



Minutes Board of Directors Retreat November 18-19, 2017

Board Members in Attendance: Jim Anderson, Megan Hansley, Yolanda Jackson, Ginny Jasontek, Krista Karwosky, Erin King, Mariya Koroleva, Michele Kraus, Linda Loehndorf, Margaret Mahoney, Sheila McNabb, Olivia Morgan, Britt Rooney, Lori Zabel	
Staff Members in Attendance: Shari Darst, Myriam Glez, Jennifer Hawkins, Stephanie Isley, Rian Main	
Guest: Joe Alwan (Synchro Foundation), Dale Neuberger (FINA Bureau Representative/TSE Consulting)	
Call To Order At: 8:55 AM MST	BY: Linda Loehndorf

Topic	Board Training	Presented by	Dale Neuberger
Discussion	<p>See PowerPoint Presentation attached to minutes.</p> <p>There are Federal laws which make our athlete-based, non-profit NGB different from other non-profits. Only 49 organizations in the US fall under this.</p> <p>Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act</p> <p>HISTORY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1970s NCAA and AAU had some warring restrictions that prevented athletes from doing both, not working together and athletes were the victim, had to make choices between groups. • Then Congress took action to help make it fair for athletes and created the NGB structure including 20% athlete representation. We have had athlete representation for 40 years. This is still unique to the world as even FINA does not have required athlete representation. • Once given the status as the NGB, the sport must conform to requirements to maintain status. If not, another entity could come in and try and take it over. <p>REQUIREMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USOC reports to Congress annually to make sure they are following all guidelines of the ACT. Therefore, USA Synchro submits reports to USOC every year. • Continued protection of athletes, coaches and officials who have the right to appeal decisions. This relates to selection of Olympic teams and why the Olympic team selection standards are very important. • We are responsible in the end, even when things get delegated. • Not restrictive • No barriers to being a member of USA Synchro • Allied organizations – i.e. NCAA, YMCA, High School, etc., as necessary <p>There was a question on why we have to report to Congress if we don't get federal funding. The answer is that the annual reporting is to make sure we are in compliance with the federal law.</p>		

	<p>GOVERNANCE</p> <p>Our BOD has a good mix of experience, outside participation (independent directors), athletes and highly capable people. This is so we are able to tell others what we did was important. We need to strive to establish good dynamics within the board and clearly define the mission. The core of what we do is about youth development.</p> <p>Elements of Governance – Fiduciary, Strategic, Generative (we should try not to live in the synchro cocoon, which is why Independent Directors are so important). Governance through leadership. Doing the right thing for Synchro but living in the bigger world as part of the Olympic community.</p> <p>LEGAL OBLIGATIONS</p> <p>BOD should speak as one voice, even if we disagree on certain issues. Once a decision is made need to act in unanimity.</p> <p>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES</p> <p>Goal – “Board-Governed (policy and strategy) and Staff-Managed (operational)”</p> <p>12 CHARACTERISTICS OF EXCEPTIONAL BOARDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructive Partnership • Mission-Driven Perspective • Strategic Thinking (more than just approving reports, having opportunities for generative thinking.) • Commitment to Transparency • Culture of Inquiry (not adhering to the “way it’s always been done.”) • Independent-Mindedness (serving more than your constituency) • Compliance and Integrity (ethical) • Resource Sustaining • Results Oriented • Intentional Board Practices • Revitalization • Continuous Learning through Evaluation (how can we do better) <p>There was a question about what does the USOC use to evaluate us as an NGB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results (uses an outside consulting team to review our results) • The plan – that we are implementing and sticking to our plan and that the content is realistic. The USOC receives the High Performance plan (started in 2013) and we update annually and report to the USOC. Myriam also has monthly phone call with her direct contact in USOC. In March we report on how we used the money from the previous year. • Financially more independent – more diversity of our income
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Topic	KPIs	Presented by	Myriam Glez
Discussion	<p>See Presentation attached to minutes</p> <p>Update: Where we were in 2008 and where we are now. Where do we want to be in 2024 and how do we close the gap.</p> <p>Mission – USA Synchro unites, promotes and inspires athletes to return to the Olympic Podium by 2024.</p> <p>3 Strategic Goals</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Development - improve financial standings and expand membership base through business development • Education and Athlete Development - improve and maintain long term competitive excellence through education & athlete development • High Performance - improve international rankings through the national team and national talent programs <p>Benchmarks to reach 2024 goal, will be based on if we get 10 teams into the OG.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility 1 => If qualification to 2020 Olympics in Duet AND Team, then possibility to medal in 2024. • Possibility 2 => If no qualification to 2020 Olympic in Team, then possibility to medal ONLY in 2028.
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Topic	Revenue Growth Opportunities	Presented by	Myriam Glez
Discussion	<p>See Presentation attached to minutes.</p> <p>Key Areas of revenue growth identified by staff: 1. Membership 2. Fundraising 3. Events 4. Education 5. National Team 6. Sponsorship/marketing</p> <p>Have to weigh the Risk vs. Resources</p> <p>Membership Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to create a different club model – clubs need to be much bigger i.e. in France Myriam’s club had 500 people France has 17,000 Synchro swimmers, Canada has 12,000 synchro swimmers. Need to partner with clubs to help with this growth, provide incentive, target existing programs not part of USA Synchro (high school & summer schools). • Discussion on rolling out the new preschool synchro program with the YMCA (and others). Ginny is working as an advisor with the YMCA to improve their current synchro program. Jim pointed out that we need to look at other programs, i.e. Nitro swimming. We need to recognize that we don’t need synchro people to coach the programs. Provide programs and oversight and after we reach out to the YMCAs, we need more follow-up. Ginny stated that using their own instructors should be incentive. <p>Fundraising Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to grow and solidify relationship with foundation • Re-sign the Edmark donation • Can we do joint fundraising with the foundation that does not have us overlapping our efforts and going after the same people? • Sponsoring an event such as an “Over the Edge” an example Jim provided. <p>Events Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to manage our National Events (and Create New Events). This will have assist with consistency, branding, revenue from marketing activities, etc. It will then be easier to go into areas with no synchro and help promote. • Grow participation and create new events. • Jim asked if we can add a new event that is more exciting and like a show team (recreational track). Ginny stated that this is already being marketed on the World stage by putting the Gala at the end of every World Series because TV is requesting it. 		

