



USAWE Board of Directors Meeting Minutes



Meeting Date: October 11, 2023

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

Meeting Frequency/Modality: 2nd Wednesday each month held virtually via Zoom

Agenda: Sent 10.09.2023 and posted to USAWE.org > Corporate > Records > Meeting Minutes and filed in USAWE G-Drive > Board of Directors (BOD) > Board Meetings folder by Secretary Kris Blacklock

Minutes: The 10.11.2023 Minutes were e-approved 10.14.2023 and posted to the USAWE.org > Corporate > Records > Meeting Minutes and filed in USAWE G-Drive > Board of Directors (BOD) folder

NEXT MEETING - *NOTE DATE CHANGE* - **5pm PST Wednesday November 29, 2023;** Agenda items due November 15 (14 days prior to meeting) using the online [Board Agenda Item Request Form](#) located on the usawe.org website > Corporate > Records page

Board of Directors in attendance for all or part of the meeting:		Attendance at Roll Call	
Executive Committee		Present	Absent
President	Chris Stanko	P	
President Elect	Doreen Atkinson	P	
Secretary	Kris Blacklock	P	
Treasurer	Leesa Nero	P	
At Large Director 1	Robin Bond	P	
At Large Director 2	Stephanie Hayes	P	
Regional Directors			
R1 Director	Heather Humelbaugh	P	
R2 Director	Katie Franklin	P	
R3 Director	Linda Frazier	P	
R4 Director	Kiki Pantaze	P	
R5 Director	Becky Sherven	P	
R6 Director	Karen Miller		A - Excused
R7 Director	Rebecca Algar		A - Excused
Total		11	2

Current # of Board members = 13 | 7 BOD members required for Quorum.

BOD members in attendance at roll call = 11 | Quorum was established | BOD Meeting Attendance Log was updated.

Non-voting USAWE Committee Chairs in attendance for all or part of the meeting						
Affiliate Organizations	Kristine Strasburger	P		International Competition	Kellee Campbell	P
Awards	Bridgett Klingler	P		Licensed Officials (co-chairs)	Christy Reich	P
Coaches Network	To be appointed	--			Doreen Atkinson	P
Competitions	Kim Hillyer	P		Marketing	Amie Perryman	A
Elections	Biddie Lowry	P		Membership	Kate Steffes	P
Ethics	Dan Dahlke	P		Rules	Jeanne Bond	P
Financial Oversight	Brittney Flowers	A		Website	Kristine Strasburger	P
Horse Recording	Mindy Finelli	A		Youth Development	Kasey Riddle	P
Task Force Leads in attendance for all or part of the meeting						
Bylaws	After P&P reviews	--		Quality Assurance	Lidia Taylor	P
Championship Show Structure	Chris Stanko	P		Strategic Planning	Doreen Atkinson	P

Current # of Committee Chairs/Task Force Leads = 18; 15 in attendance.

Excused = notified Secretary and President in advance director (or chair) was unable to attend meeting.

USAWE Members in attendance for all or part of the meeting: Nicole Lee (R6-PA), Sara Barnwell (R5-MI), Sammi Korinek (R5-MN), Martha Ryan (R6-PA), Polly Limond (R7-NC); Lynn Maloney (R6-PA); Willa Rose (R1-ID), Julie Alonzo (R1-OR), Leslie Martien (R3-CO)

Call to Order: President Chris Stanko called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM Pacific Time.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Treasurer Leesa Nero provided financials and bank reconciliations through October 7, 2023 and 2023 Budget vs Actual Income/Expenses. Organization is \$ 17,884.65 over budget at this time. Depending on pending income organization may end the year in the black.



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Financial Summary through October 7, 2023

Current Funds:	U.S. Bank Checking #1	\$4,540.81
	U.S. Bank Checking #2	\$665.00
	U.S. Bank Savings Restricted Funds	\$2,191.20
	U.S. Bank Money Market	\$134,047.90
	PayPal Bank	\$2,118.26
	Total Funds	\$143,563.17

FINANCIAL REPORT (2023 BUDGET) – Leesa Nero, Treasurer

Please consult Leesa on all committee fees and ensure amounts are unique so PayPal and QuickBooks can be systematically coded to minimize manual reconciliation as fee amounts cannot be the same amount or it causes bookkeeping issues and a lot of unnecessary time manually reconciling accounts each month.

