



**Minutes**  
**Board of Directors Retreat Weekend**  
**Friday, February 3, 2017**

<b>Board Members in Attendance</b>	
Shari Darst, Myriam Glez, Jennifer Hawkins, Stephanie Isley, Ginny Jasontek, Krista Karwosky, Erin King, Linda Loehndorf, , Ryan Main, Judy McGowan, Sheila McNabb, Paige Ramsey, Britt Rooney, Nancy Rosengard, Lori Zabel Joined later: Margaret Mahoney (4:40), Mariya Koroleva (6:50), Jim Anderson (6:50) Excused: Yolanda Jackson, Olivia Morgan	
<b>Call To Order:</b>	
TIME: 3:55	BY: Linda Loehndorf

- Introductions were made by Myriam Glez and Linda Loehndorf. Linda Loehndorf gave description the members on the board and their roles. Judy McGowan stated that all BOD members should make financial contributions to the sport.
- Myriam Glez discussed the breakout drinks session, which was to occur at 5:30 with the Anaheim Sports Commission (ASC). The ASC is very interested in getting the FINA World Wide Seminar in the fall of 2017 and will bid on other future events.

Topic	High Performance Business Plan	Presented by	Myriam Glez
<b>Discussion Time: 4:10 PM, break at 5:30, resumed at 6:25</b>	Myriam Glez presented a PowerPoint with the key highlights of the High Performance Business Plan		

Myriam Glez presented the High Performance Business Plan (HPBP) to the United States Olympic Committee (USOC). She feels the USOC understands where USA Synchro stands and how far are we from the Olympic podium. Myriam feels the meeting went well, and we'll know by February 8, 2017 if USA Synchro will get any more performance money.

- Ginny Jasontek asked if all the focus on the Olympic games podium. Myriam stated that yes, mostly focused on the Olympic Games with a little emphasis on the Union Americana de Natation (UANA) meets and FINA Worlds. The USOC places us in the development sports category and values that we are focused on the long term strategy.

The following topics were presented by Myriam Glez based on the HPBP.

### **What we have achieved since 2012**

Highlighted were the initiatives completed in 2013-2016 in four categories; Leadership & Governance, Staffing, Business Development and High Performance & Education.

- Lori Zabel stated that these accomplishments were good, but wanted to know how effective have these measures been in achieving our long term goal? We need to be able to have a way to measure the milestones for the future.
- Stephanie Isley stated that one point of measure was the 71% increase in unique visitors to website from 2015-2016. This is partly because it was an Olympic year. However, our live streaming numbers to the website are still low. Stephanie said if we get more unique visitors to the website we can get more money from USOC per the digital marketing agreement. There are 4 tiers (with tier 4 being the bottom rung on the ladder and tier 1 being the highest) USA Synchro is currently in tier 3 with 218,000 unique visitors for 2016 and received \$50,000. To reach the next tier we would need 250,000 unique visitors in a year and we would receive \$75,000. The tally is based on your IP address, if one person goes online to the website once (or more) per month that counts as 12 unique visits per year.
- There was discussion to design a campaign around trying to get members and others to visit site more. This included a bimonthly newsletter to highlight items on the website and looking at new things to put on the website (i.e. international results, highlight videos) to draw interest. Also putting more information for members on the general website and not the members only section, as long as we are keeping enough information in the members only section to make it worth it for members. We can also reach people and drive them to the website through cross promotion with NBC Gold Map, FINA and Take It Live. However, Take It Live posts videos as well and it has been difficult to get numbers from them on their streaming "hits". We recognize that Take it Live is not ideal, but the product is good and given to us at a good rate.

### **SWOT Analysis**

Myriam highlighted the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) that synchronized swimming as a sport and USA Synchro have and how they compare.

- There was discussion on how market to boys because this is highlighted as an opportunity for us since we have the most talented male synchronized swimmer in the world. There would be value in seeing the mixed duet event at more of our competitions and for all ages.

### **Strategic Summary**

The technical strategy includes building the right structures for a sustainable athlete pipeline to high performance and/or collegiate programs and to encourage inclusion and development of all clubs and coaches from around the country through on-going education and better understanding of athlete development. This includes three areas; the National Team Program, the National Talent Program and the Long Term Athlete Development program.