Topic	Revenue Opportunities	Presented by	ID and Athlete Reps (Lori, Yolanda, Olivia, Maria)
Discussion	<p>Need help with revenue opportunities. Need to do more with what we have.</p> <p><u>Social Media (Lori)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term implantation – long term brand awareness • How to monetize through social media – now is driven through FB and Twitter, etc. need to have a giving model for all (even \$1) – consider social media – mobile messaging (texts) is a opportunity. • Kwippit – a new fundraising platform – an opportunity for nonprofits to have a deeper engagement with its supporters; fun, exciting and easy for the community. Customizable emojis to use in text messages– download app to see channels which relate to what we care about. – allows us to determine price of access. Minimal effort on part of USA Synchro, but get 100% of proceeds. <u>Next steps – low level of effort and high brand awareness and new revenue stream.</u> <p><u>Events (Yolanda)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current State – limited elite (Gala) events that would attract attention – this is a missed opportunity especially with media. Athletes aren’t showcased for example at Sequins Glitter and Gold. • This key event can create a consistent media attention – this will enhance sponsorship interest and fan awareness, affinity to stay involved with the sport. • In year 1 – if we can get a sponsor to underwrite an event. • <u>Next steps – High level of effort, medium level of risk, High brand awareness</u> • Look to new name ideas – Synchro Spectacular Gala • Need more media promotion for our annual events, like Synchro de Mayo • We need to promote our athletes more. – need to present them at these events and showcase their training. This can really capture the attention of the public. <p><u>Corporate Giving (Olivia)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporations have philanthropic funding. 65% of Fortune 500 companies offer matching gift programs and much of it goes unclaimed every year. • Types of giving programs 1. Matching 2. Volunteer 3. No strings attached annual grant stipends (apply for grants). • Different ways we can mold our image and mission statement to match up with some application of grants. Corporate motivations are important to consider; i.e. Geographically motivated, employee support, CEOs cause, and causes that align with their business interests. • Need to determine if members work for organizations with gift matching programs. • Find programs that have grant donation programs – Lori stated that the grant programs in large companies like Nike or Adidas makes sense – vs. trying to go the sponsorship route with these companies takes 3+ years. • <u>Next steps – High level of effort, medium level of risk, new revenue stream</u> <p><u>Sponsorships (Mariya)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biggest challenge is that our membership is too low, also partners want to contribute product but not cash, and we have low event attendance. • Goals are to identify new partnership opportunities, steward our current partners, move partners from VIK to Royalty to Cash (up-sell). • Opportunities 1. Create a media kit that outlines the partnership opportunities and post on website 2. Develop a model for gathering contact information and a communication plan (parents, alumni, ex-parents, etc.) How can we make them 		

