importance to the organization and has been a cornerstone of our ability to be best in the world that we were able and willing to step back from the slopestyle event for this one season, knowing that we needed to push forward next season.

When it came to aerials, it was a very tough conversation and decision and we looked at those events that were core to our mission as Olympic sports and we've been trying to also pursue new events like team Snowboardcross and team Aerials and put them out in the world in non-Olympic years to showcase that we have more options for Olympic sports or potential World Championship sports, and basically had to retract ourselves to the very core of Olympic-oriented events. The outcome of that is yes, athletes lose out on opportunities to be on TV and lose opportunities to win prize money which is troubling, but that was the rationale.

Bodensteiner added that we really have been pretty aggressive in our event program and there is a lot of benefit to hosting these events, i.e. relationships with the resorts, media, it's good for the brand, it provides athletes with home field opportunities, it provides training for the athletes and we've pushed the envelope on that, but when we got into the position where we knew we had to wind things back, I was grateful and impressed with the approach that Tiger and Brooke took to look everywhere but in the support that we provide to athletes. We needed to protect that. So we've had to give a bit on the events side, but we've kept the core athlete support and done the right moves on behalf of the athletes.

Paine reported that they had really debated this and spent a bunch of time talking about this. Events are a huge challenge because we spend \$5.5 m a year on events. That's a huge number for this organization. It's incredibly important; on the other hand, it's a lot of money. Tiger and I have discussed is there a better model – is there something better we can do in working with our partners.

We need to figure out ways that everyone walks away saying it's a huge benefit to hosting these events and everyone feels it's a benefit to their business model. That doesn't seem to be the case right now. You raised it with me and we didn't get it on the agenda, but it's an incredibly important issue so I wanted to make sure before getting to the end of the agenda that this was addressed. Seemann thanked everyone for the discussion.

#### **USSA Vision, Mission, Values, Goals and Objectives: Tiger Shaw et al**

Shaw commented that when he arrived at the organization a couple of years ago and we went through the long-term planning process, the output of that process resulted in a more than 500 page document. The next year we got it down to 55 pages. This year, I am proud to say we got it down to this one page with a dozen pages of backup. As we were doing that, we looked at everything top to bottom. We spent a lot of time as an organization in discussing our vision, mission, goals and objectives, and core values. It became clear that we had to understand what is a vision statement and how is that different from a mission statement. It's really clear, the vision is the desired future state of the organization, it's a mental picture; it's what we are focused on; it's a north star; it's got to be simple.

The mission is very different. The mission is what we do, for whom we do it, and how we do it. He noted that the red text were the revisions. We did not change the vision statement

because it's important that a vision statement endures leadership changes and guides the organization for a long period of time.

He noted that we had taken a lot of input on best in the world. That is our desire, to be the very best team in the world. We are broader than that, but it doesn't mean that you need a three or four sentence vision statement. So we stuck to it. A lot of people pushed us to change it but we said no, that is the simple thing that we want for the organization.

We came up with what is in red for the mission statement.

The Mission of the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association is to provide strong leadership that establishes and supports athletic excellence in accordance with core values.

The mission of the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association is to lead, encourage and support athletes in achieving excellence by empowering national teams, clubs, coaches, parents, officials, volunteers and fans.

Brooke McAfee discussed the core values. Tiger disclosed that this had been a wholesale, let's start from scratch and see where we land process. McAfee reiterated that we went through a long process led by Charlotte Moats and received a lot of community input and here is where we landed with the following seven core values; she asked Luke to address these.

Integrity	Action based on values rather than personal gain.
Passion	Motivation for doing what we love.
Fun	A fresh, positive, creative culture.
Team	Individual humility and collective pride.
Community	Exceptional stewardship and lifetime inclusiveness.
Excellence	Personal and collective wins every day.
Grit	Courage, tenacity and perseverance on the path to excellence.