The business strategy includes the continuing to rebuild stability and professionalism by operation with the right people in the right positions, with all staff focused on revenue generation, financial sustainability and stability and relationship building. Four key channels will grow revenues and support financial stability; Fundraising, Membership Growth, Sponsorships and Competitive Operations.

### **Key Initiatives for the Technical Strategy - High Performance and Education**

- Triangle (Grass Roots, National Talent, National Teams)

- Provide consistent message
- Consistent coaches on National Team
- Consistent athletes on National Team – large pool of athletes, core group and some that can come in and out as needs are met, collegiate, etc.
- Increase understanding of talent program
- Continue LTAD through grade testing, training programs and regional clinics
- Educate all clubs and athletes

## **2017 Key Projects**

- National Team trials & National Teams
  - 4 trials: Senior in Moraga, Junior in Dallas, 13-15 and 12U Phase 1 and 2 NT trials in SCA, Increased participation in Junior & 13-15: Junior – 50, 13-15 - 77
  - 4 to 5 National Teams: Senior, Junior, 13-15 and 12&Under National Teams, maybe 13-15 Team 2
- National Talent
  - Re-signed Rising Star Coach, selected 6 athletes to 2017 Rising Star program
  - 2017 Talent Camps – 3 camps for 11 to 15 years old in Riverside, 2 camps in Vegas for Junior and Senior
- Education
  - Coaches Education: New Coach Certifications from 9/1/16 – 1/31/17: CCP Level 1 – 52, CCP Level 2 – 29, CCP Level 3 – 33
    - Grade Assessors: Level 1-3 – 98, Level 1-4 – 101
    - Coaching Tips Manual – For release April 1, 2017
  - Judges Education: PowerPoint for Judge Training, Levels 1F, 1, 2F & 2 – completed & distributed January, 2017
    - Athletes Education: Grade Testing from 9/1/16 – 1/31/17: Level 1: Passed – 737, Failed – 115, Level 2: Passed – 613, Failed – 69, Level 3: Passed – 162, Failed – 72, Level 4: Passed – 311, Failed – 26
    - Grade Level 5 – To be released by Summer, 2017 (will not be implemented in 2017/2018 season)
- Other projects
  - Pre-School Program – For release June/July, 2017, Coaching for Success Clinics – 2 scheduled for April, 2017, Synchro Academy at Arden Hills

## **Key Initiatives for the Business Development Strategy**

- Critical Success Factors
  - Generate and diversify revenue through fundraising, membership, sponsorship and events
    - Lori Zabel questioned how we measure increases and targets. Myriam said this is in the HPBP, and we will discuss more during budget presentation.
  - Increase and strengthen organizations network and relationships with key partners
  - Continue to produce better communication, programs and management to deliver a more professional image and rebuild trust with partners and members.
- Revenue Generating Responsibilities of staff
- Staff Organization Chart 2017
- Fundraising
  - Major gift donation – key donors, wish lists

- A discussion about the availability and best uses for the Synchro Foundation Donations was had and how we can work hand-in-hand with the Foundation to best meet our mission.
  - It was mentioned that the USA Swimming foundation does the fundraising (outside of the organization) and USA Swimming does sponsorships. Can we work with the Synchro Foundation to get to this point?
  - Nancy Rosengard gave a summary of the May 2016 BOD call with the Foundation. The 3 areas identified to collaborate on are:
    - 1) Fundraising (timing and fundamentals)
    - 2) Communication to the Membership/Marketing. This would include a report at the BOG.
    - 3) Education Internal between the two BOD; Sharing strategic plans between the two groups to ensure we are working together to achieve our goals. Equal but separate organizations. Collaboration to improve the relationship to benefit the sport in the US
- Events – fundraising at two national meets
- Campaigns – for specific programs (i.e. National Team and Grass Roots and End of the Year), reach out to old collegiate athletes
- Membership
  - Structure update will be presented on Saturday
  - Membership growth – Meeting with key players to brainstorm ideas to increase membership, National office to implement various membership drive initiatives over the next 4 years, More communications and engagements with membership, Improve existing and create new club resources
- Sponsorships
  - Existing and new sponsors – resign and increase cash contributions, prospect new partners, attain sponsorship for some events
  - Sponsorship structures – update sponsorship materials and expand sponsorship prospecting reach
- Events
  - Graphic Design – use professional for more professional looking events
  - Strategic Planning – set up hotel and strategic release of meet locations work with Sport Commissions and Convention Visitors Bureau – carry out positioning for each of the 5 national meets
  - Source of Revenue – increase revenue from and refine strategy for merchandizing, ticket sales, vendor booths, etc.
- Other
  - Strengthen support network – USOC, other NGBs, key partners
  - Digital – continue to revamp website , media strategy and the Tier 3 of the USOC Digital Marketing Agreement
  - Continue seeking new revenue streams and increasing value of existing streams