	<p>interested in staying members of the sport; minimal fee each year to get communications, etc. Need to find a way to gather these people and even better if we can convert them into members. 3. Taking care of current partners. Annual recap, connecting with athletes, bonus opportunities, showing appreciation.</p> <p>It appears we have some gaps in information about employers, managing our database to reach all parents and alumni. Finding connections within our current memberships; is probably a better route than finding connections outside our organization. Get in touch with those who love already synchro and foster those relationships.</p>
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Topic	Annual Campaign	Presented by	Martha Johnson, Stephanie Isley
Discussion	<p>NGB Fundraising – Martha Johnson with the USOC provides NGBs with support for fundraising; best practice and advice.</p> <p>Philanthropy, fundraising and asking – “When you ask for money you are not taking something away, you are giving someone the opportunity to feel good and to make a transformation difference.” – Laura Fredricks</p> <p>Giving by individuals is the greatest percent of money vs. corporate and matching grants.</p> <p>Fundraising challenges –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not educating our membership that the NGB is a charitable organization and does not receive government funding • asking/expecting too much too soon – about relationships (be specific about what funds are used for and how to donate) • no clear case for support • lack of appropriate pipeline of donors and/or donor pyramid • Poor stewardship – not thanking existing donors in a timely manner (48 hours!) for their gifts and not updating donors specifically on how gift was used. <p>Success in fundraising – What is the need to run a successful program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone to drive the bus • Realistic and attainable goals • Supportive board members who contribute and understand the process • Viable list of qualified prospects (or the time and resources to build one) • Dedicated and engaged staff/volunteers <p>Board Engagement Essentials for Success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank donors • Introduce prospects/advocate for the organization • Go on visits with staff and ask questions to get to know prospective donors • Share you story with others – why are you involved with USA Synchro • Attend organization and fundraising events and be prepared to talk about fundraising priorities • Host private receptions or special activities • Send solicitation letters and emails • Contribute financially <p>So now what</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to partner and collaborate • Be ready to continue to work 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set reasonable expectations • Remember why you are here <p>Annual Campaign (Stephanie)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Called Sync for Tomorrow – support our youth campaign • Goal \$35,000, will run from Giving Tuesday November 28th until end of year • Support the talent program, and 13&U national teams in preparation for 2028 • This year we segmented our membership to approach with a different kind of message (more personalized) than in years past. Using email, call list, mailing. Yolanda will be the board advocate this year. • Look into the Facebook matching gifts program. • Ask around about employer matching grants. <p>Martha was asked if events (i.e. repelling) or galas or individual contributions are better? She said you have to know your audience. She is not pro-Gala – gala and golf events can be a huge time-suck for staff. Silent auctions are not usually very productive. She feels smaller events with guest athlete speaker can be very productive, but do not ask for the donation at the event, but follow-up later with a phone call or invitation to a national event which may then be in the area (VIP box).</p>
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Break for the Evening 6:00 PM

Return Sunday AM 8:00 AM

Topic	Budget	Presented by	Myriam Glez
Discussion	<p>This year was easier to go through the budget as it was the second year with Myriam and the new process.</p> <p>Myriam will send the budget spreadsheet to all members so we can look at more closely and vote at the next conference call.</p>		

Topic	Action Item Revenue Opportunity	Presented by	Myriam Glez
Discussion	<p>Would like a very detailed plan of action from now until 2024. Can we group the ideas into buckets and then prioritize?</p> <p>Myriam is going to prioritize and help look at short-med-long term actions and come back to the BOD with recommendations.</p>		

Topic	New Business	Presented by	
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheila McNabb discussed the changes in the rules packet which were affected by the new rules at convention. She moved to make a blanket motion to accept the full package of administrative rules including Appendix F. • It was seconded by Britt Rooney. The vote passed. • Tax reform going to Congress to tax part of sponsorship and licensing on the NGBs. All NGBs have written a letter to the constituents in Congress. • Safesport update – Fees are the same this upcoming year at \$7800. The Safesport committee is expanding to athletes, coaches, etc. and is still a very hot topic. Dale feels like it is a worthwhile program. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the recent SafeSport audit, five small items were highlighted and have already been taken care of. • USA Synchro has a new legal lawyer since the previous one is retiring. Myriam is working with the new firm to review contracts for events, etc. • USA Synchro has received several complaints from club concerning club business. It seems that the clubs don't have basic club management training. This will be discussed during on of the Admin Chair conference calls to educate on the Admin Chair role. This should help them mitigate situations and keep them from coming to the BOD. • The board made a recommendation for the payment of the mixed duet prize money from World Championships. Ginny moves that we accept Myriam's suggestion. <p>It was seconded by Krista Karwosky. The vote passed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myriam is finalizing all the coaches for national teams, talent camps, and ID camps. She is developing a network of coaches from the US and other countries so we can have the best training, a variety in training and also an international network of coaches and connection to lobby. Myriam will also be developing an induction program for the coaches to get to know each other and the expectations of USA Synchro before they arrive. • Andrea Fuentes (from Spain) has created a new gelling product called Synchrolovers. It is a pre-made gel which only needs to be heated up prior to applying. She is partnering with USA Synchro to be the US distributor of the product. Currently it is only manufactured in Spain, but we are looking into manufacturing it in the US as well.
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NEXT MEETING: December 13th 9:00 PM EDT

Adjournment at 11:27		
Moved to adjourn by: Margaret Mahoney	2 nd by: Ginny Jasontek	Vote: unanimous

Respectfully Submitted,



Erin L. King
Secretary

Attachments: Dale Neuberger Presentation, KPIs Presentation, 2018 Budget Spreadsheet, Revenue Growth Opportunities