

Minutes

Special Meeting of the USA Fencing Board of Directors

November 21, 2021 6:00 pm Eastern Time

Present: David Arias, Donald Alperstein, Sam Cheris, Lorrie Marcil Holmes, Abdel Salem, Adam Watson, Lauren Haynie, Nzingha Prescod, Cliff Bayer, Peter Burchard

Absent: Alan Kidd, Kat Holmes

Guests*: Peter Barton, Stephen Hess, Bridget Toelle, Jill Grotzinger, Suzie Riewald

*There were additional guests in attendance on a separate line listening to the call.

I. Call to Order

General Announcements

Remarks – David Arias, Chair

Conflict of Interest announcement.

Any Board member participating in this Board meeting should at this point let the Board know if they have any perceived or known Conflicts of Interest concerning any of the items listed in the Agenda for this meeting. Any such disclosure will be noted in the Minutes.

II. Consent Agenda Items (Mr. Arias)

1. To approve the minutes from the October 16, 2021 meeting.
2. National Office requests that the Board exempt the vaccination requirement for youth 11 years of age and younger based on the recommendation from Mt. Sinai.

Motion from Mr. Alperstein: To move the Consent Agenda items to New Business for further discussion.

Second: Mr. Watson

Motion passed.

III. Old Business

Motion (Mr. Alperstein): To take from the table the 7/7/19 motion to amend the materials rule concerning adding a second different safety system to the mask.

Rationale: At the 7/7/19 board meeting in Columbus, Ohio, Mr. Alperstein made a motion (which was seconded by Mr. Watson) to amend the material rules to add a second different safety system to the mask (e.g., a second strap). A subsequent motion (which was seconded and passed) laid the first motion on the table "for one year and referred the issue to the RC and SEMI commissions for more data and to report back no later than the deadline for agenda items for the Summer Nationals meeting in 2020 and to request any data the FIE has on the rule." At the 8/27/2020 board meeting the motion was retabled until the 2021 Summer Nationals meeting, which has passed. Here is the text of the motion being taken from the table:

To amend the material rules as follows:

M25.7.e:

**e) The bib of the mask must be made with cloth resistant to 1600 Newtons.
Replace with "350 Newtons"**

M25.7. f:

**~~f) The mask must contain a horizontal safety strap at the rear of the mask, with the two ends of the strap firmly affixed to the two sides of the mask. This strap may be elastic or of any other material that may be approved by the S.E.M.I. Commission.~~
Replace with:**

**f) The mask must contain two different safety systems at the rear of the mask, with the two ends of the straps of the systems firmly affixed to the two sides of the mask. These straps must meet the following requirements approved by the S.E.M.I. Commission:
Mask with metallic tongue**

- ☐ **The central band (strap) should not be less than 45 mm wide.**
- ☐ **The strap must be positioned low enough across the rear of the cervical region that the position of the strap on the head ensures that the mask cannot slide off.**
- ☐ **The band must be in solid material: when stretched the material should not sustain permanent plastic deformation and should quickly return to its original shape and size**
- ☐ **The fastening system must be doubled: it must be closed with a double security system (this means that the Velcro™ must be attached at least twice).**
- ☐ **The Velcro™ must have a minimum breaking strain of 750 N/cm**
- ☐ **The tags to which the strap is attached by Velcro must be secured to each side of the mask with the same breaking strain.**

Mask without metallic tongue

- ☐ **The position of the main strap must be low enough to ensure that the mask cannot slide off; the correct distance should be decided by the manufacturer (typically, 25/30 mm).**
- ☐ **The strap must incorporate 3 fixing points.**
- ☐

The use of a magnetic strap, when present, remains mandatory.

For USA Fencing competitions the retrofit of existing masks, including FIE masks, to the new design is allowed, subject to verification by Equipment Check (approval of the Head Technician).

Appendix A 2.2

4.3 Bibs: (p.177)

The bib of the mask must be made with cloth resistant to 1600 Newton, to be tested by the methods described in 3.1, below ~~Replace with “350 Newtons”~~

4.5 Test and Certificates: (p.178)

DELETE 4.5

Implementation: FIE homologated masks used in National events will be required to conform to the amended rules no later than 1 Aug 2020; all masks used in National events will be required to conform to the amended rules no later than 1 Aug 2021; all masks used in any USA Fencing event will be required to conform to the amended rules no later than 1 Aug 2022.

Motion (Mr. Alperstein): To table this motion and add it to the January 5, 2022 Special Board Meeting Agenda.

Second: Mr. Watson
Motion tabled.

IV. New Business

Motion (Mr. Alperstein): Be it resolved that the Board hereby authorizes the National Office of USA Fencing to explore the possible venues for hosting the Junior/Cadet World Championships in April of 2025 and to place the options on the agenda of the International Events Task force, which will then make a recommendation to the Board of whether and when such event should be held and request the Board to then authorize the National Office to make application to the FIE to host that event.

Rationale: The International Events Task Force has recommended that USA Fencing bid to hold the 2025 Junior Cadet World Championships as a replacement with the Covid canceled ones. The Task Force is requesting that the Board authorize the National Office to search and determine possible locations during the time period established by the FIE Statutes and then present those options to the Task Force, which will provide a recommendation to the Board.

Second: Mr. Watson
Motion passed.