### Risks to Mitigate

- Business development
  - Membership fee restructure
  - Restriction of 100K of the Edmark donation
    - Is there a way to regrow the donation money
  - Uncertainty of USA Synchro Foundation annual contribution

- Fundraising and sponsorship money to raise
- FINA & UANA
  - Lack of planning – no set competitive calendar – last minute decisions impact budget
  - No clear communication – no set rules and new World Series
  - Possibility for the World Series to serve as selection for Olympic Games and the financial implications (can we afford to send a full team to 4 international competitions?) Ginny Jasontek says this will not be used for the 2020 games, but if the IOC allows the number of teams in the Olympics to increase from 8 to 10, then the World Series could be used in the future to fill out the 10 spots.
- Performance
  - Senior team: recent injuries, lack of a full 8 member training squad at NTC
  - Increase financial contribution to be on the National Team (now \$6,000 for Jr, 13-15 and 12&U)
  - Judge succession plan = National judges to retire in the next few years
- New US Policies
  - Impact on leadership and coaching staff (visa renewal and increased legal costs)
  - Competition participation, international collaboration (entry guidelines, boycott)
  - Impact on LA2024 bid – USOC positioning

<b>Topic</b>	Safe Sport	<b>Presented by</b>	
<b>Discussion 8:25</b>	USOC has mandated that we use some new by-laws in regards to the Safe Sport program.		
<b>Motion</b>	Motion to approve Safe Sport as required by the USOC in the form the USOC requires		
	Moved by: Margaret Mahoney	2 <sup>nd</sup> by: Krista Karwosky	Vote: Unanimous

<b>Topic</b>	Rulebook	<b>Presented by</b>	
<b>Discussion 8:30</b>	Do we want the rulebook to come out of the Members Only section on the website and put it in the public area of the website? Britt Rooney stated that having it in the public area would be good for the high school programs. Myriam Glez says that in public area everyone can see the competitive rules, harassment section, etc.		
<b>Motion</b>	Motion to put the rulebook on the public area of the website		
	Moved by: Margaret Mahoney	2 <sup>nd</sup> by: Jim Anderson	Vote: Unanimous

No official adjournment as the meeting will resume Saturday morning.



## Minutes Board of Directors Retreat Weekend Saturday February 4, 2017

<b>Board Members in Attendance</b>	
Jim Anderson, Shari Darst, Myriam Glez, Jennifer Hawkins, Stephanie Isley, Ginny Jasontek, Krista Karwosky, Erin King, Mariya Koroleva, Linda Loehndorf, Margaret Mahoney, Ryan Main, Judy McGowan, Sheila McNabb, Olivia Morgan, Paige Ramsey, Britt Rooney, Nancy Rosengard, Jeanne Struck, Lori Zabel	
Excused: Yolanda Jackson (on the phone for independent directors portion of agenda) Guest Speaker: Jeanne Struck (joined at 1:50) Left early: Jim Anderson (12:30), Margaret Mahoney and Judy McGowan (4:00)	
<b>Call To Order:</b>	
TIME: 8:32	BY: Linda Loehndorf

Topic	Judges Proposal	Presented by	Krista Karwosky
<b>Discussion 8:32 – 9:40</b>	Problem: Not enough judges, we need to get more judges to fill panels. Ideal is minimum 15 judges for routines. Ideal for figures is 20.		

