

2025 ABC Winter Board Meeting Minutes

Date: January 5, 2025

Time: 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. CST

Location: Virtual Meeting

The meeting was called to order by ABC President Teri Jones at 4:10 p.m. CST

Roll call was conducted by Teri Jones

- **Executive Board**
 - Teri Jones – President/Midwest
 - Sean Qualey – Vice President – Midwest
 - Sandy Boerman – Secretary/Midwest
 - Jerry Kanawyer – Treasurer/Director – West
- **Regional Directors**
 - Mike Jenkins – Executive Director – East
 - Scott Stouffer – Executive Director – Midwest
 - Bryan Koehn- Director- Midwest
 - Ken Reynolds- Reserve Director- Midwest
 - Ben Groen – Executive Director – South
 - Vonl Adams – Reserve Director – South Central
 - Blake Ehlers – Executive Director – South Central
 - Brad Ripp – Director – South Central
 - Ted Klein –Executive Director – West
 - Francois Claude- Reserve Director- West
- **Athlete Advisory Council**
 - Landen Ehlers – Chair – South Central
 - Megan Adams – Member – Midwest
 - Brett Swanbom – Member – South
- **Non-Voting Participants**
 - Brian Heeney
 - Bob Archambeau- USA Waterski
 - Andrew Martin- came in late
- [ABC Board list](#) (1)
- [ABC Committee list](#) (2)

Appointment of Parliamentarian

Teri Jones appointed Sean Qualey as Parliamentarian and a quorum was established.

Approval of Automatic Second for reports

The motion to approve automatic seconds for reports was approved by Sean Qualey and seconded by Ben Groen.

Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was reviewed. No additions or corrections were made; Ken Reynolds Moved to approve the agenda, which was Seconded by Ben Groen.

Reports Requiring Action

1. [Online Voting Recap Final](#) (3)
2. The President reviewed the 2024 online voting report, which covered all voting items and results. The motion to approve was made by Ben Groen and Seconded by Mike Jenkins.

Reports Requiring NO Action

1. President's Report
 - a. [USA-WSWS Sanctioning Fee Increases](#) – USA-WSWS Sanctioning Fee Increases were discussed effective January 1, 2025.
 - b. EMS Licenses—The donors for the EMS license fee have made a significant decision regarding financial support. They will no longer cover the costs for skier EMS licenses.
 - Implications for Skiers:
 - All individuals wishing to have their scores posted on the World Ranking List must now pay for their individual EMS licenses.
 - This change will necessitate personal financial planning for skiers and may impact participation and ranking opportunities.
 - Rationale Behind Donor Decision:
 - The donors expressed their belief that their funds would be better allocated to other areas within the organization, leading to the decision to discontinue support for EMS license fees.
 - Action Items:
 - Inform all relevant parties about the change in policy regarding EMS license fees.
 - Discussion on Event Participation Without License
 - Question: Can a participant take part in events without a license?
Response: Participants can ski without a license but will not be eligible for the ranking list.
 - Question: Can participants without a license be added to LION?
Response: The recommended process involves downloading EMS, manually adding participants, printing results, deleting them, and then uploading them back into EMS to ensure they do not appear on the ranking list.
 - Communication strategy
 - Plan to announce updates via multiple channels:
 - Barefoot.org
 - Facebook (ABC)
 - Regional Directors
 - Tournament Hosts
 - Outreach to Others
 - Suggested seeking input from Australia and New Zealand regarding participation and licensing issues. Ruth was identified as a good contact.

c. [Hank Cobb update-](#)

- Overview:
 - Hank Cobb's request for compensation related to his boat was rejected by the BOD via a letter.
- Legal Concerns:
 - Hank has suggested that he will contact USA Waterski and is considering legal action against the ABC.
 - If legal action proceeds, Hank would need to file in Florida.
- Insurance Negotiations:
 - USA Waterski advised against filing a preemptive claim, as we are currently negotiating our insurance policy.
- Discussion Points:
 - Ben expressed concerns about Hank's unpredictable nature and lack of follow-through.
 - Brian suggested that we refrain from advancing the process and allow Hank to initiate any actions.
- Additional Notes:
 - It was mentioned that Jay did not provoke Hank, and Joe Lavato and Ken confirmed these actions.
 - The use of the boat was strictly for slalom purposes.
- Action Items:
 - No objections were raised regarding the decision to wait for further developments regarding Hank's actions.
 - Bob inquired about a pre-check report on the boat by the Chief Driver, but it was noted that this had not been reported and the boat was dropped off months in advance.