REVISED CHART OF ACCOUNTS– Leesa Nero, Treasurer

The Chart of Accounts (updated 10.13.2023) lists various committee’s income and expense class codes; please use in invoicing and within the Expenditure Reimbursement Request Form.

EXPENDITURE/REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS – Leesa Nero, Treasurer & Kris Blacklock, Secretary

Leesa reviewed the Expenditures, Reimbursements and Account Transfers process. Allow a minimum of 5-10 business days after submitting a completed Expenditure Reimbursement Request Form and required documentation for requests to be processed.

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Minutes – Board Committees and Working Committees – Chris Stanko, President

Rationale: To ensure compliance with the Bylaws of USA Working Equitation and Colorado Nonprofit Act regarding Board Committees and Working Committees, obtain legal opinion. The law firm **Howard O Bernstein, P.C. Attorneys At-Law** Boulder CO (attorney used previously by USAWE to draft the Bylaws), was contacted and their hourly rate is \$450/hour for Attorney Howard O Bernstein or \$290/hour for Attorney Zachary Walker; both stated the amount of time needed would be 1 to 1.5 hrs.

Doreen Atkinson provided the following description **Board Committees:** defined as formal committees, established by the BOD and made entirely or almost entirely of board members, have the authority to make decisions or exercise board delegated powers. **BOD appointed committees** are working groups given power and authority to perform charters by the board and these working groups are not required to take minutes and no changes in committee authorizations will be made to the BOD preliminary approved committee policies and procedures.

Robin Bond explained the board was trying to define committees that actually make decisions on behalf of the board. An Executive Committee meeting was held to determine which committees are Board Committees and which are operating Working Committees. The Coaches Network and Licensed Officials have a board approved process to recognize or license officials.

Board to take a look at developing a process to vet organization communications that merges diplomacy, directness and consideration of the recipient. An Executive Committee officer will review communication prior to distribution.

DOREEN ATKINSON, PRESIDENT ELECT, made a motion; KRIS BLACKLOCK, SECRETARY, seconded

Motion: To obtain an attorney’s opinion on which committees are Board Committees (authorized to act on behalf of the board and require public notice, agendas and minutes) and committees that are considered operating Working Committees (that follow a board approved charter). Fee quote is \$290 to \$450 per hour and 1 to 1.5 hours to complete.

→ **Motion Failed by Zoom poll vote 5 in favor, 6 opposed, 0 abstained, 0 recused, 2 absent.**

Update! USAWE Nonprofit Attorney– *Chris Stanko, President*

7/19/2023 BOD approved motion: “USAWE Executive Committee to conduct interviews with at least three (3) Colorado corporate attorney/law firms that are familiar, and work with, not-for-profit organizations, not-for-profit Bylaws and contract and license agreements and to then hire one as the organization’s ongoing legal advisor on an as-needed basis.”

President Stanko is reaching out to various attorneys in Colorado.

Committees and Task Forces

Quality Assurance Task Force – GIRA.io Survey Feedback Recap, Audit Recommendations & Licensed Show Score Sheet Retention– *Lidia Taylor, Team Lead*

Note: This topic was tabled. Please take time to review the information that will be discussed at an upcoming meeting.

- **GIRA.io Feedback Survey Recap** (Show Organizers/Managers, Scorers Licensed Officials (Judge and TDs)
- **Audit Recommendations**
- **Licensed Show Score Sheet Keeping Requirement Task Force Opinion**

WAVE Countries – Scoring & Placement (25 countries: 24 members of WAVE +1 non-WAVE) - *Kris Blacklock, Secretary*

# WE Countries	GIRA.io	Equi-Score	Manual	Own App	No Competitions	No Response
25	6	4	4	5	1	6
	Columbia France Mexico Portugal Switzerland United States	Australia Belgium Germany Holland Switched from GIRA due to expense	Austria Canada Denmark Italy	Australia Canada Poland Romania Sweden	Luxembourg	Brazil Czech Republic Hungary Netherlands South Africa Spain

Update! Strategic Planning Task Force – *Doreen Atkinson, President Elect, Leesa Nero, Treasurer & Kristine Strasburger*

Task Force is mindful of people’s concerns of timing and money to come attend in person this year. Newly elected board members need time to settle into their position, understand strategic planning and prepare their thoughts before an in-person meeting can be held.