A discussion began with a brief overview of the difficulties of providing enough judges for national meets and the length of time it takes to become a national judge so everyone in the room could understand. We need a better system to build the pipeline with the most difficult part of the pipeline being converting the level 3 zone judges into level 4 national judges. Most other sports can pay their judges; currently USA Synchro does not have the funds to do this. In an ideal situation, USA Synchro would have the ability to train and pay for unaffiliated judges at all levels. Therefore, we need to come up with another possible solution to have more national judges at our national meets. Krista Karwosky presented the following three plans which involve all clubs providing a judge to the meets they attend.

- **4 Year Plan** – by 2018 level 1 to association meets, 2019 level 2 to regionals, 2020 level 3 by zones, 2021 level 4 to nationals (Rollout plan, similar to CCP)
- **3 Year Plan** – 2018 – level 2 to association, 2019 level 3 to zone meets, 2020 level 4 to nationals
- **2 Year Plan** – 2018 club must have at least 1 judge in training for level 3 and bring a level 2 to judge all association and regional meets, 2019 club must have level 4 at nationals
- Penalty is \$100 to zone or association to not bring judge to zone and below and \$500 for national to USA Synchro

Several questions were generated by these plans:

- Can we look at makeup of clubs that don't have a national judge, will it be a hardship? Yes, Krista is in the process of looking at the current distribution of judges and how it will affect them by implementing this plan.
- Is the penalty the same for whether we bring a solo or a team? This is still in discussion.
- What about an athletic tax to the meets? What is the incentive of this program? Mostly just to get more people into the pipeline. Just implementing a tax does not guarantee new judges.

There was a discussion that the underlying problem is that there is a disconnect between the coaches and judges and why do coaches not want to be judges? The truth is that most do not want to have to play both roles at a National meet. At the moment, it is unrealistic to think we can get all unaffiliated judges, but maybe strive for half and half.

Ginny Jasontek suggested that we need to target former swimmers who are not coaching. We can add a membership initiative to help get older swimmers into judging before they graduate with a combination initiative and incentive program. Myriam Glez suggested that maybe we can link CCP to judging levels and assessor levels which might help generate more level 1 and 2 judges. Britt Rooney also mentioned that it has been hard to get people to commit to a full day of training.

Jim Anderson questioned how much it would cost to fund judges at the meets; can we pilot an example to see if we would attract more judges by paying for the meets? This might give people an incentive to want to be a level 4. Lori Zabel suggested it might be a sponsorship opportunity.

Topic	Budget	Presented by	Britt Rooney
<b>Discussion 9:55</b>	Treasurer's report		

#### Highlights

- December deficit of \$50,349 – 2016 not a good year final shortfall will be around 80K
- Great loss in USOC funding gradually since 2004, showing historical perspective
- USOC supports us in different areas, our loss of revenue from them has been on the performance piece, we still get money from them for other revenues (matching grants, communications, etc.)

#### Budget Discussion

- Ginny Jasontek mentioned that we need to leverage our money to get to as many World Series competitions as possible. Synchro is not "safe" as an Olympic sport and we need to show support at these competitions by bringing athletes.
- Britt Rooney suggested that we need to determine where the variances in the budget are coming from each year. She recommended:
  - We add a line item under the net to reflect expenses and obligations we have that are not be accounted for. This would also help us target our goals and how we know if we are doing the right thing to achieve our objectives.
  - That we explain the variances on a monthly basis as they occur.
  - We find a way to have a more predictable income stream through memberships (maybe increase fees) and national meets. It was suggested that each national meet will



provide a certain guarantee of income. Lori Zabel suggested that we need to evaluate after each meet to set new goals, that are realistic every year.

- Myriam Glez pointed out changes since December:
  - New things to consider
    - Legal fees for Lolli Montico’s green card renewal.
    - Travel to Chili for UANA meet.
    - Will we get more funding from USOC?
- Nancy Rosengard suggested that we find a way to better record merchandize. We did make more sales in 2016 by taking merchandizing into the hands of USA synchro and out of E-synchro.
- Myriam Glez asked about the 100K that has to go to a locked account which does not allow us to be building our reserves, is this better than trying to put it back into reserves?
  - Judy McGowan stated that the intent of having the 100K as a restrictive fund, keeps us from spending it all in 5 years.
  - There was discussion about how we best want to use these funds moving forward, and by setting up a floor for operating expenses budget and getting more money in our NT budget, which is who are we specifically targeting for fundraising. It was suggested that we have better accounting on a monthly basis to increase the visibility of the trend and when budget hits yellow, do something before it gets to red. We also need to try and create regenerating revenue.