Motion (Mr. Alperstein): To rename the Red Light Appeal Group as the “SafeSport Review Committee” and assign to it additional duties.

The SafeSport Review Committee, consisting of three Board members, will review items referred to it by the Executive Director (or senior staff, in the absence of the CEO), after consultation with General Counsel and the SafeSport coordinator. The roles of this review committee consist of the following:

1. To approve or deny background screen appeals.
2. To review and approve or disapprove the recommendations (not including suspension or expulsion) by the Safe Sport Coordinator related to alleged Code of Conduct, MAAPP and non-sexual misconduct or abuse SafeSport violations based on investigation by the National Office.
3. To review and approve or disapprove requests from the Safe Sport Coordinator to form a Disciplinary Panel related to alleged Code of Conduct, MAAPP and non-Sexual misconduct or abuse SafeSport violations based on investigation by the National Office. The panel, if formed, will further investigate allegations of SafeSport violations not handled under paragraph 2 above or those where the penalty being sought is suspension or expulsion. Additionally, the committee will approve the selected panel members and name the panel’s chair.
4. To approve or disapprove the temporary suspension of a member as recommended by the Safe Sport Coordinator, if deemed reasonably necessary for the safety and well-being of USA Fencing members, either prior to the U.S. Center for SafeSport determining whether to accept jurisdiction or prior to the determination of the issue under paragraphs 2 or 3 above. If the U.S. Center for SafeSport accepts jurisdiction, the Center has the power to modify or terminate such suspension. If the U.S. Center for SafeSport declines jurisdiction, the matter shall be handled under paragraph 3.
5. In all matters the committee shall act by unanimous decision. If on any issue the committee is unable to reach a unanimous decision, the item will automatically be sent to the Board of Directors for resolution.

The committee will act for and on behalf of the Board between its meetings, providing a full report of actions at the next regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting.

Rationale: Currently decisions relating to Safe Sport Violations must wait until the next scheduled Board meeting to receive responsive action to protect USA Fencing and its members. That can be as long as 90 days, too long to consider urgent matters. The committee will address only background check, code of conduct and safe sport issues, and not other disciplinary matters. The committee’s purview regarding background check red light appeals is not changed by this motion.

Second: Ms. Marcil Holmes
Motion passed.

Motion (Ms. Haynie): To approve the Search Committee recommendation of TurnkeyZRG as the executive search firm used to assist USA Fencing in hiring the new chief executive officer.

Rational: The Search Committee (Lauren Haynie, Abdel Salem, Adam Watson, Peter Burchard and David Arias) researched six national executive search firms and solicited two proposals in making the recommendation that TurnkeyZRG had the process and experience that would result in the best outcome in our search for the next CEO for USA Fencing.

Second: Mr. Watson

Motion passed.

Motion (Mr. Watson): To appoint Ms. Valerie Asher as the Chair of the Ethics Committee.

Second: Mr. Alperstein

Motion to Amend (Mr. Alperstein): To revise the motion with the title adjusted to Dr. Valerie Asher.

Second: Mr. Watson

Motion to Amend passed

Amended Motion: To appoint Dr. Valerie Asher as the Chair of the Ethics Committee.

Motion passed.

Motion (Mr. Arias): To appoint Ms. Selena Kaing and Mr. Jeff Salmon to the Audit Committee and to approve Mr. Adam Watson as the Chair of the Audit Committee.

Rationale: To fulfill the Bylaw requirements for the Audit Committee. Other members of this Committee are Ms. Maria Panyi and Mr. Alan Kidd.

Second: Mr. Watson

Motion to amend (Mr. Alperstein): To include Mr. Cheris as a liaison to the Audit Committee for the purposes of the prior year audit.

Second: Mr. Watson

Motion to Amend passed

Amended Motion: To appoint Ms. Selena Kaing and Mr. Jeff Salmon to the Audit Committee, approve Mr. Adam Watson as the Chair of the Audit Committee and to add Mr. Sam Cheris as the liaison to the Audit Committee for the purposes of the prior year audit.

Motion passed.

The following items were moved to New Business from the Consent Agenda

Motion Mr. Alperstein: To remove the word “also” from the notation of approval of the Vaccine Motion in the October 16, 2021 minutes in section VI, and to approve the minutes as so amended.

Second: Mr. Watson
Motion passed.

Motion Mr. Alperstein: To amend the new Vaccine Policy, passed at the October 16, 2021 Board Meeting, to exempt those 11 years old and younger.

Second: Mr. Watson
Motion passed.

IX. Good and Welfare -

X. Recess to Executive Session

Motion Ms. Marcil Holmes: To adjourn to Executive Session

Second: Mr. Watson
Motion passed.

XI. Executive Session

Present: Abdel Salem, Donald Alperstein, David Arias, Cliff Bayer, Lorrie Marcil Holmes, Adam Watson, Nzingha Prescod, Sam Cheris, Peter Burchard, Lauren Haynie

Absent: Alan Kidd, Kat Holmes

Guests: Peter Barton, Stephen Hess, Bridget Toelle, Christy Strong Simmons

General Announcements
Remarks – David Arias, Chair

The board approved a recommendation to determine next steps for an Interim CEO.

The board approved a recommendation to form a disciplinary panel to address a complaint.

XII. Adjourn

Motion Mr. Arias: To adjourn the Executive Session.

Second: Mr. Watson
Motion passed.