



## Minutes Board of Directors Retreat January 12-13, 2019

<b>Board Members in Attendance:</b> Morgan Fuller-Kolsrud, Megan Hansley, Ginny Jasontek, Erin King, Mariya Koroleva, Michele Kraus, Linda Loehndorf, Margaret Mahoney, Sheila McNabb, Lori Zabel,	
<b>Staff Members in Attendance:</b> Adam Andrasko, Jennifer Hawkins	
<b>Guest:</b> Dale Neuberger (FINA Bureau Representative/TSE Consulting)	
<b>Excused:</b> Krista Karwosky, Yolanda Jackson , Britt Rooney, Jim Anderson	
<b>Call To Order At:</b> 8:30 AM PST	<b>BY:</b> Linda Loehndorf

Topic	FINA Intersection with UANA, US Aquatic Sports and USA Synchro	Presented by	Dale Neuberger
<b>Discussion</b>	<p>FINA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of 35 Olympic sport international federations (28 summer and 7 winter)</li> <li>• Founded in 1908, 209 national federations worldwide</li> <li>• Maintains seven disciplines swimming, open water, diving, high diving, synchro, water polo and masters</li> <li>• General congress every 2 years – Synchro technical congress every 4 years</li> <li>• FINA Bureau has 25 members – meets once a year</li> <li>• FINA executive has 8 members and 20 committees</li> </ul> <p>UANA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprised of 42 national federations</li> <li>• Conducts PanAms</li> <li>• Four zones (South America, Central America and Caribbean, US, &amp; Canada)</li> <li>• Formed in 1948</li> <li>• Rotating executive committee leadership and equitable apportionment of committee positions</li> </ul> <p>In order to stay relevant in the Olympics each sport has to evolve. Aquatic sports have added events to evolve (i.e. mixed relays). Ginny Jasontek contributed that we have to listen to what Dale is saying, we have to stop fighting things like the mixed duet, the highlight routine and the name artistic swimming, in order to stay relevant, we have to evolve. FINA is asking these things of us and we need to be on the bandwagon and not chasing it. Dale mentioned that we need to think about our re-branding to our logo with Artistic Swimming. There will be a new event after world games called the Gala (similar to gymnastics), which will be a showcase of the competition with freestyle routines. This was designed based on the fact that for gymnastics, it is the biggest ticket seller. This will be a great step forward to help involve and pull-in an audience.</p> <p>USAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five members – Swimming, Diving, Synchro, Water Polo, Masters</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USAS is the national federation to FINA – not USA Swimming or USA Synchro</li> <li>• Voting in USAS (11 votes) – 4 for swimming, 2 for synchro, diving and water polo and 1 vote for FINA member – US Masters gets the 4 swimming votes when it's masters related matters</li> </ul> <p>American leadership in FINA is important, the world still looks to us for decisions to impact the sport and we currently have Americans on 19 of the 20 committees. Most countries may have 1-2 people. Important to keep nominating good people who will do a good job on these committees. We need keep working on our succession plan for people who are cycling off. Ginny commented that we have a succession plan within USA Synchro for replacing some of these positions.</p> <p>In FINA – all disciplines are important (Swimming, synchro, etc.) – a total of 49 medal events.</p> <p>The future for synchro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 teams in 2020</li> <li>• Mixed duet has potential for an Olympic spot</li> <li>• Worldwide there is now confusion over terminology of Artistic Swimming vs. Synchronized Swimming. The US needs to get on board which will lead others in UANA to do the same.</li> <li>• Maintain a leadership position on the FINA AS committee and obtaining a leadership position within UANA AS</li> </ul>
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Topic	VP Reports	Presented by	
<b>Discussion</b>	Ginny Jasontek – VP, Olympic International		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linda and Ginny have assumed the role as High Performance (HP) director which has been challenging but good. Ginny thanked Shari Darst for all her work with organizing national team trials.</li> <li>• The numbers for trials are very good and we have a lot of kids are participating.</li> <li>• Ginny has been helping with communication between the National Team program committee, team trials organization and current members on the National Team. This includes discussions about the difficulties, especially the partially self-funded national teams, which are too expensive for many swimmers.</li> <li>• Ginny emphasized that the Pan American Games, one way to qualify for the Olympics is coming up this year. She stated that with our new coaching staff and the swimmers, this is our big chance to move up in the world. USA Synchro and all members need to show support to our team going into the Pan American Games. We will be working on a campaign which may include letters to the athletes, exhibitions and encouraging words to the coaches and swimmers. Anyone with ideas can share them with Ginny. We, as USA Synchro need positive self-talk about our swimmers.</li> </ul> <p>Sheila McNabb – VP, Competitive Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2019 meets have been set and are being planned. This year we are going to implement the stay to play rule. This means there may be a fee to the club if you do not stay at a host hotel.</li> <li>• Sheila is in the process of finalizing contracts for 2020 meet sites.</li> </ul>		

