



USAWE Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: November 16, 2020

Meeting Time: 5:30 p.m. Pacific, 6:30 p.m. Mountain, 7:30 p.m. Central, 8:30 p.m. Eastern

Meeting Modality: Zoom

Board Members Present		Board Members Absent	
President	Leslie Martien	President Elect	Barbara Price
Secretary	Julie Alonzo		
At Large Director 1	Trisha Kiefer-Reed		
At Large Director 2	Doreen Atkinson		
R1 Director	Kristine Strasburger		
R2 Director	Robin Bond		
R3 Director	Cindy Branham		
R4 Director	Kiki Pantaze		
R5 Director	Alex Tyson		
R6 Director	Kimberley Hillyer		
R7 Director	Rebecca Algar		

Current # of Board members = 12. BOD members required for Quorum = 6. # of BOD members in attendance = 11. Quorum was established.

USAWE Adult Members in attendance:

Kris Blacklock
Lidia Taylor
Rebecca Yount
Karen Boso
Carmen Franco

President Martien called the meeting to order at 6:32, Mountain time.

Appointment of Treasurer

Leslie Martien caught the Board up on the current state of USAWE financial details. USAWE does not currently have a bank account but has been paying for things, as needed, using both WE United and the Confederation's bank accounts so far. USAWE has a PayPal account, with \$4000 of start-up funds (less processing fees) from each of WE United and the Confederation as well as additional monies from membership fees collected to date. The balance in the PayPal account at the time of the Board meeting was just over \$13,500. Currently, all USAWE funds are being held in that PayPal account.

Secretary Julie Alonzo suggested that USAWE send notification to the membership to solicit applications for Treasurer.

President Leslie Martien agreed that this might make a great deal of sense.

R1 Director, Kristine Strasburger, suggested that we create a job application (via Google Form) and request people to apply by a given deadline. Suggests that we include a request for references.

At-Large Director Doreen Atkinson, reminded the Board that the Treasurer doesn't sign checks; there is a



requirement that two officers sign off on any checks made. There's also a financial oversight committee to set up.

President Martien asked R1 Director Kristine Strasburger if the two could work together to create a Google Form for the application.

R1 Director Kristine Strasburger indicated that she could assist with this and could get it done in the next day or two.

Doreen Atkinson made a motion to:

Motion: Authorize Kristine Strasburger to work with Leslie Martien to create a Google Form to send out to members for application for Treasurer.

Motion was seconded by Rebecca Algar.

➤ **The motion passed unanimously by voice vote with no “nays” heard.**

Social Media Presence

President Leslie Martien had earlier shared a draft Social Media Presence document with the Board, provided to her by At-Large Director Trisha Kiefer-Reed. She asked Trisha to provide an overview of the Social Media Presence policy document. The goal of this document is to provide a uniform approach for the organization to have a presence on social media.

President Leslie Martien suggested that the Social Media Presence might have a tie-in with a Communications Committee (which the organization doesn't yet have).

Secretary Julie Alonzo encouraged the idea of having Regional Directors provide content for the USAWE Facebook page and granting them all access to that page. She thought it would work well to have the people posting on the main USAWE Facebook Page work with a communications team.

R4 Director Kiki Pantaze offered to set up Regional pages and add each Regional Director as an Admin on each of those pages.

R5 Director Alex Tyson asked about whether the idea was to set up an Instagram and possibly TikTok or other such media account as well.

Secretary Julie Alonzo indicated that she would add R4 Director Kiki Pantaze and R5 Director Alex Tyson as Admins to the existing USAWE.org Facebook page.



Julie Alonzo made a motion to:

Motion: Adopt the Social Media Presence policy document. Authorize all Regional Directors to post information that might be of interest to members on the main USAWE Facebook page as well as Regional pages, set up for this purpose. The group would be further authorized to set up additional social media outlets.

Motion was seconded by Leslie Martien.

➤ **The motion passed unanimously by voice vote with no “nays” heard.**

Appointment or Re-Appointment of Committee Chairs

Some committees had committee chairs appointed during the merger process and appear to be functioning well. President Leslie Martien asked At Large Director Doreen Atkinson for her input on the LOC. At-Large Director Doreen Atkinson expressed interest in continuing to serve as chair as the LOC. She indicated that she has the confidence of the current Licensed Officials.

President Leslie Martien indicated that she has discussed it with Christy Reich as well, and Christy has indicated interest in serving as Chair on that committee.

R3 Director Cindy Branham asked for clarification about why Leslie thought it might be “awkward” to have a Licensed Official serve as Chair of the LOC.

President Leslie Martien clarified that the comment came from the desire to avoid a conflict of interest or a perceived conflict of interest.

R2 Director Robin Bond added her thoughts that the perception of a conflict is often just as important as a true conflict.

R4 Director Kiki Pantaze indicated that she didn’t believe that it would be an issue to have a Licensed Official as Chair of that committee.