<b>Motion</b>	Moved to approve option 2 for the 2017 annual budget		
	Moved by: Ginny Jasontek	2 <sup>nd</sup> by Margaret Mahoney	Vote: Unanimous

<b>Topic</b>	Independent Directors	<b>Presented by</b>	All directors
<b>Discussion</b> 11:10-12:10	The Independent Directors were approached to present to the board how their skills can be leveraged and how they feel they can best help the organization.		

Their presentation began by stating what they feel they are famous for?

- Lori Zabel – strategy and planning, communications, process innovation, expert shopper/consumer
- Margaret Mahoney – detailed analysis, presentation excellence, event planning, shoe dog
- Jim Anderson – influencer, relationship management, deal maker, extrovert geek (keynote speeches)
- Yolanda Jackson – connector, promoter, deal closer, passionate about advancing women’s sports

They discussed communication style and trying to develop a more business-like approach to our meetings. We should present:

- The overview for the year: what is the big picture, to set a context for discussion.
- Then have a project by project review to give more of the specifics.
- Then we can discuss the Progress and Milestones – are we tracking to the milestones
  - Our calls tend to wander. We need to focus on whether we are making progress, what are the priorities, and how can we be more succinct.



They asked how do the key pillars of USA Synchro (Sponsorship, Fundraising, Memberships and Education) relate to the events (competitions) during the year. What events are our priorities? They had us complete an exercise to determine what we think our most important competitions are during the year. The result was that FINA Worlds, US Nationals and the USA Synchro Open are the most important.

Following the exercise, the independent directors talked about taking the priorities and breaking them down into functional areas (ex: sponsorship, event management, marketing, finance etc.) and setting timelines. These functional areas and timelines should be integrated into the monthly meetings to determine if we are meeting our milestones, what needs to be accomplished, where do we need help and how can we delegate to ensure we meet our final objectives. This can help our monthly calls to be more targeted and more action driven.

<b>Topic</b>	Membership Structure	<b>Presented by</b>	Nancy Rosengard
<b>Discussion 1:50-3:20</b>	Long Tem membership fee structure and strategy for growth		

Goal is to develop membership growth opportunities and strengthen USA synchro financial standing

**Objectives**

- Increase clubs
- Simplify and reduce categories
- Pipeline of athletes and coaches
- Fee structure competitive with other sports
- Revenue driving categories
- Restructure fee increase alone is not enough

**Retain + Attract = Expansion**

- Shari Darst is working on resources to provide to new clubs
- Is the 100 team growth by 2024 realistic?
  - Includes high school programs, pre-school programs, camps, etc.
  - This is a trackable goal. We should determine how to utilize people to make this happen. Additionally, we can tap into collegiate kids to help start programs or to become judges. We can provide education at Collegiate Nationals
  - Ginny Jasontek also suggested involving the zones more to help start programs

<b>Action Item</b>	Provide information at collegiate nationals to athletes on starting programs and learning to judge.	
	Person Responsible:	Deadline: Collegiate Nationals

What steps can we take to make this a reality and who is going to implement them?

- Jeanne Struck suggested that people can apply to the Foundation for grants to help a new coach with mentor, to travel to learn from mentor.
- To achieve 100 new teams by 2024, what are the action items and milestones?
  - Get the plan out in 60 days – April board meeting will have plan

<b>Action Item</b>	Membership implementation plan	
	Person Responsible: Membership	Deadline: April Board Meeting

	Committee	
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Current situation of Membership

- Membership is flat, but trial and introductory is growing
- Fees are flat
- Goal to at least cover support staff

Nancy Rosengard outlined proposed changes to all membership categories. This information is currently confidential and will need to be voted on before convention in order to implement the changes this fall. The membership committee will present the changes at the zone champs, collegiate nationals, US Nationals from February – March. The final proposal and structure will be put to a BOD vote during the April BOD Phone call. After that the implementation will begin with updates to website and communications with a GO LIVE date of August 1, 2017.

