



USAWE Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: April 12, 2021

Meeting Time: 5:00 p.m. Pacific, 6:00 p.m. Mountain, 7:00 p.m. Central, 8:00 p.m. Eastern

Meeting Modality: Zoom

Board Members Present		Board Members Absent at Roll Call	
President	Leslie Martien	Treasurer	Erin O’Shaughnessy
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 = 13. BOD members required for Quorum = 7. # of BOD members in attendance = 12. Quorum was established.

Board Members in Attendance After Roll Call

Erin O’Shaughnessy

USAWE Adult Members in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Christy Reich, LOC Co-Chair
Jeanne Bond, Chair, Competitions & Rules Committees
Leesa Nero, Ethics Committee Chair
Susan Watkins, R2 Member

President Martien called the meeting to order at 6:18 PM, Mountain time.

LIABILITY RELEASE FORM FOR GENERAL CLUB LIABILITY

Leslie Martien, President, made a motion to:

Motion: Approve the Liability Release Form for General Club Liability for Equisure, including the photography release paragraph.

Motion was seconded by Kristine Strasburger, R1 Director.

- **The motion passed by voice vote with one “nay” heard.**



MARKETING / PUBLICATIONS / WEBSITE CANDIDATES & MARKETING COMMITTEE

President Elect Barbara Price had previously shared the marketing/publications/website candidates and marketing structure idea with the Board in advance of the meeting. She had been working with Kiki Pantaze and Kristine Strasburger on these documents asked the Board to adopt these guidelines as a starting point.

Barbara Price, President-Elect, made a motion to:

Motion: The USA Working Equitation Board of Directors hereby approves the marketing committee description as provided in Attachment A entitled USA Working Equitation Marketing Committee and dated April 2021.

Motion was seconded by Kiki Pantaze, R4 Director.

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

Julie Alonzo, Secretary, made a motion to:

Motion: Appoint Kiki Pantaze (Chair) and Heather Hiller to the Marketing Committee along with Jody Fontanetta and Stephanie Kame (Graphic Design), and Julie Alonzo, Gillian Ockner, and Adrienne Raymond (Website/Publications). To ensure continuity, preliminary marketing team members Kristine Strasburger and Barbara Price will provide oversight and assistance to the Marketing Committee for several months.

Motion was seconded by Leslie Martien, President.

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

BANNER PROPOSAL

Barbara Price had previously shared information about providing USA Working Equitation banners and a mock-up of a banner, designed by Kiki Pantaze, R4 Director.





Barbara Price, President-Elect, made a motion to:

Motion: Authorize the USA Working Equitation Executive Committee to purchase banners for use at sanctioned shows and special events, per the following protocol. Banner mock up is displayed above. Actual banner proportions may differ from mock-up shown.

Provide one banner to each regional director (or designated regional representative), and reimburse shipping to and from up to three approved events per year. Have official banner art on file with a national vendor and reimburse approved show or other event managers 75% of banner cost if they order on their own. Each show/event manager is limited to one subsidized banner purchase. They would retain the banner for future uses. Estimated cost to USAWE for initial banner order is \$675 total. Estimated cost for future subsidized orders \$60 per banner for USAWE / \$20 for event managers.

Motion was seconded by Cindy Branham, R3 Director.

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

ETHICS DOCUMENTS

Leesa Nero, Ethics Committee Chair, had previously shared four documents with the Board of Directors. She provided a brief introduction to each of the documents: ***Ethics Complaint Form*** and ***Complaint Response Form*** (the Committee’s intention is to have these two documents publicly available on the USAWE website) plus two primarily internal documents for the Ethics Committee to work with (the ***Ethics Committee Process*** document, which is intended to provide guidance to Ethics Committee members so they know what to do, and the ***Timeline*** document, which is intended to provide guidance for the committee as well as complainants and respondents.

Ethics Complaint Form

President Leslie Martien brought up two of her concerns: the first dealing with the Committee’s recommendation that people be allowed to file anonymous complaints, and the second dealing with the inclusion / exclusion of an LOC member when an Ethics complaint is filed against a Licensed Official.