President Leslie Martien indicated that it is her belief that Chairs of committees / Presidents of organizations, etc. tend to have more power than a single vote might indicate.

Secretary Julie Alonzo added her support for Doreen continuing to serve on the LOC, but encouraged the Board to think about bringing in new people to serve in leadership roles.

President Leslie Martien asked the group to think about the value that Doreen can bring as a mentor on the LOC, as a way to continue to grow additional leaders.

R7 Director Rebecca Algar indicated that Doreen has done a great job with the LOC and also emphasized that she believes it is important that a Licensed Official be in the position of Chair, who might be grooming someone to take over in 12 months’ time. The reason is that some of the questions that come to the LOC, some of the problems, are very complicated. If you’re not a licensed official, it’s very hard to understand how something might have happened.



At-Large Director Trisha Kiefer-Reed commented on how she appreciates the camaraderie and willingness of people to work together, she expressed concern about the perception of the “old guard” simply carrying on.

R3 Director Cindy Branham indicated support for having a licensed official chairing the committee.

Secretary Julie Alonzo commented that she questioned some judgement on the part of Doreen in sending out emails to all licensed officials related to the rules discussion that resulted in a flurry of emails.

R4 Director Kiki Pantaze pointed out that Secretary Alonzo had posted on her personal Facebook page about the same topic, and that post also resulted in a flurry of emails.

Rebecca Algar made a motion to:

Motion: Appoint Doreen Atkinson and Christy Reich as co-Chairs of the USAWE Licensed Officials Committee.

Motion was seconded by Alex Tyson.

Kiki Pantaze made a motion to amend:

Motion to Amend: Appoint Doreen Atkinson as the sole Chair of the USAWE Licensed Officials Committee.

Motion was not seconded and therefore was not taken up.

The Board then voted on the main motion

- **The main motion passed by roll call vote with 10 in favor and 1 opposed.**

VOTES RECORDED

Region 1 Kristine Strasburger - Yes	Region 7 Rebecca Algar - Yes
Region 2 Robin Bond - Yes	At-Large Director 1 Trisha Keifer-Reed - Yes
Region 3 Cindy Branham - Yes	At-Large Director 2 Doreen Atkinson - Yes
Region 4 Kiki Pantaze - No	Secretary Julie Alonzo - Yes
Region 5 Alex Tyson - Yes	
Region 6 Kim Hillyer - Yes	President Leslie Martien - Yes

Leslie Martien made a motion to:

Motion: Re-affirm the appointment of Jeanne Bond as Chair of Competitions Committee; Mindy Finelli as Chair of Membership & Horse Recording Committee; Trisha Keifer-Reed as Chair of Coaches Committee; Kristine Strasburger as Chair of Website Committee; and Jeanne Bond as Chair of Rules Committee.

Motion was seconded by Robin Bond.



Discussion on the motion:

President Leslie Martien shared the view that Jeanne Bond would prefer to have the Rules Committee operate as a separate entity.

A number of other board members expressed their opinions that the rules need to belong to USAWE, and be under the USAWE umbrella.

The Board will be looking for chairs for a variety of committees, including marketing, publications, and financial oversight.

President Leslie Martien reported that the Membership Team, with Mindi Finelli as chair and Olga Hendrickson, Chris Stanko, and Julie Alonzo is doing great work. At the time of the meeting, they had already processed over 300 members in the two weeks since the website went live.

- **The motion passed unanimously by voice vote with no “nays” heard.**

Approval of Rules version 4

- Version 4 of the Rules for Working Equitation had previously been shared with the Board.

Kiki Pantaze made a motion to:

Motion: Approve version 4 of the US Rules for Working Equitation.

Motion was seconded by Rebecca Algar.

Discussion on the motion:

President Leslie Martien opened the floor for discussion.

R7 Director Rebecca Algar expressed her opinion that a competition is not the correct place to be showcasing a blind horse in that it takes away from the integrity of the training. She indicated that she does not in any way want to take away from the accomplishments of the person who has previously competed with a blind horse. She brought up concern about insurance and liability. She also brought up the idea that the sport is based on working cattle in the Iberian Peninsula. She believes that Morgan and Endo have done amazing things.

Secretary Julie Alonzo shared that she would not vote against the rules, yet she believes it is a bad idea not to allow blind horses to compete.

President Leslie Martien commented that she has received a lot of well-written and thoughtful commentary from members from across the regions. She commented that because this is a four-phase sport, and that in her mind a blind horse could never successfully compete in a cattle trial. If we start to make exceptions, where do those exceptions stop? She expressed concerns about the possibility of liability. But given the strong feeling that so many people have about horses and riders that are differently abled, she is not against us at some point developing a program for people and horses that are differently abled.