Bodensteiner stated that he simply wished to highlight a few of these. It was a great process led by Charlotte and was very inclusive. We found core values that really engage everyone in the organization and brings them onto the same page. He said that a great one was excellence and that the very best coaches on our team were people who lived and breathed this day to day. When they have a training session with their athletes, every day, they are looking for that small win to push the bar forward a little bit. With everybody that is a part of this organization, it's incumbent upon all of us to do that same thing and go for the little wins every day as that is the only way we can be best in the world.

Fun, he said he did not know for sure, but he would venture to guess that we were the only NGB which had fun as a core value, which he thought was great. As Tiger stated in the morning meeting, we are all part of this business because these are all fun sports; we enjoy them; they are lifelong sports; it's what kids get attracted to; there is nothing more fun than winning.

Finally, community is really important and is something that has been a big focus of the organization and a big focus of Tiger's and we really feel the impact of that. This is a special community; it is a community of people who have been involved in these sports on a lifelong basis; people continue to stay engaged. While we may not be the biggest ski and snowboard association in the world financially, we have incredible community, which acts as a secret weapon for us. The more engaged they are, the more we will have performance out of our athletes. So, that's it.

McAfee communicated that similar to how our mission was expanded to reflect the broadened scope of our work, we also revised our goals. She said that the goals more

closely reflected how we would be working over the coming years. The goals align us so that we are all working toward the same targets. They help us in budget planning so as resources are allocated among the various initiatives, we make sure the investment will help us achieve our mission. The following are the goals with their objectives listed. The more specific objectives allow us to measure our performance – allow us to answer how we are doing and what can we do better.

### **Goal #1 – Achieve athletic excellence**

1. Win more medals than any other nation in Olympic skiing and snowboarding (Athletics)
2. Sustain our ability to be Best in the World through our development and sport education programs (Athletics)
3. Develop world class facilities and athletic opportunities (Athletics, Events)
4. Establish and implement best practices in athlete medical care (Athletics)
5. Develop a world-class sport science program to maximize athletic potential (Athletics)
6. Develop a world-class athlete career and education program to maximize athletic potential (Athlete Career and Education)

Bodensteiner discussed the first goal. He explained that there were six pillars to fulfill the athletic program and that we had a high focus on the top end and elite performance where we are attempting to be best in the world and trying to win the Olympics in 2018. There is a lot of focus and a lot of effort that goes into that. Along with that, in sport, you are only as good as your last competition. We have to be able to sustain that over time. We have to have development programs that continue to bring kids to the top.

Particularly in the last few years we've had a strong emphasis on training facilities development, the Center of Excellence obviously being one. He noted the work that was done at the Utah Olympic Park this year. The training that we are doing with the athletes gets more and more specific every year. We need these facilities; in some cases these facilities are advantages for us.

We have a heavy focus on sport science and sports medicine. These have yielded a lot of performance for our team and we are at a high level with that program. That will continue to be something that we remain heavily invested in. On the sports medicine side, obviously, the health and wellbeing of our athletes is hugely important. It's not just about rehab, it's about their physical condition and mental wellbeing, their health and fitness overall. We have a lot of partners with whom we have worked synergistically to build a robust program.

The final pillar is one that Jory leads. Macomber emphasized that the one key point in the phrase was to maximize athletic potential. We have an obligation of educating our athletes but we have to weave into that developing our athletes and keeping them in the sport as long as possible and supporting the vision of the organization.

McLane questioned that a gold medal counts the same as a bronze medal so have we ever thought about going a step further and weighting these? Bodensteiner replied that the world looks at these in one of two ways; it's difficult to see a gold medal count vs. a medal count. We, as an organization, have made a decision that we want to win medals and that is how we manage the program. It's a little different to manage against a gold medal count, where

gold is weighted higher than the bronze. We haven't put much emphasis on how this would change our organization, but it would have an effect.