President Elect Barbara Price asked for additional clarification about allowing people to file ethics complaints anonymously (on what basis did the attorneys recommend allowing anonymous complaints to be filed?).

President Leslie Martien indicated that in her opinion, and the opinion of the attorneys consulted during the merger process, allowing anonymous complaints would help reduce the likelihood that people would file complaints.



R2 Director Robin Bond indicated some unease with the allowance of anonymous complaints, but indicated that the way the forms were written, it might reduce people's desire to file complaints anonymously.

At-Large Director Doreen Atkinson shared that she had been approached multiple times in the past by people who wanted to complain, but said they were afraid to file a complaint because they were afraid of retaliation.

President Leslie Martien indicated that she felt it was far better to have bad behavior stop, and if allowing people to file anonymously would help with that, then she would like that to be allowed.

Kiki Pantaze, R4 Director, indicated that if having the ability for people to make anonymous complaints causes problems, then the Board could re-visit the issue.

Leesa Nero, Ethics Committee Chair, indicated that the Ethics Committee felt very strongly that anonymous complaints should not be allowed. If the Ethics Committee, after their investigation, believes that a complaint is valid and moves to the hearing process, then anonymity might not be able to be preserved.

Trisha Kiefer-Reed, At-Large Director, shared her belief in the importance of trusting the Ethics Committee to do their work, and indicated continued support of allowing anonymous complaints.

Cindy Branham, R3 Director, indicated that she thinks it is very important to make sure that IF there might be situations where a person filing an anonymous complaint will need to have their identifies revealed, it's important that this is clear to the Anonymous Complainant from the first doc filed by them, so they are fully aware that can happen. She also shared her concern that the Board also keep in mind the need to provide "protection" for the LO's, Board members, show organizers, etc.

Doreen Atkinson, At-Large Director, asked if USAWE has an advisory board where ethics issues could be run by others to see if they should be elevated to an Ethics Complaint.

Leesa Nero, Chair of the Ethics Committee, explained that there might be some things that were not being done that should be done (for prize lists, etc.).

Leslie Martien, President, suggested that the Ethics Committee might serve as a clearinghouse to help resolve issues before they escalate to an Ethics Complaint.

Barbara Price, President-Elect, indicated that she receives questions from people quite frequently and said that a lot of things can be / have been resolved simply by talking



through issues.

Kiki Pantaze, R4 Director, asked that the re-phrasing of the last sentence of the Complaint Form indicate that the identity of the person filing the complaint could be revealed *if needed*.

Alex Tyson, R5 Director, suggested adding the following to the Ethics Complaint Form: “At the Ethics Committee’s discretion, anonymous complaints may not be pursued if insufficient evidence is determined due to anonymity.”

Additional discussion led to the addition of the following information as well: “The Complainant will be given the opportunity to reveal their identify if necessary to continue the pursuit of the complaint.”

Cindy Branham, R3 Director, asked if the same language should be included on the Ethics Complaint Response Form.

Leesa Nero, Ethics Committee Chair, indicated that the respondent would receive a copy of the actual complaint, with the complainant’s name redacted (in cases of anonymous filing)

Leslie Martien, President, made a motion to:

Motion: Approve the Ethics Committee Complaint Form, with the inclusion of the following line at the end: At the Ethics Committee’s discretion, anonymous complaints may not be pursued if insufficient evidence is determined due to anonymity. The complainant will be given the opportunity to reveal their identity if necessary to continue the pursuit of the complaint.

Motion was seconded by Kiki Pantaze, R4 Director.

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

Inclusion of a Member of the LOC for Ethics Committee Discussions

Leslie Martien, President, brought up another topic – related to the inclusion of a member of the LOC on the Ethics Committee as a non-voting participant.

Cindy Branham, R3 Director, indicated that she thinks it is important to have a member of the LOC sit in on the Ethics Committee discussions / meetings if a Licensed Official has an ethics complaint filed against them.

President Leslie Martien asked Christy Reich, LOC Co-Chair, to share her thoughts on



whether it was a good idea to have a member of the LOC sit in on the Ethics Committee discussions if/when a complaint is filed against a licensed official.