- 1.) After Leesa finishes the budget by the end of the year we will start working on a strategic plan.
- 2.) Similar to this year’s policy and procedure development we will ask each committee to come up with goals. Discuss weaknesses, strengths, concerns and anything needed for their goals to meet the mission of the USAWE (including goal deadlines).
- 3.) Leesa will develop a format to follow and meet with each committee by a certain date (with Doreen’s help as needed) to complete a strategic planning form. Along with the committee’s input, we also want board members to participate in the overall goals and strategic planning of the organization.
- 4.) By the middle of 2024, we plan to have an in-person strategic meeting to put all this together to start organization strategic planning.
- 5.) In 2025 we hope to start with an in-person strategic planning to follow the one started in 2024.



NEW BUSINESS

COMMITTEE REQUESTS

Awards: 2024 Remove Non-member Licensed Show Competition – *Bridgett Klingler, Chair*

Rationale: USAWE contributes a great deal of infrastructure that supports licensed competitions (licensing officials, processing results, insurance, software licensing, the organization’s website, etc.). One of the organization’s long-term goals is to grow our membership. Requiring all competitors at USAWE-licensed competitions to be members helps support this goal. In addition, requiring membership status will help improve the accuracy of historical tracking of performance records and will reduce the opportunity for errors/confusion related to people’s Rider Division (Open, Amateur, Youth).

MOTION BY ROBIN BOND AT LARGE DIRECTOR 1; SECOND BY KIKI PANTAZE, REGION 4 DIRECTOR

Motion: Effective January 1, 2024, remove the option for non-members to compete at USAWE-licensed competitions. Non-members will still be allowed to ride “schooling rides” at regular (non-championship) licensed competitions but can no longer compete without joining USAWE.

→ **Motion passed by voice vote: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, 0 recused, 2 absent.**

Awards: 2024 Regional Leaderboard Recognition Change – *Bridgett Klingler, Chair*

Rationale: This proposal will reduce the cost of Regional Leaderboard awards by one-third while still recognizing the top two horse/rider pairs in each region/level/division. This change will bring the Regional awards into alignment with the National awards (which already award only the two top horse/rider pairs).

MOTION BY KRIS BLACKLOCK, SECRETARY; SECOND BY BECKY SHERVEN, REGION 5 DIRECTOR

Motion: Effective January 1, 2024, change the Regional Leaderboard awards to honor the top two horse/rider pairs in each rider division (Open, Amateur, Youth) and Level (L1-L7) in each region (R1-R7), rather than the top three, as the organization has done since its founding.

→ **Motion passed by voice vote: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, 0 recused, 2 absent.**

Awards: 2024 Regional Leaderboard Award Change – *Bridgett Klingler, Chair*

Rationale: Topping the National Leaderboard is a really big accomplishment. The two top-point-earning horse/rider pairs have earned their points based on their highest-scoring rides at a maximum of four competitions, under at least two different judges. This accomplishment is meaningful and should be recognized as such. The wording “National #1” is atypical of how such National standings are recognized elsewhere. Recognition is for National Leaderboard and Regional Leaderboard.

MOTION BY KIKI PANTAZE, REGION 4 DIRECTOR; SECOND BY CHRIS STANKO, PRESIDENT

Motion: Effective January 1, 2024, change the name of the recognition given to the top two National and Regional Leaderboard horse/rider pairs at each level (L1-L7) and in each rider division (Open, Amateur, Youth) from “National or Regional #1” and “National or Regional #2” to “National Leaderboard Champion [level] [division]”, “National Leaderboard Reserve Champion [level] [division]” and “Regional Leaderboard Champion [level] [division]”, “Regional Leaderboard Reserve Champion [level] [division]”.

→ **Motion passed by voice vote: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, 0 recused, 2 absent.**

Horse Recording: Lifetime Horse Recording Fee Change – *Mindi Finelli, Chair*

Rationale: Increase the lifetime horse recording fee from current \$20 to \$30 (a \$10 increase).

MOTION BY KIKI PANTAZE, REGION 4 DIRECTOR; SECOND BY DOREEN ATKINSON, PRESIDENT ELECT

Motion: Increase the lifetime horse recording fee to \$30 starting January 1, 2024.