There was a comment that we had this discussion in going through the strategic planning process where one gold medal is not the same as another gold medal. We discussed explicitly should some be worth more than others and what we decided there was no and that is why there are other criteria when we do prioritization such as relevancy of the sport, the size of the audience, the importance of the sponsors, donors and so forth that come into the prioritization of resources but we had that conversation.

McLane affirmed he would not want to go there on the sport differentiation. That would be a terrible idea. Bodensteiner said it was critical for us to be aligned with the USOC in terms of the way they look at team performances. They are focused on the total number of medals that the team wins.

### **Goal #2 – Grow the visibility of our sports**

1. Nurture strong relationships with the public through media and industry partnerships to raise the positive profile of the USSA's sports (Marketing)
2. Enhance relationships with resort partners (Events)
3. Enrich and diversify media and commercial partnerships (Marketing)
4. Drive global awareness and brand value (Marketing)
5. Drive and grow media impact (Communications)
6. Build fan interest through content (Communications)

Jaquet outlined the dual purpose of the sales and marketing department is to drive revenue and to increase exposure for all of our athletes and our events and our sports. Those work together pretty well. The more visibility we can gain, the better the value that we are driving back to our sponsors. The headline is we want to use our event properties and our TV operations to top line drive visibility to the sports.

Then, this year, with these goals, we are also trying to diversify ourselves on our visibility and that is speaking to digital and trying to diversify our revenue which if we can diversify digital we can diversify revenue. They are all linked together.

### **Goal #3 –Engage, lead, and grow our communities**

1. Increase membership (Member Services, Athletics)
2. Grow participation in competitive skiing and snowboarding (Athletics, Events)
3. Engage alumni, donors, members and fans (Foundation, Communications)
4. Lead and steward international governance (Board Chairman, Athletics, Legal)
5. Foster Trustee and major donor engagement (Foundation)

Worthington announced that engaging, leading and growing our communities from her perspective was important because it provided more opportunity for us to raise more funds. It also allows us to grow our support beyond our incredibly generous board of trustees. We have relied on them significantly year after year and we need to grow our donor base so we don't have to go back to them every time we need something significant.

A couple of examples of what we are doing to support this already include the investment in the major gift program with gift officers across the country. They are all working with portfolios of 100 to 125 donors outside of our board of trustees, engaging them to grow that support.

We've also made an investment in our direct marketing program. It's quite small right now at 7,000 people supporting us with on-line donations which is a small number for an organization of our size. So we are working to increasing that number over the next few years.

#### **Goal #4 – Cultivate organizational excellence**

1. Positive staff culture (HR)
2. Enhance business processes and build efficiencies (Finance and HR)
3. Implement innovative technology solutions (IT)
4. Foster an efficient Board governance process (Legal)
5. Establish and implement best practices in athlete safety (SafeSport, Legal)

McAfee discussed cultivating organizational excellence. We want the USSA to be a great place to work and so the areas I am focused on are positive staff culture. We are looking specifically this year at the onboarding and off-boarding process, implementing a 401k match in 2017 and do an employee survey to learn what is valuable to them and then working to implement some process or change based on this input.

#### **Goal #5 –Achieve financially sustainable growth**

1. Increase operating income to build organizational reserves (Finance)
2. Sustain, grow and diversify foundation fundraising revenue (Foundation)
3. Sustain, grow and diversify marketing sponsorship and media revenue (Marketing)
4. Sustain and grow USOC funding and relationships (Athletics)
5. Sustain and grow FIS funding and relationships (Board Chairman)
6. Maximize athletic funding (Finance)

The last goal she explained that financially sustainable growth was very important at this time for the organization. Increasing our revenue and building up our reserves once we pay down our line of credit. Building some net income and being able to have organizational reserves were really important for the long-term success of the organization.

She also wished to highlight maximizing athletic funding. This objective focuses on our expense policies and procedures and making sure we are diligent and efficient in looking at where our funding is spent in addition to growing revenue. The goal is through tighter practices we are able to maximize the funding that's available for our athletes and athletic budget.

