

Committee: Communications and Technology

Date: August 25, 2020

In attendance: Charles Sgrillo, Roberta Jackson, Tina Breedle, Cara Ross, Heidi Permattio, Christina Gerrish, Patricia Bauler

- I. Overview of proper meeting protocols and meeting procedures - Tina
  - A. Need: new meeting minute notetaker
    1. Patricia volunteered to take meeting minutes
- II. "Technology person" update - Tina
  - A. Frank is no longer with USARS
  - B. Tina, Brent, and Eric are currently handling social media
  - C. No plan to fill this position in near future
    1. COVID has reduced need
    2. Lack of skaters and event funding at this time
  - D. Tina to replace Frank as staff member for Communication and Technology Committee
  - E. May need to hire dedicated Safe Sport staff member
    1. Requires more clarification
    2. This would be the priority hire as the position may be required
  - F. What platform is currently being utilized?
    1. SiteCore
    2. Send notifications to Tina if there are issues or updates needed with the website
  - G. Recent focus has been on launching new membership platform for the season
  - H. May try to use an intern from the University (TBD with Eric)
- III. Committee structure going forward - Tina/Chalie
  - A. Patricia will take the minutes
  - B. No new "tech" person for the foreseeable future
- IV. Status of new YouTube channel - Cara
  - A. Has not posted anything new
    1. Focused on Brand Messaging project
    2. Technical difficulties with computer, which has been resolved
  - B. Working on a content plan
  - C. No new progress to report
  - D. Plan clarification
    1. Goal: content will be 1:1 in entertainment:information
    2. Any content is acceptable at this point - we do not yet have an established formula
    3. How-tos would be a good addition
    4. Plans to do collaborations with members who want to promote Star Skate
    5. Who to contact for hockey/derby/extreme skating?
      - a) Christina can help with derby
      - b) Michael Jacques may know more high level competitors in other disciplines

- V. Determining USARS Message & Brand - Roberta & Cara
  - A. How to come up with a message?
    - 1. Why do people skate/why do they like to skate?
    - 2. Adults = exercise/social
    - 3. What about other ages/groups of skaters?
    - 4. 4 years ago poll among youth skaters = "fun"
  - B. What is the tagline?
    - 1. "Skating's for everyone" or "We live for speed"
    - 2. What is our branding?
    - 3. Send out a poll and let members decide?
      - a) Some opposition to polls because of knowing how people interact on social media make priorities clear without needing to poll the membership
  - C. Short presentation from Cara
    - 1. Branding = look & feel
    - 2. Messaging = statement
    - 3. Why: establishes character, personality, voice, tone, emotion, becoming relatable, memorable, etc.
    - 4. Example: Team USA Instagram - homemade video mix with bold text & focus on top athletes (consistent messaging/look)
    - 5. We should try to have consistent messaging in a similar way - lots of contrast, bold images, unified theme
  - D. Has USARS ever had a tagline?
    - 1. Heidi: yes but the explanation was not audible
  - E. It seems like the logo/emblem is new every year - constantly updating
  - F. Roberta: marketing plan from 2014 had a tagline, etc. but never got implemented
    - 1. Older materials probably will not be helpful because things have changed
    - 2. We can review the older materials to find anything relevant but do not want to move backward
  - G. Goal: we need to "look like a part of Team USA"
  - H. Team USA has 1 Instagram for many sports, but USARS has one for each discipline
    - 1. Would be better and more consistent to have one instagram with everything
    - 2. Instagram: usarollersports\_official - account is currently blank until marketing plan is implemented
    - 3. "usarollersports" account was not available when Instagram was set up
      - a) Facebook also has a lot of non-official USARS pages that were NOT created by the organization
      - b) Once we have something that has clear branding and looks official there won't be confusion
      - c) Not going to be possible to take down the other pages that are using USARS name
    - 4. Creating viral content: try to make Instagram look like a "wall of art"