<b>Action Item</b>	BOD vote on final proposal and structure	
	Person Responsible: BOD	Deadline: April Board Meeting

<b>Topic</b>	Athlete Representatives	<b>Presented by:</b> All Athletes
<b>Discussion 3:30 – 4:20</b>	The Athlete Representative were approached to present to the board their contributions and biggest impact on the board.	

Who we are:

- Mariya Koroleva – AEC President, responsible for engaging the rest of the athlete’s representatives. Currently working at CAL Berkley with sports marketing. Mariya wants to define the role of AEC President better for herself and future persons holding this role.
- Olivia Morgan – AAC Rep, responsible for broadening communication between the USOC and active athletes. She meets 3 times per year and is included in some conference calls for initiative groups, and serves as a source of input and advice to the USOC board directors. Meetings are with multi-sports and discussions are usually on things happening in the world (i.e. doping, politics, etc.) Olivia would like to figure out how best to influence USA Synchro with her experience on this committee. Her professional career is working for a startup called Thought Spot which is a Relational Search engine for data analytics.
- Paige Ramsey – At Large Athlete, is elected by the athletes to be a voice of the athletes. She feels her strengths are being open minded and finding creative solutions.

AEC Mission statement – the mission of the AEC is to transform our culture by education, inspiring and mobilizing the athletes of USA Synchro.

The athletes defined culture as a pattern of beliefs and expectations shared by the organization members. They would like to enhance the current USA Synchro culture by:

- Making current athletes feel comfortable and willing to invest their lives into the National Team organization
- Drawing alumni back into the organization through volunteering. This can include helping with choreography, getting in the pool with athletes, showing up to practices, and engaging in mentorships.

- Creating a culture at the top to make the elite athletes superstars again and giving young athletes people to look up to.

Challenges include:

- Low level of athlete engagement
- Low level of support – athletes having to make big life choices between college, club or National Team
- Showing that the advantage that USA Synchro (vs. college or job) has is the Olympic experience, not necessarily as an Olympian, but to see the value in the journey of trying to represent your country on a global stage
- Lack of unity within the community including; Alumni, National Team and Grass Roots programs.

Solutions for the way ahead:

- Define mission and roles of each athlete representative position
- Develop consistent communication between Myriam, the AEC and VPs
- Create a succession plan
- Utilize tech platform to keep athletes connected (i.e. Facebook, slack (IM platform))
- Giving current athlete reps jobs to do to help add skills to resume and be more engaged
- Re-engage our alumni network (National Team and Olympic)

Want to come up with a 4 year plan so we can measure the impact and determine if we are meeting our intermediate outcomes to achieve the ultimate goal.

- Feb – define roles, etc.
- April – solidify timeline, create effective communication platform (Slack)
- June – Alumni networking event, alumni database
- July – initial strategies for National Team athlete financial support
- Oct 2020 – success

Topic	Foundation Update	Presented by	Jeanne Struck
<b>Discussion 4:20-5:00</b>	100% committed to furthering synchro in US and growing core of the foundation		

Our missions and vision is to emphasize grants that are innovative and largely support the Long Term Athlete Development program.

- Provide grants for US programs at all levels in education, judging, etc.

Key initiative of strategic plan: Funding the future of synchro

- Grant programs
- Communications
  - Monthly basis
- Financial Development
  - Target of 1M over next 3 years
  - Wants USA synchro to be as self-reliant as possible
  - Fundraising – setting up way to contribute online (joint genie)
- Foundation Board Development and Succession
  - Significant changes in the foundation structure over the last 2 years
- Collaboration between USSSF and USA Synchro

- Enhance USA Synchro's efforts and try and take much of the fundraising efforts off of USA synchro's table

Accomplishments in 2016

- Completed strategic plan to guide all efforts
- Accomplishments by strategic initiative
  - Grant process
    - Streamlined grant process and established metrics to measure impacts
    - Used USA Synchro initiatives to help assess grant applications

Plans for 2017

- Foster growth and work together
- Improved communication
- Show appreciation to donors

NEXT MEETING: Phone conference – February 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9:00 ET

<b>Adjournment at 5:03</b>		
Moved to adjourn by: Britt Rooney	2 <sup>nd</sup> by: Olivia Morgan	Vote: unanimous

Respectfully Submitted,



Erin L. King  
Secretary