2. Treasurer's Report – Jerry Kanawyer

1. [2024 Income & Expenses YTD](#) (4)
2. [Account Balance](#) (5)

Jerry provided an overview of the report submissions related to deposits, highlighting some challenges regarding donations that lacked clear documentation indicating their specific purpose. There was a significant increase of \$14,000 compared to last year. Ben expressed some concerns about a potential discrepancy in the fraud amount listed in the report. Additionally, Sean and Brian raised questions regarding the negative income reflected in the report. In response, Jerry clarified that these issues are primarily linked to the unclear allocation of certain donations not a concern with the mathematical data.

3. Rules & Bylaws Committee - Mark Shank (6)

There were no significant updates or developments to share.

4. [Officials Committee](#) – Mike Molepske (7)

There were no significant updates or developments to share.

5. [Awards Committee](#) - Megan Adams (8)

Megan presented the awards committee report, highlighting any current updates.

6. [Technology Committee](#) – Sean Qualley (9)

Sean presented his report on the utilization of GSuite for nonprofits, highlighting several key areas for improvement. He discussed the importance of maintaining consistent email addresses for better communication, enhancing live streaming capabilities, and optimizing operations to reduce the need for human ballast in boats by eliminating the videographer and allowing for judging from shore. Additionally, he emphasized the need to improve boat speed and streamline volunteer coordination efforts to increase overall efficiency.

7. [Records Committee](#) – Brian Heeney (10)

1. [Aligning ABC Record Age Brackets with the World Masters Brackets](#)

Brian's presentation of his report highlighted several key issues. Firstly, he noted that out of approximately 30 submissions, only 15 were approved, which is considered typical. He emphasized the importance of requiring review sheets to be submitted alongside the application packages to establish a unified standard.

Secondly, he raised a question regarding the procedure for handling exceptions to the established rules. Specifically, he inquired whether such exceptions should be referred to the committee or escalated to the board. Ben expressed hope that these situations would be infrequent and asserted that they should ultimately be directed to the board for a decision. There were no objections raised, thus establishing that all exceptions will indeed be reviewed by the board.

The third point of discussion involved a letter from Mike to the board, requesting an outline of the roles and responsibilities of the committee. It was suggested that each committee should maintain a clearly defined list of tasks to ensure accountability.

Lastly, the conversation turned to the number of divisions and the potential alignment with the IWWF to eliminate confusion. Skiers are expected to present their records to the chief judge, who is responsible for compiling this information. Sean shared that the website has been updated to provide clearer guidance regarding the procedures to follow if a skier breaks a record.

8. [Marketing and Social Media Committee](#) – Paul Stokes (11)

Paul is aiming to distribute a newsletter to help build an email list. Kevin Michael has offered to share this newsletter with the entire barefooting community. The newsletter will include tips on executing a proper flying dock start, as well as quarterly updates with links for entering tournaments and accessing live streams. Anyone interested can subscribe to the list. Additionally, it will provide a step-by-step guide on event promotion, covering pre-event strategies and post-event follow-ups.

9. History Committee- John Cornish (12)

There were no significant updates or developments to share.

10. Skier Development Committee – (????) (13)

[Junior Development Squad Initiative](#)

The committee is currently seeking individuals to assist. They propose that once the 2026 junior list has been finalized, we arrange a few training weekends. The estimated cost to fund each training weekend is approximately \$1,500.

11. [Team Select](#) - Andrew Martin/Scott Jones (14)

[ABC Guidelines for Team Select](#)

Sandy presented the proposal for the new Team Select process, incorporating suggestions from Ben. A discussion ensued during which Ken proposed that team athletes should contribute to the sport in meaningful ways as a condition for their inclusion. His recommendations included offering free clinics through volunteer work at junior clinics, conducting media interviews, participating in Think Tank, and engaging in initiatives to promote the sport. This suggestion will be forwarded to the committee for consideration in the proposal to the BOD.

12. [Athlete Reps](#) - Landen Ehlers (15)

Landen provided positive feedback regarding the recent achievements, highlighting the establishment of new records. Constructive feedback included the suggestion of not awarding medals to participants during others' skiing events. Additionally, a proposal was made for juniors to compete as juniors at nationals, as they currently do not have the opportunity to win a championship. Furthermore, novice skiers expressed a desire to compete alongside the best athletes in their age group. Landen will put together a proposal for the BOD.

13. Regional Reports

1. [Western Region](#) - Ted/Jerry/Francois (16)

Ted provided a comprehensive overview of the tournaments in the Western Region.

2. [Midwest Region](#) –Scott/Bryan /Ken (17)

Scott provided a comprehensive overview of the tournaments in the Midwest Region.

