

2026 ABC Winter Board Meeting Minutes

Date: January 4, 2026

Time: 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. EST

Location: Virtual Meeting

The meeting was called to order by ABC President Teri Jones at 5:05 p.m. EST.

Teri Jones conducted a roll call

- **Executive Board**
 - Teri Jones – President/Midwest
 - Sean Qualey – Vice President – Midwest
 - Sandy Boerman – Secretary/Midwest
 - Jerry Kanawyer – Treasurer/Director – West
- **Regional Directors**
 - Sam Dubs – Executive Director – East
 - Scott Stouffer- Executive Director- Midwest
 - Bryan Koehn- Director- Midwest
 - Ken Reynolds- Reserve Director- Midwest
 - Ben Groen – Executive Director – South
 - Trey Edwards- Director- South
 - Kelly Cooper- Reserve Director – South Central
 - Brad Ripp – Executive Director – South Central
 - Ted Klein –Reserve Director – West
 - Jerry Kanawyer- Executive Director- West
- **Athlete Advisory Council**
 - Landen Ehlers- Chair
 - Noah Kinnieman- Member- South
 - Carter Boerman – Member – Midwest
 - Megan Adams- Member- Midwest
 - Lauren Ehlers- Member- SCR
- **National and World Representatives**
 - Dale Stevens- USA Waterski
- **ABC Committee Participants**
 - John Cornish- Chair
 - Scott Jones- Chair
 - Paul Stokes- Chair
 - John Garrity- Chair
- **Non-Voting Participants**
 - Brian Heeney- Chair/Honorary Member
 - Andrew Martin- Honorary Member
 - Thor Thordarson
- [ABC Board list](#) (1)
- [ABC Committee list](#) (2)

Appointment of Parliamentarian

Teri Jones appointed Brian Heeney as Parliamentarian, and a quorum was established.

Approval of the Agenda\Approval of Automatic Second for board reports

The agenda was reviewed. No additions or corrections were made. The motion to approve automatic seconds for reports and the agenda was made by Ben Groen and seconded by Lauren Ehlers.

Reports Requiring Action

1. [Online Voting Recap Final](#) (3) The President reviewed the 2025 online voting report, which covered all voting items and results. The motion to approve was made by Ben Groen and seconded by Ken Reynolds.

Reports Requiring NO Action

1. [President's Report](#) (4)
 - a. [Your role as a Regional Director](#) (4a)
 - b. [ABC Committee Roles](#) (4b)
 - Membership Update: The ABC had over 300 members at the summer meeting; currently, it has fewer than 300 members for the winter meeting.
 - Action Item: Focus on increasing membership and communicating with each region to leverage their strengths.
 - Committee Development: Ongoing work to define the roles and responsibilities of the ABC committees.
 - Leadership Change: Mike Molespski stepped down as the official's chair. The world level has replacements, but the ABC level currently lacks a successor.
 - Current Committee: Looking to create a committee with judges, scorers, and homologaters, managing their respective officiating groups.
 - Bylaws Update: Mark Shank added provisions regarding finances to the bylaws. