

**USA Federation for Sport Cheering
Board of Directors Meeting
December 9, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 1:33 p.m. CDT by Lauri Harris via ZOOM video/teleconference.

The following members of the Board of Directors participated in the meeting:

- Melanie Berry
- Rhonda Blanford-Green (*joined at 1:59 p.m. CDT*)
- Mike Burgess (non-voting)
- Jim Chadwick
- Buffy Duhon
- Jesa Herman
- Jim Lord (non-voting)
- Ryan O'Connor
- Bill Seely (*joined at 1:59 p.m. CDT*)
- Christa Sanford
- Carolyn Shoemaker
- John Stuart (*joined at 1:41 p.m. CDT*)
- Lee Trudell
- Justin Carrier

Absent from the meeting:

- Kim Kaye
- Ben Schreiber

Attending the meeting were the following:

- Lauri "Looie" Harris, Executive Director
- Landon Craft, Treasurer (*left at 2:36 p.m. CDT*)
- Jessica Chatto, Assistant Secretary
- Danika H. Mendrygal, Attorney, Mendrygal Law PLLC
- Lynne Howard, Paralegal, Mendrygal Law PLLC

Approval of October 2021 Minutes – Lauri Harris

- Lauri referenced the draft minutes of the October 7, 2021 meeting of the Board of Directors, previously circulated to the Board for review. Lauri opened a discussion for comments or revisions.
- With no comments or revisions raised, upon motion by Lee Trudell to approve the minutes as circulated, seconded by Melanie Berry, and carried without dissent, the October 7, 2021 minutes were unanimously approved.

Announcements – Lauri Harris

- Lauri displayed the meeting agenda by remote technology and shared announcements regarding STUNT Nationals, the Premier National Teams, the Juniors and Youth Division Teams, and Special Olympics.

Jon Stuart joined the meeting at 1:41 p.m. CDT

Safe Sport Update – Lauri Harris and Jim Lord

- Lauri turned the discussion over to Jim Lord to present an update on USA Cheer’s activities related to athlete protection.
- Jim reminded the Board on the unified reporting process, detailing how incoming reports are managed and investigated. He reported that the number of abuse reports are decreasing since the initial increase experienced following the 2020-2021 media reports on abuse in the cheer community, and that the majority of reports are currently related to bullying, hazing, and policy violation. Jim emphasized that USA Cheer remains focused on education initiatives as being key to the prevention of athlete abuse, and discussed the significance of the “no 1-to-1 communications” policy. He also reported on the status and outcomes of four (4) investigations referred to Players Health, and two (2) appeals for denial of USA Cheer membership.
- Lauri commented on USA Cheer’s education and awareness initiatives planned for 2022, reiterating USA Cheer’s overarching goal for safeguarding. The Board engaged in discussion, and Jim and Lauri responded to questions.

Safety Certification Update – Lauri Harris and Jim Lord

- Lauri displayed by remote technology a graph analyzing the number of Safety & Risk Management courses completed across all participation levels during the period of 2017-2021, and invited Jim Lord to present an update to the Board.
- Jim discussed the trends demonstrated by the graph. Key takeaways noted in his update included (i) 2021 course completion figures are approaching pre-pandemic levels, (ii) course delivery on the USA Cheer platform is showing growth over the NFHS learning site, and (iii) on-site (in-person) course delivery has been eliminated. Jim asked for questions from the Board and there were none.

Bill Seely and Rhonda Blanford-Green joined the meeting at 1:59 p.m. CDT

Membership Update – Lauri Harris and Jessica Chatto

- Lauri displayed by remote technology the figures on memberships across all participant categories over the period of 2019-2021, and invited Jessica Chatto to provide an update to the Board. Jessica briefly reviewed the membership categories, and reported expansion in USA Cheer’s member base and growth of memberships across all categories. She further noted that the number of memberships are anticipated to rise over the next few months, particularly in the STUNT categories. Lauri added that the membership course and certification requirements are an effective tool for rolling out education, particularly on the athlete level. Lauri opened for questions from the Board and there were none.

Financial Update – Lauri Harris

- Lauri displayed by remote technology the preliminary 2022 budget. She reviewed the income and expense projections with the Board, and discussed variables in the projections. She reported that the budget is anticipated to be finalized first quarter 2022, once the organization has a clearer indication of revenue sources and anticipated expenses, particularly around events.
- Danika Mendrygal briefly referenced USA Cheer’s financial and contract approval protocols, and recommended that the Board consider approving the preliminary 2022 budget, with the understanding a revised, finalized budget is planned to be provided in the coming months.
- Upon motion by Bill Seely, seconded by Jim Chadwick, and carried without dissent, the 2022 preliminary budget was unanimously approved.

Governance – Lauri Harris

- Lauri refreshed the Board on the extensive process undertaken in connection with evaluating USA Cheer's governance structure and exploring alternatives to strengthen USA Cheer and support USA Cheer's growth. She shared with the Board by remote technology a working proposal outlining recommendations for a new Board structure. Lauri discussed the proposal in detail, noting it was developed with an eye towards rounding out membership on the Board with independent, functional expertise, strategic sports representation, and active athlete representation, all aligned with USOPC guidelines. Lauri noted the restructure contemplates utilizing sports-focused task forces and other committees in an advisory role to the Board, which would allow room to diversify membership on the Board.
- Lauri also informed that USA Cheer is targeting to implement the restructure in first quarter 2022 and will include revising the Bylaws and implementing task forces and committees to complement the new Board structure.
- B. Seely and R. Blanford-Green provided favorable feedback on the working proposal. Lauri opened for additional questions and feedback and there were none.

Landon Craft left the meeting at 2:36 p.m.

Next Board Meeting/Other Business – Lauri Harris

- Lauri informed that the proposed Bylaws revisions and the final 2022 budget will be circulated to the Board in advance of the next meeting, currently planned to be held February 2022.

With no further questions or additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:41 p.m. CDT.

Respectfully submitted,



Lauri Harris, Executive Director