→ **Motion passed by voice vote: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, 0 recused, 2 absent.**

International Committee: International Education Fund – Kellee Campbell, Chair

Rationale: Establish a self-funded International Education Fund overseen by the International Committee that will offer educational training camp opportunities for riders and horses (East, Central and West) interested in USA Working Equitation’s upper-level (L4-L7) performance. Self-Funded means the money needed to finance the educational efforts are one hundred percent (100%) funded by training camp participant income. Event registrations will be received via Google Form spreadsheet and payments invoiced by the Secretary using QuickBooks coding provided by the Treasurer.

MOTION BY DOREEN ATKINSON, PRESIDENT ELECT; SECOND BY ROBIN BOND, AT LARGE DIRECTOR 1

Motion: Establish an International Education Fund which will be overseen by the International Committee. This self-funded USAWE account will have income/expenses earmarked for hosting educational training camps (East, Central and West) that promote and support rider education, recruit upper-level riders (L4-L7) and offer high performance horse-rider training opportunities within USA Working Equitation.

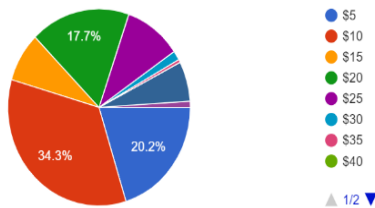
→ **Motion passed by voice vote: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, 0 recused, 2 absent.**

Membership: 2024 Adult Membership Fee Change – Kate Steffes, Chair

Rationale: Based on membership feedback within the Educational Benefits Survey conducted September 19 – October 3, 2023, a \$10 membership increase is the most favorable \$ increase amount. 198 responses as of 10/1/23; 34.3% of respondents agree with \$10 dues increase.

Additional funding will be needed in order to develop more programs and benefits. By how much would you support **increasing** annual membership dues to help cover the costs associated with developing and providing **educational initiatives** and other committee efforts and programs as a **member benefit**?

198 responses



\$5 increase 20.2% (40)
 \$10 increase 34.3% (68)
 \$15 increase 8.1% (16)
 \$20 increase 17.7% (35)
 \$25 increase 10.1% (20)
 \$30 increase 1.5% (3)
 \$35 increase 1.0% (1)
 \$40 increase 0% (0)
 \$50 6.6% (13)
 More than \$50 1% (2)

MOTION BY KIKI PANTAZE, REGION 4 DIRECTOR; SECOND BY LEESA NERO, TREASURER

Motion: Authorize increasing the Adult membership fee to \$55 beginning with the 2024 membership year.

→ **Motion passed by voice vote: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, 0 recused, 2 absent.**

Membership: Next Year’s Processing Date – Kate Steffes, Chair

Rationale: Members are asking when the processing of new/renewal memberships will start for next year. Designate December 1st as the date to accept next year’s memberships starting 2024 and going forward.

MOTION BY DOREEN ATKINSON, PRESIDENT ELECT; SECOND BY LEESA NERO, TREASURER

Motion: Distribute an eBlast membership campaign and accept next year’s memberships starting December 1st.

→ **Motion passed by voice vote: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, 0 recused, 2 absent.**

Marketing and Promotion: Appointment – Amie Perryman, Chair

Rationale: Virginia Aulin (R1-ID) has been a professional writer for years and have worked in a variety of genres and media (journalism [magazines and newspapers], corporate PR and marketing, fiction, investor relations, blogs, social media posts, etc.).

MOTION BY KRIS BLACKLOCK; SECOND BY KIKI PANTAZE, REGION 4

Motion: Appoint **Virginia Aulin** (R1-ID) as a reporter and member of the Marketing and Promotion Committee, effective immediately.

→ **Motion passed by voice vote: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, 0 recused, 2 absent.**



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Membership & Youth Development: 2024 Youth Membership Fee Change – *Kate Steffes, Chair & Kasey Riddle, Youth Development, Chair*

Rationale: On 7/19/2023 the board approved implementing a Youth Membership fee starting with the 2024 membership year with all youth dues to be allocated for youth programs. A youth membership fee amount of \$41 is proposed.

7/19/2023	BOD	Starting with the 2024 membership year, begin implementing membership dues for youth riders, (not to exceed adult annual dues) and those dues allocated specifically for youth programs and opportunities designated by the Youth Development Committee.
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The Youth Development Committee wants to provide financial opportunities for youth members to learn and compete in Working Equitation. As part of our long-term plan, we are asking membership dues for youth at \$41 a year. This membership fee will help replenish the now depleted Youth Championship Scholarship fund each year, as well as help fund future grants and future opportunities for the youth in our club.