	<p>Athletes Representatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morgan Fuller-Kolsrud attended the AAC meeting in April 2018 which focused on athlete safety. There will be a survey coming out for athletes titled the Child USA survey.</li> <li>• Megan Hansley has been working with Betty Hazle to update athlete election procedures to ensure that we are filling the athlete positions in USA Synchro and also on the USAS board correctly. This will help us to get more athlete representation on the committees and is being driven by the USOC.</li> </ul> <p><b>Motion:</b> Sheila moves to accept the changes to the USSS Code 2019 as recommended by the International Relations Chair and Governance. Seconded: by Ginny Jasontek</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion: Margaret Mahoney wonders if we can do a provisional vote until the Board of Governors (BOG) can vote at convention as we don't typically change the Code at the BOD meetings. Linda Loehndorf has explained to the zone chairs that in order to be in compliance with USOC we have been asked to make these changes to the USA Synchro Code by March 1<sup>st</sup>. Mariya Koreleva stated that it is important that we do this by this summer when elections will be affected. Linda says it can be considered emergency legislation to be in compliance with USOC.</li> </ul> <p><b>Motion:</b> Margaret moves that we table this item until Sunday morning. Seconded by Ginny Jasontek. Vote passes.</p> <p>Michele Kraus – VP, Education &amp; Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Her committee is still working to improve the USA Synchro website.</li> <li>• She is continuing to increase our presence with social media and influencing the world about how USA Synchro is healthy and vibrant.</li> <li>• Adam Andrasko agreed that we have a lack of information on the website and navigation is not organized. A committee had put together an audit of the webpage and changes were supplied to Stephanie to be changed; however, with Stephanie leaving this has not happened yet. Michele will be working with Ginny, Andrea Fuentes and Reem Abdalazem for more media presence.</li> </ul>
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BREAK 10:20 – 10:40

Topic	Budget Evaluation and Discussion	Presented by	
<b>Discussion</b>	<p>In reviewing the previous budgets, it was noted that the anticipated expenses were too low and we had many unexpected costs which made it difficult to meet our goals.</p> <p>Although Treasurer, Britt Rooney, was unable to attend, she forwarded an email where she emphasized that the goal of the organization is to have a positive net revenue of at least \$100,000 so that we can begin to reinvest in the organization. There was discussion that this was a great goal, and making it happen will be a priority, but it may not happen overnight. If we continue to operate our budget like we did in 2018, we will not have a reserve. Adam explained that the expenses are as bare bones as possible. He stated that the BOD needs a true realization of our expenses and income, we need to discuss each program and area in more detail and we need some time to evaluate where significant changes can be made. The following is a discussion of each aspect of the budget.</p> <p>NATIONAL TEAM BUDGET</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linda is working with Andrea to develop the plan for the National Team budget for travel and training. Junior team will begin full-time training in September.</li> </ul>		

- Direct athlete support from the USOC is ear-marked for the duet only and is \$12,000. Mariya reported that this money has not increased across all the sports. This was discussed, but this line-item is not in the USA Synchro budget as it goes directly from the USOC to the athletes.
- The 13-15 National Team 2 might be a fully self-funded team or may not exist this year at all, it is still in negotiations; however, this team budget needed to be cut from the overall budget in order to save money.
- There was discussion that the Senior National Team is not going to very many World Series events. This is a strategic decision from the head coach who wants to wait until the team is ready and can show significant improvements and also not to show new choreography.