- I. Campaign example: hear the athlete's voice
  - a) What life lessons
  - b) How to deal with disappointments, etc.
  - c) Why is practice important to goals, etc.
- J. Platform discussion: why do we need a blog *and* a newsletter?
  - 1. Discussion: stop the biweekly newsletter and make it quarterly
    - a) Use the information that goes out to stretch the content over multiple mediums
    - b) Blog is not logical to maintain with biweekly newsletter - content burnout
    - c) Can do blog posts after major events
    - d) Blog is good for Google searches (you will get clicks that will come from people who may not get the newsletter)
- K. We need to provide marketing templates (PPT, Canva, etc.)
  - 1. 2021 goal: what is the "marketing packet" that we give to all the disciplines
  - 2. Make it "click and edit" or "drag and drop" level editing for ease of use
- L. Discussion of "content management" and waivers that are utilized to go with the marketing to have consistent branding
  - 1. Can only have 2 people per discipline
  - 2. We are not sure the current state of who has these forms
    - a) Tina: to look up which forms are being used by active members
  - 3. Need to set up this structure
  - 4. Need to be able to easily send new marketing content to the account managers
  - 5. Need clear line of communication between discipline level posters & marketing oversight
  - 6. Clubs will need to operate at own level
  - 7. "Account takeover" options for in depth coverage at an event
  - 8. Roberta & Charlie to create a to-do list/diagram so the methodology is clear
- VI. Updates on the judges training platform
  - A. Patricia continues to work on creating materials
    - 1. Asked for color hex codes, marketing materials from prior discussion for consistent branding
  - B. Current issues: lack of materials, etc.
    - 1. Going to focus on streamlining the introductory level and putting more effort into the higher level which should have more long-term viability
- VII. Status of USARS blog
  - A. Can collect content before we are ready to post
  - B. Not ready to post until marketing messaging is approved
  - C. Might be a better place to put the material that has been in the newsletter
    - 1. A way to make the newsletter bigger without stretching the content
  - D. Cara has started on content, but we need to decide where the articles will exist

1. Blog does not have to be very long in today's market; approximately 1-3 paragraphs
2. Need to clearly state that any opinions are from the contributor
- E. What frequency of posting?
  1. Can depend on many factors:
    - a) Maybe once every two weeks, or once a quarter
    - b) When do you want to be in front of your audience?
- F. How to engage the audience?
  1. Create interactive quizzes
    - a) "What type of skater would you be?"
  2. Need to make things more entertaining
  3. How to get people to the site/engaged
  4. Who is the audience?
- G. Types of content that can go on a test blog
  1. Results
  2. Posts
  3. Quizzes
  4. How tos
  5. Links to rule books
  6. Class promotions
  7. Events
  8. Marketing trends/tips
  9. Star Skate
- H. Switching newsletter to blog would need approval from Eric
  1. Charlie to discuss with Eric

## VIII. Project Connect

- A. Meeting goals: what to keep and what to remove from the to-do list
- B. Overarching Goal: find ways to get more skaters
  1. Button on USARS site can direct people to rinks, lessons, etc.
    - a) This information is not currently populated because Sport 180 went live last week
      - (1) USARS does not have club class informations to post
      - (2) Sport 180 has information spaces for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. to direct people to club information
      - (3) Most Clubs with Charters maintain their information on Facebook
      - (4) How to take that and convert it to a platform that can be posted on the website & point people where they need to go?
  2. Have a sticker or flyer to use with vendors to provide information about where skate classes are available
    - a) Support for the idea of a card/insert that has QR code to partner with vendors
      - (1) Who does this?

- (2) Where are these connections/relationships coming from?
    - (3) Who has the time to do this?
  - b) We need someone from each discipline to say who the vendors are before being contacted
- 3. Skate lessons - may be too difficult for national office to coordinate with individual rinks and lesson classes
  - a) Promote the rinks and let rinks promote their own classes, etc.
  - b) USARS information points them to USARS affiliated rinks
- 4. Expand non-competitive memberships
  - a) Fitness skaters = not at an event = no insurance
  - b) Need to give them some other service to make membership worth the fee
    - (1) Live streaming (for further discussion in the future)
    - (2) Corporate discounts
    - (3) Etc.
- 5. Digital marketing information
  - a) Create documents where rinks can use USARS branding in their marketing if they are affiliated
  - b) Don't want USARS to be responsible for marketing for rinks
  - c) Consensus - remove this item from the project - goal of this item has been covered by other project areas
- 6. Need to reach out and find which vendor contacts we have
  - a) We need to provide the marketing for them we don't have the numbers to demand things
  - b) Create an "Official skate of" or "Preferred vendor of" - we need to provide value to the vendors
  - c) Item is on hold: to be removed temporarily until further discussions regarding vendors occur
- 7. Presence on social media - handled in earlier sections
- 8. Content calendar for social media
  - a) creating post regularity
  - b) using consistent hashtags
  - c) Do we have Hootsuite or social media platform management system?
    - (1) USARS had one but it wasn't utilized
    - (2) Small fee
    - (3) Check for non-profit deals
    - (4) Easy to pre-schedule media
    - (5) Can schedule posts on Facebook now
    - (6) Tina will look into restarting Hootsuite
      - (a) If a college intern is available then it may be worth it but otherwise it can wait until budget permits

IX. Other topics

- A. USOPC email about redesigned USA website

1. New opportunity to be featured on social media to drive views to the site
2. Want to start around Sept. 7
3. Office staff wants feedback on content/marketing of this

X. Meeting adjourned

Next C&T meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 23, 2020