She closed stating that if anyone had feedback on these, we were still open to making changes to these. Boester made a comment to broaden the survey to more than just the staff.

Paine asked if there is no further discussion, he requested a motion for approval of the changes to the mission, core values, as well as approval of the goals and objectives that were distributed in the board packets.

Motion #5: To approve the amendments to the USSA's mission and values and approve the goals and objectives as outlined.

M/S/C - D. Landstrom/D. Paine

Paine complimented Shaw on the leadership he exhibited on this piece.

#### **9. Next USSA Board Meeting: Dexter Paine**

The next in-person meeting is the board meeting at the USSA Congress May 15, 2016, DoubleTree Hotel, Park City, UT. We will have a telephonic board meeting in March, always a challenge in the midst of the season but we will try to have a two-hour meeting at that point.

#### **10. Closing Comments & Motion to Adjourn: Dexter Paine**

In closing, Paine described that we had talked briefly about events. There are a bunch of other areas, events being one of them, where we have a lot of work to do and where we need to focus on that. Having said that, focus is a real issue right now and this is a management team that has a lot going on and we need to continue to prioritize and make sure we focus on three things and get those done, and then move on to the next three things and get those done.

Paine disclosed that he would appreciate feedback from everyone here in terms of what you think some of those priorities are as we move into 2016. Right now, we need to complete the governance piece, we just got the mission done, we need to obviously continue to focus on the athletic piece and be high-achieving there. But I would appreciate if there are other items besides events that you think we need to address from a task force perspective or we as a board should spend an hour talking about vs. five minutes. Please get back to me or Tiger or Alex and we will make sure that we get these onto the agenda for either the call in March or the board meeting in May.

Natt said there was a question for Mr. Leever as to whether he was going to be able to provide periodic reports soon on development and the reply was yes.

Paine agreed that it would be great at the next telephonic meeting to have Dan Leever address some of the historical things we found; not necessarily conclusions out of that but you've done a lot of quantitative work with Luke and it would be helpful for people to be able to appreciate some of the groundwork that has been done because it will help with the sense of where we are headed.

Leever confirmed that the project would not be completed until the end of the winter but that if time could be allocated in March he could discuss this.

Anecdotally, Paine shared that Lynn Dorsey Bleil was present and he remembered, while doing the McKinsey work, somehow she had interviewed Dan Leever and she called asking if I had seen the paper that he had put together. His reply had been that he had no idea who that was and what was she talking about. She said she would send it to him. It's a 20 page paper about the quantitative analysis of alpine development. And it's pretty remarkable. My sense is that we are doing phase II of that as part of this discussion. To

give everyone a sense, he was talking to coaches and asking how do we make sure we have the best coaches on the hill. Should we have US coaches on the hill? If so, what will we do to develop them as US coaches vs. foreign coaches? And it probably needs to be a mix. Those are the kinds of questions that are going to be tackled in what Dan's work.

Paine affirmed that there is never enough time, but that he would ask for a motion to conclude the board meeting and then ask that all non-board members please leave the room with the exception of Jim Benedict and Kevin Arquit who are going to stay.

Charles Christianson announced that this was his last in-person meeting as the athlete rep and he wanted to thank those who helped him and he appreciated the engagement of the board, thanking Darryl Landstrom and Luke Bodensteiner specifically for their guidance. He said that the engagement that we are talking about here is filtering down to the athletes and this is being represented in the discussions he is having from people who, for lack of a better word, mistrusted the USSA – these are team athletes from three years ago and how they feel now is pretty remarkable. Even in the athlete elections currently going on there are people recently retired, people who are still skiing, and even a former athlete emailed me as someone who is removed from the sport and asked can I really make an impact and to be able to say yes to that and light the fire in the athletes is a cool thing so, from the athlete side, people see the work that you are doing.

Paine reminded the group that there was an alumni reception going on downstairs.