#### COMPETITIVE OPERATIONS BUDGET

- Currently the Synchro America Open is budgeted for about a \$15,000 dollar loss. This is based on unexpected costs from last season. This is an area where we feel the projected loss can be overcome with strategic planning. Also, there should be no unexpected costs this year.
- There was discussion on importance of this event and although FINA sets high standards and requires a certain amount of pageantry for these World Series events, hosting this event every year is still worth the risk to stay relevant leaders in the sport. Adam and Sheila will be working on finding areas to increase the amount of money this event can make; including reaching out to sponsors, reviewing the delegation package fees, marketing to make the pageantry work in our favor and working with Greensboro commission to provide as much as possible.
- Linda asked again that the membership committee needs to look at increasing the collegiate athlete's entry fees and are raised to the same fees as the other athlete events. Increased shipping costs, ISS scoring fees and pool fees make this a necessity in order not to lose money on this meet.

There will be a reforecast on the budget – after Q1, Q2 and Q3

LUNCH BREAK 12:20 – 12:50

#### EDUCATION BUDGET

- Adam commented that Shari Darst, Education Director, has put forward a very good budget in order to operate education in USA Synchro properly. This is important for revenue generation. Overall, there are lots of long-term opportunities to grow revenue under education as we can grow the numbers in the sport.
- There was discussion on the costs of printing copies of books and shipping vs. sending things electronically. Need to explore options of how to keep things private but keep them online.
- Money is budgeted for the club coach mentor program and athlete education which needs to be evaluated on whether they are producing success. It is in our high performance plan that our national team coaches reach out to help other coaches and athletes, so this needs to be considered when we look at this expense.
- Much of the money USA Synchro receives from the Synchro Foundation is earmarked for Education purposes; however, a lot of what is outlined under education is part of the high performance plan as directed by the USOC. Therefore, is it possible to speak with the foundation about allocating some of the money towards things like the Education Director's salary which oversees many of the programs.

- Currently many of the camps put together by USA Synchro are in competition with other synchro camps, some of which receive money from the foundation. There was discussion on how to make USA Synchro camps more appealing and also how to possibly work with other camps, such as In the Zone camps, to benefit both parties.

#### MERCHANDIZING/MARKETING AND DONATIONS BUDGET

- Adam is currently working on ways to maximize our revenue and reduce our overhead and oversight that USA Synchro has been responsible for. He is looking into hiring an outside contractor to do event merchandizing and also allow them to print our USA Synchro logo. There will be discussions about going to an all royalties plan in a licensing agreement. This will be similar to the USA Diving store. He has requested bids and they are due by Feb 1<sup>st</sup>.
- There are many new opportunities to try and partner with Jolyn or other places to brand merchandise. Then we need to promote our online sales.
- Adam hopes to increase corporate sponsorships by at least \$20,000 over 2018.

#### TOMINA EDMARK MONEY

- The contract ends in June 2019 and it will not be renewed.

#### ANNUAL CAMPAIGN AND OTHER DONATIONS

- Donations received between Giving Tuesday (the Tuesday after Thanksgiving until December 31<sup>st</sup>) totaled approximately \$26,000, with about \$15,000 from Facebook donations.
- The total for year in donations was approximately \$32,000.
- There was discussion about doing a more unified campaign this year with a focus on Pan American Games. We want to be able to align the foundation fundraising and USA Synchro fundraising in a synergistic way and we need better mechanisms to reach potential donors.

#### UPCOMING HIRES

- Current staff includes Adam (CEO), Shari Darst, education coordinator, Jennifer Hawkins, operations manager and the National team coaches.
- Adam is in the process of hiring an events coordinator to help oversee all the national events. His ideal scenario would be to hire a communications coordinator and then also a membership coordinator. The last two positions are a dedicated fundraiser, possibly to be shared with the foundation and the high performance director. There was discussion about the order of the hires and many in the room feel that the high performance director should come sooner than later. There currently is no money in the budget to hire anyone beyond the events coordinator.
- Margaret mentioned that we need to make sure our policies have the new job descriptions for the positions that Adam outlined.

Meeting recessed until Sunday morning 6:10.

Start at 8:00

There was final discussion about approving the budget.