3. [Southern Region](#) – Ben/Rachel/Eric (18)

Ben provided a comprehensive overview of the tournaments in the Southern Region.

4. [South-Central Region](#) – VonL/Blake/Brad(19)

Blake provided a comprehensive overview of the tournaments in the South-Central Region.

5. Eastern Region - Mike/Derek/Jason (20)

Mike stated that the Eastern Region will combine with the Southern Region.

14. WBC/Pan Am – Lauren Ehlers (21)

1. [WBC/Pan Am Google Drive Link](#)

Lauren delivered a comprehensive overview concerning the Google Drive link. There was a dialogue about the upcoming Pan Am tournament, to potentially coincide with the US Nationals in 2025. It was noted that no bids have been submitted for the 2026 Open and Junior Worlds. The technical rule book for 2025 has been officially posted. In

addition, athlete representatives are currently working on compiling an email list from the EMS database to improve communication efforts.

15. USA Waterski – Dale Stevens (22)
The report was not discussed during the meeting.
16. [USA Waterski & Wake Sports Hall of Fame Foundation](#) (23)
The report was not discussed during the meeting.
17. USA Waterski Waterways Committee - Jay Leuck (24)
The report was not discussed during the meeting.
18. USA Waterski Safety Committee Char Portman (25)
The report was not discussed during the meeting.
19. SafeSport & EMS Rep. Tina McCauley (26)
The report was not discussed during the meeting.
20. Betsy's report updates for USA 15-19 (27)
The report was not discussed during the meeting.

Old Business: None

New Business

1. WANTED: PanAm alternate- The BOD engaged in discussions concerning potential candidates for the position of alternate for the Pan Am Committee. Faith Dix was nominated as a candidate for the role of social media manager. Court Harrington and Bryon Kane were nominated as potential chairs for the Skier Development Committee. It was proposed that the responsibilities of the Master's team manager be divided among available individuals. Andrew Martin emphasized the need for a designated lead on apparel for the Masters team. Teri updated the BOD, stating that the Executive BOD will continue collaborating with Ken and John on apparel initiatives for the Masters.
2. [2025 PanAm Tournament](#)
Ben presented a proposal to combine the 2025 Nationals with the 2025 PanAm Tournament. The proposed structure would be determined by the LOC potentially having 3 rounds:
 1. All Skiers
 2. U.S. National Skiers Finals,
 3. Pan American finals, which will encompass overall scores from Rounds 1 and 2.Similar to the World Championships, each participating country will send six skiers based on the time rounds by the LOC. The LOC needs to decide before March to facilitate Pan Am's planning process, as they need to formulate and present a formal proposal to the LOC.
Bob Archambeau suggested that it would be advantageous for the LOC to convey its expectations to Pan Am first, allowing them to determine their willingness to proceed with the proposal. The intent is to rotate hosting responsibilities among Canada, the U.S., and Mexico in

alternate years, with the U.S. taking a leadership role in this initiative. There were no objections raised regarding the proposal.

3. Lobby to include jump in the overall for the Masters

Brad proposed that we advocate for the inclusion of the jump discipline in the overall category at the Masters. A lengthy discussion took place regarding the rationale behind its removal from the overall competition. Sean suggested conducting a survey aimed at athletes aged 35 and over to gauge interest in reinstating the jump for the overall ranking. Lauren is currently compiling a list of survey questions that the athlete representatives will distribute to collect this data. Currently, no immediate action is required. Lauren will raise this topic at the next PanAm meeting.

4. ABC sponsorship at Worlds held in the USA

Donations will be assessed on an individual basis, taking into consideration the financial status of ABC for that particular year.

5. Language and limitations regarding re-ride criteria. Are re-rides consistent among judges?

Brad addressed the inconsistency of re-rides across various tournaments. The motion was sent to the Official's committee to review this matter and develop a formal proposal outlining clear criteria for re-rides.

6. Proposed changes to junior division.

Landen proposed a rule that allows Juniors who are qualified as Open skiers to compete as a Junior at the National Tournament. This practice is already implemented in other countries. Participants should have the option to register as either Open, Open Pro, or Juniors. Bryan suggests that skiers should move to the next level at the end of the year, rather than transitioning only after accumulating points, and should apply to all age groups. This policy would be specific to Nationals, while other tournaments may adopt their own guidelines as needed. Sean has made a motion to send this proposal to the committee, which Bryan has seconded.

Adjourn: Next meeting: 8:00 a.m. on July 30, 2025, in Auburndale, FL

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Sean Qualey and Seconded by Ted Klein.