Natt said we would be adjourning the USSA meeting and moving into executive session to discuss a litigation matter so if all non-board members could please leave the room.

The USSA Board of Directors' meeting adjourned.

## Executive Session

Minutes transcribed by Suzette 12/30/15;  
Legal, Financial and Executive review completed 1/29/16

## Addendum 1: USSA Board of Directors' Agenda

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Saturday, December 5, 2015

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., Juniper Room, Beaver Creek Lodge

26 Avondale Lane, Beaver Creek, CO 81620

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Meeting chair: Dexter Paine

1. Chairman Calls the USSA Board Meeting to Order Dexter Paine
  - ▶ Moment of Silence for Bob Dart and David Arnold
2. Roll Call & Establishment of Quorum Alex Natt
3. USSA September 2015 Meeting Minutes' Approval Alex Natt
4. Chairman's Comments Dexter Paine
5. Chief Executive Officer's Report Tiger Shaw
6. Financial Report Brooke McAfee
7. Ratification of the Executive Committee's Decision Rescinding the May 2016 Alpine Equipment Matrix Alex Natt
8. Old/New Business
  - ▶ USSA Governance Task Force Report Eric Resnick/Lisa Kosglow
  - ▶ Foundation Board of Directors' Rotation Schedule Alex Natt

	Year Joined	Term Expires
Dan Leever*	2015	May, 2017
Kipp Nelson	Spring, 2006	May, 2016
Greg Boester	Spring, 2010	May, 2016
Eric Resnick	Spring, 2014	May, 2016

\* Moving from At-large to Foundation position on the board.
  - ▶ Investment Committee Membership Change Alex Natt
  - ▶ USSA Vision, Mission, Values, Goals and Objectives  
Presented by Tiger Shaw, Brooke McAfee and Vice Presidents
9. Next USSA Board Meeting Dexter Paine
  - ▶ May 15, 2016, DoubleTree Hotel, Park City, UT
10. Closing Comments & Motion to Adjourn Dexter Paine

Executive Session

## Addendum 2: Alpine Equipment Matrix

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You will recall that at the May Congress, the Alpine Sports Committee brought forth a proposal which involved creation of a matrix to address ski length issues for junior racers. The proposal was intended to fill a gap in junior racing where the FIS has not published rules. Certain assumptions regarding equipment marking and controls turned out not to be sustainable and now the Alpine Sport Executive Committee would recommend rescinding the May 2016 action as compliance has proven very difficult. Alex Natt

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When considering equipment specifications for U16 and U14 athletes at the 2015 Congress, the Alpine Sports Committee was trying to weigh specifications that were in line with what was available by the manufacturers, as well as allow for a progression of equipment as athletes got older. Following the FIS equipment rule changes in 2012-2013, the ASC has had considerable feedback that the specifications need to allow for a wide variety of athlete sizes and abilities, and also accommodate existing inventories between the manufacturers and the used market.

FIS does not have regulations for U16 DH or for U14 DH or SG – because USSA does allow for racing in these disciplines at these age groups, the ASC wanted to be sure that there is appropriate regulation.

During Congress 2015, the assumption was that all manufactures mark their equipment by discipline – that turned out not to be the case. The direction taken was that, if we can require skis that are manufactured for the discipline, we can be rid of the length and side cut requirements.

However, about a month ago, a parent called asking about a certain ski as it was not marked with a discipline designation. After that call, staff began to check with manufacturers to ensure that everyone was aware of and able to comply with the currently-approved specifications. We subsequently found numerous manufacturers that did not comply with the event-marking requirements. Considering the fact that many athletes have already bought their equipment for the year, the Alpine Sport Executive Committee determined that a change in the equipment rules for the 2015-2016 season was necessary.

The expectation is that in the next few years, as all old stock is removed from inventory and trade-downs, we will be able to move and directly adopt the FIS regulations and only need to have a variance where no FIS regulation exists.