**Motion:** Ginny Jasontek moves to accept the 2019 US Synchro Budget as presented.  
Seconded by Margaret Mahoney. Vote: Passes

Topic	Items needed approval	Presented by	
<b>Discussion</b>	<p>Discussion returned to the topic from Saturday about the changes in the procedure to elect the athletes.</p> <p><b>Motion:</b> Margaret moves to approve the changes in the Code related to the athlete's election procedures as recommended by the USOC. Seconded by Ginny Jasontek. Vote: Passes</p> <p><b>Motion:</b> Sheila moves to approve Appendix G changes (remove level 4F judge, unless someone already has this level) and aligned the practice judging with the 16&amp;O technical routines to eliminate practice judging figures and ask Betty Hazle to add new FINA requirements for the FINA judges section. Seconded by Ginny Jasontek. Vote: Passes</p> <p><b>Motion:</b> Mariya Koreleva moves to implement doubling the cost for late fee for grades testing effective Feb 1<sup>st</sup> 2019. Seconded by Margaret Mahoney. Vote: Passes</p>		

Topic	Background Checks for Coaches	Presented by	Adam Andrasko
<b>Discussion</b>	<p>USA Synchro is delinquent on background checks for coaches per new USOC regulations. Adam has asked the foundation to grant \$16,000 to help cover the costs to get background check for all coaches this first year and then in subsequent years we will add \$10 to the coaches registration fee to cover the \$20 background check per person every 2 years. This is required by USOC and will in future years need to be required in order to coach.</p> <p>We need to communicate to the coaches that based on information from the USOC there will be a background check coming down the road for all coaches.</p> <p>Adam will be working on implementing this and stressed that the USOC is going to require that we put a process in place as quickly as possible to temporarily suspend all coaches and judges until the background check is complete.</p> <p><b>Motion:</b> Margaret Mahoney moves that all coaches and judges have a USOC background check for covered individuals. Seconded by Sheila McNabb. Vote Passes</p>		

Topic	Foundation Phone Call	Presented by	Karen Rosolowski and Joe Alwen
<b>Discussion</b>	<p>Foundation used their retreat look at strategic plan and make sure it is conforming and meeting the established needs.</p> <p>Outcome – no change in mission and vision</p> <p>Vision – to be the premiere organization which supports synchronized swimming in the US</p> <p>Mission – Synchronized swimming foundation exists to support grassroots development; educational opportunities for coaches, athletes and officials; and the development of synchronized swimming in the United States.</p> <p>Set 5 initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Relationship between foundation and USA Synchro</li> <li>2. Grant programs</li> <li>3. Communication &amp; marketing</li> <li>4. Fundraising development</li> <li>5. Board development</li> </ol>		

How have these changed since 2016. Last year spend a lot of time on board development and moved from a management to a fundraising board. Therefore the initiatives have been ranked in a new order.

1. Fundraising development
2. Board development
3. Communications and marketing
4. Relationships between foundation and USA Synchro
5. Grant Programs

Importance has been placed on having key performance indicators. Another important topic is the relationship with the US Synchro BOD. The foundations would like to go farther beyond the conversations including only the USA Synchro CEO and the BOD President with the Foundation President and have those monthly meetings also include another BOD member from foundation and another BOD member from USA synchro.

Adam Andrasko asked if the foundation discussed hiring a joint fundraiser for both entities. Joe Alwan replied that they want to explore ways and new ideas to cooperate and jointly utilize a fundraising resource and continue the conversation.

Adam also asked about whether they discussed providing grant money to cover the \$16,000 for coaches background checks which is being required by the USOC. Joe stated that this will be discussed in the grant committee. The foundation recognized the importance of athlete safety and have decided that all members on the foundation be required to take the Safesport training. However, in terms of giving a grant for the background checks, all the endowment money which is allocated on an annual basis for grants is determined in June-July and therefore, there is no money in the endowment for an additional grant at this time. Furthermore, money for background checks does not align with the mission of the foundation; growth for the sport.

Adam thanks the foundation for the phone call and concluded with Karen that they will share more ideas at the next monthly meeting and see where the initiatives between the two groups can align.

**NEXT MEETING: January 30, 9:00 PM EDT**

**Adjournment at 10:15 AM PST**

Moved to adjourn by: Margaret Mahoney

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Ginny Jasontek

Vote: unanimous

Respectfully Submitted,



Erin L. King  
Secretary