Christy Reich, Co-Chair of the LOC indicated that the LOC was torn between what the spirit of what the merger indicated (which would have a LOC member participate in the Ethics meetings regarding a Licensed Official), and what the Ethics Committee has recommended (to stand alone as backed by Leesa Nero's depth of experience from the prior organization that she worked with) and that the LOC would respect what the Board decided.

Leslie Martien, President, indicated that part of the thinking was that the LOC would be in the best position to implement training or remedial actions.

Cindy Branham, R3 Director, indicated that it's important to keep in mind that any member of the LOC sitting in on the Ethics Committee meetings, would be under the same limitations in terms of not discussing the information outside of the committee. Having the Chair of the LO Committee sit in on the meetings of the Ethics Committee could help ensure that the full deliberations would be understood.

Leesa Nero, Ethics Committee Chair, indicated that she thought it was up to the Ethics Committee to do the research, and that the Ethics Committee would be able to reach out to the LOC when conducting their investigation.

Barbara Price, President-Elect, indicated that in her experience, Ethics Committees stand alone. She indicated that she doesn't see the need for having a member of the LOC sit in on the Committee and that it defeats the purpose of the Ethics Committee and process.

Julie Alonzo, Secretary, indicated that she agreed with Barbara. She indicated that she felt that having a member of the LOC sitting in on the Ethics Committee meetings could serve as a "dampening" force for the fair, thorough, and impartial investigation of the complaint. She would be more in favor of having the Ethics Committee be a stand-alone Committee with no LOC representative.

Leesa Nero, Chair of the Ethics Committee, summarized the process the Ethics Committee would be using and indicated that if the Ethics Committee needs additional information, the Ethics Committee could reach out to the appropriate committee, etc., for additional information.

Doreen Atkinson, At-Large Director, indicated that she thought that it would be more appropriate for the Ethics Committee to contact the LOC for specific questions / additional information rather than having the member of the LOC attend as a non-voting guest of the committee.

Christy Reich, Co-Chair of the LOC, asked for clarification on the notification process to the



Licensed Official. From the merger docs, it currently stands that Ethics Committee would inform the LOC, and the LOC would inform the Licensed Official. Christy stated that she did not agree with this process because it has potential to harm the relationship between the LOC and the Licensed Official. She thought that the decision should come from Ethics Committee with the LOC being cc'd.

Not having a representative from the LOC sit in on Ethics Committee meetings when a complaint involves a Licensed Official will require revisions to that section of the Policies & Procedures Manual, but since that is still in Draft form and has not yet been formally adopted by the Board, President Leslie Martien did not see this as an issue.

Julie Alonzo, Secretary, made a motion to:

Motion: Approve the adoption of the Ethics Response Form, Ethics Complaint Process, and Timeline for Ethics Complaint Proceedings as presented by the Ethics Committee.

Motion was seconded by Barbara Price, President Elect.

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

LICENSING OF CANADIAN SHOWS

Leslie Martien, President, made a motion to:

Motion: Clarify that USA Working Equitation will only license competitions held in the United States of America.

Motion was seconded by Doreen Atkinson, At-Large Director.

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

WAYS TO SUPPORT REGIONAL SHOWS

Leslie Martien, President, asked Julie Alonzo, Secretary, to share some ideas for helping to support Regional Championships.

Julie Alonzo, Secretary, shared the following ideas: waive the show licensing fees (\$2 per competitor), perhaps provide some funding (\$500? \$1000?) per regional championship. She also indicated that she thought it was important that the Board first adopt a budget before allocating any money.



Cindy Branham, R3 Director, wanted to make sure that our non-profit status would not be impacted by allocating funds to be used by show organizers. We might need to stipulate what the funds are used for.

Robin Bond, R2 Director, indicated that the R2 Regional Show Committee is trying hard to make the Championship happen and that they are still trying to figure out insurance.

Barbara Price, President-Elect, indicated that she would like to get actual input from our insurance agent about the risks that USA Working Equitation would incur if we had our insurance cover the Regional Championships.

Leslie Martien, President, said that she would ask our insurance agent this question directly and that we would address this topic again at our next Board meeting at the end of the month.

President Leslie Martien adjourned the meeting at 8:15, Mountain Time.

Minutes submitted by Julie Alonzo, USAWE Secretary