R5 Director Alex Tyson echoed Leslie’s suggestion that we consider developing a program for people and horses that are differently-abled. She suggests that it might be in the organization’s best interests to approve the rules as they currently are, suggesting that a proposal for creating a new category for horses/riders that are differently-abled could be ironed out in the future.

At Large Director Doreen Atkinson expressed that as a judge she worries about the next blind horse that comes in. If she sees a dangerous situation with a blind horse in the arena, it would be too late to address it in the middle of a competition.

President Leslie Martien indicated that she believes it is important to get the rules passed. If Morgan is determined to continue showing Endo, she could support some sort of an exception if it were fully covered by insurance. She is concerned that if that section of the rules were excluded, we would be putting show managers in a bad position.

R3 Director Cindy Branham expressed the worry that the Board is not looking for a compromise. If we don’t find compromise, then where does that leave us? Could the wording be changed to allow a fully blind horse to do exhibition performances at a competition?

Cindy Branham made a motion to amend the main motion:

Motion: Approve version 4 of the US Rules for Working Equitation with the following modification: change “participate” to “compete” in the section of the rules related to fully blind horses.

Motion to amend was seconded by Trisha Kiefer-Reed.

R4 Director Kiki Pantaze expressed her concerns about whether the organization would be liable and asked if the insurance had been looked into yet.

R2 Director Robin Bond expressed that she is just as concerned about how blind horses handle the barn environment as she is about how they handle the competition.

R6 Director Kim Hillyer asked for clarification on process – whether the Board has the right to make changes to the rules.

Secretary Julie Alonzo re-shared the section from the Bylaws that R5 Director Alex Tyson had shared earlier, “Article 7 section 5 addresses the Rules Committee, and while they are responsible for "maintaining the rules" and "soliciting rule change proposals". They are also not able to make "board level decisions". Section 12 regarding Limitation of Powers in the same article goes on to clarify: "The Board of Directors shall always have the power to amend, alter, or repeal the decisions of committees, subject to limitations on the unilateral amending of contracts, interference with third party rights, and other legal limitations."

R1 Director Kristine Strasburger asked for clarification about the difference in meaning of “compete” versus “participate”.

President Leslie Martien explained that the difference is that an exhibition performance is not part of the actual competition, but they would be able to showcase their horse and their training to those in attendance.

R4 Director Kiki Pantaze again emphasized her concern about insurance and potential liability.



At-Large Director Trisha Kiefer-Reed reminded the Board that a fully-blind horse has already competed at licensed competitions for years.

Secretary Julie Alonzo suggested that we approve Version 4 of the rules as presented tonight with the understanding that the Board will address this issue with our insurance company and follow-up at a future meeting should the insurance company’s response indicate that they would not have a problem issuing insurance with the rules allowing a blind horse to compete.

R3 Director Cindy Branham indicated that she did not want to change the wording in her motion. She would rather the Board vote on it with the language she used, and then if it should not pass, and the USAWE insurance indicates there is no issue with blind horses competing, a rule change proposal could be submitted in the normal rule change proposal cycle.

The Board voted on the motion to amend the main motion made by Cindy Branham:

Motion: Approve version 4 of the US Rules for Working Equitation with the following modification: change “participate” to “compete” in the section of the rules related to fully blind horses.

➤ **The motion failed to pass with 5 in favor and 6 against.**

VOTES RECORDED for motion to amend

Region 1 Kristine Strasburger - Yes	Region 7 Rebecca Algar - No
Region 2 Robin Bond - No	At-Large Director 1 Trisha Keifer-Reed - Yes
Region 3 Cindy Branham - Yes	At-Large Director 2 Doreen Atkinson - No
Region 4 Kiki Pantaze - No	Secretary Julie Alonzo - Yes
Region 5 Alex Tyson - Yes	
Region 6 Kim Hillyer - No	President Leslie Martien - No

The Board returned to the Main Motion made by Kiki Pantaze to:

Motion: Approve version 4 of the US Rules for Working Equitation.

Motion was seconded by Rebecca Algar.

➤ **The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.**

VOTES RECORDED

Region 1 Kristine Strasburger - Yes	Region 7 Rebecca Algar - Yes
Region 2 Robin Bond - Yes	At-Large Director 1 Trisha Keifer-Reed - Yes
Region 3 Cindy Branham - Yes	At-Large Director 2 Doreen Atkinson - Yes
Region 4 Kiki Pantaze - Yes	Secretary Julie Alonzo - Yes
Region 5 Alex Tyson - Yes	
Region 6 Kim Hillyer - Yes	President Leslie Martien - Yes



Determine Regular Meeting Times/Dates

- Proposed – the final Monday of the month – President Leslie Martien advised the Board that she would send out a Doodle poll to try to find a day/time that will work for future Board meetings.

President Leslie Martien adjourned the meeting at 9:15, Mountain Time.

Minutes submitted by Julie Alonzo, USAWE Secretary