A task force is being established by staff, including coaches and equipment representatives, to review current rules and determine appropriate rules and timelines for moving to adoption of the FIS Equipment regulations. The work of that task force will be presented at Congress 2016. Darryl Landstrom

**Alpine FIS and USSA**

**Equipment Rules 2015-16**

**21-Oct-15**

	OWG, WSC, WC, WJC, all COC including NAC		FIS/ENL		USSA U19 (16 years old) and older*		USSA U16 (15 and 14 years old) For season 2015-16 the following specifications are recommendations - not requirements		USSA U14 (13 and 12 years old) For season 2015-16 the following specifications are recommendations - not requirements		Masters ***	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Men & Women	
Minimum Ski Length	DH	218 cm	210 cm	213 cm	205 cm	210 cm	205 cm	DH or SG **	DH or SG **	DH or SG **	see note below	
	SG	210 cm	205 cm	205 cm	200 cm	200 cm	195 cm	183 cm - SG or GS **	SG or GS **	SG or GS **		
	GS	195 cm	188 cm	190 cm	183 cm	180 cm	175 cm	GS **	GS **	GS **		
	SL	165 cm	155 cm	165 cm (155 cm for 16 year olds)	155 cm	165 cm (155 cm for U19 men)	155 cm	SL **	SL **	SL **		
Minimum Ski Radius	DH	50 m		50 m		45 m		DH or SG **		DH or SG **		see note below
	SG	45 m	40 m	45 m	40 m	33 m	23 m	27 m	17 m	SG or GS **		
	GS	35 m	30 m	35 m	30 m	no rule		no rule		GS **		
	SL	no rule		no rule		no rule		no rule		no rule		
Profile Width Under Binding	DH	max 65 mm		max 65 mm		not restricted		not restricted		not restricted		see note below
	SG	min 63 mm		min 63 mm		min 63 mm		not restricted		not restricted		
	GS	min 63 mm		min 63 mm		min 63 mm		not restricted		not restricted		
	SL	min 63 mm		min 63 mm		min 63 mm		not restricted		not restricted		
Maximum Binding Stack Height	50 mm		50 mm		50 mm		50 mm		50 mm		50 mm	
Measurement includes ski + plate + binding	43 mm		43 mm		43 mm		43 mm		43 mm		45 mm	
Maximum Boot Height	43 mm		43 mm		43 mm		43 mm		43 mm		45 mm	
Measurement from sole to top of foot bed	43 mm		43 mm		43 mm		43 mm		43 mm		45 mm	

\* In USSA U19 (16 years old) and older racing, athletes may use equipment that conforms to either the rules as outlined for USSA racing or as outlined for FIS/ENL racing. Athletes are encouraged to use equipment that conforms to FIS/ENL to enhance their adaptation to those specifications.

\*\* Where the rule above only notes an event (no measurement listed), or combination of events, (e.g. U14 SG as SG or GS) the requirement is that the ski must be marked by the manufacture with that event designation.

\*\*\* USSA Masters rules conform to the FIS Masters equipment rules. USSA recommends that competitors in USSA Masters events compete on equipment designed for the particular discipline (DH, SL, GS, SG), but does not make any recommendations in regards to ski length, radius or profile width.

\*\*\* For FIS Masters Competitions, equipment rules in regard to ski length (except SG), radius and profile width are recommendations. The minimum ski length for SG skis is compulsory for MAS races. No length, width or ski radius restriction for ladies above 55 and men above 65 years of age. The FIS recommendations for ski length, ski radius and profile width can be found in the current FIS Specifications for Competition Equipment.

**NOTE: The jury is empowered to prevent an athlete from starting if equipment is deemed inappropriate for the event being contested.**

NOTE: U12 and younger athletes should limit skis based upon the recommendations in the Alpine Training System and the Course Setting matrix. U12 - 2 pairs (SL, GS), length skill/size appropriate. U10 - 1 pair (multi-event), length skill/size appropriate.