Here’s a few supporting facts to be considered when making this decision:

Youth Members= 113 members
At \$41 a member x 113 members = \$4,633 would be available for use.

We began this year with \$6,700 to use in the championship scholarship fund.
After 11 scholarships were used this year at \$4,515, the fund is now at \$2,185.

***We had 16 applicants and if all applicants were awarded the scholarship (\$6,590) there would only be \$110 left.

Membership dues (if all put into the Championship Scholarship Fund) would not even cover the Scholarships applied for this year. Along with member dues we will have to provide stricter guidelines for application and/or more funds raised.

For comparison, 2023 US Pony Club (USPC) dues were:

National Dues	\$145
Club Dues	\$35
Region Dues	\$20
Facility Dues	\$50
Total Yearly	\$250

Note: This fee is Membership Renewal (which is cheaper).

In determining USAWE Youth Membership Fees, I was advised **not** to have a discount for multiple children because it would be a bookkeeping nightmare. Of the 113 Youth, only 10 families have more than one youth; 103 are single memberships.

We had one family apply for 4 championship scholarships for the championship show.

To break that down, if that family had paid dues for 4 youth at \$164 total, then, was awarded 4 scholarships they would have received \$1,700. The proposed membership fee is worth youth families paying it.

In addition to the Youth Scholarship Fund, we are hopeful for our “tabled” grant program as well as other opportunities for youth (which includes plans for a youth sponsor drive in the near future).

Prior to the December 1 membership campaign, we plan on communicating with membership on “why” we are having youth dues and the purpose of the proposal. We really want to emphasize that ALL of these funds will be available to go directly back to the youth for their use.

MOTION BY DOREEEN ATKINSON, PRESIDENT ELECT; SECOND BY KRIS BLACKLOCK, SECRETARY

Motion: Authorize implementing a Youth membership fee of \$41 beginning with the 2024 membership year.

→ **Motion passed by voice vote: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, 0 recused, 2 absent.**



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Awards, Competitions, Membership, Rules and Youth Development – per 9.14.2023 joint meeting (and letter sent to BOD) with Kasey Riddle, Youth Development Committee Chair, Barbara Price, Rules Committee Member, Leslie Martien, Rules Committee Member, Jeanne Bond, Rules Committee Chair, Glynna Hoekstra, Rules Committee Member, Julie Alonzo, GIRA Administrator, Competitions and Awards Committee Member, Kate Steffes, Membership Committee Chair

Rationale: The group reached consensus that for now it makes the most sense to retain one category of 17 & under and agreed to call this category “YOUTH” to match programs and committees already in place. The group discussed that if there’s a split in the future, it should be for the younger children, to give a place where the younger children can compete against each other while older youth compete against each other (e.g., ages 7-11 and then 12-17). The group reached consensus on taking out the option to sub-divide the youth division (USAWE Rules for Working Equitation, Section 1.3) at this time.

The group reached consensus on changing the word “Junior” to “Youth” throughout USAWE materials. The group reached consensus on keeping the Youth age range 7-17.

Note: Article III Definitions > Section 1. Definitions > H. Member(s) > Membership Classes: 2. U.S. Juniors and 4. International Junior of the Bylaws of USA Working Equitation will also need to be updated.

MOTION BY KRIS BLACKLOCK, SECRETARY; SECOND BY DOREEN ATKINSON, PRESIDENT ELECT

Motion: Authorize replacing the term ‘Junior’ with ‘Youth’ (age 7-17 years) in all aspects within the organization (i.e., Awards, Competitions, GIRA, Membership, Rules, Policies & Procedures, website, etc.), effective January 1, 2024.

→ **Motion passed by voice vote: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, 0 recused, 2 absent.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS - None

ITEMS TO CONSIDER FOR NEXT MEETING - None

NEXT MEETING - ***NOTE DATE CHANGE*** - **5pm PST Wednesday November 29, 2023**; agenda items due November 15 (14 days prior to meeting). Submit Agenda items using the online [Board Agenda Item Request Form](#) located on the usawe.org website > Corporate > Records page.

President Elect Doreen Atkinson adjourned the meeting at 7:05 PM, Pacific Time.

Minutes submitted by Kris Blacklock, USAWE Secretary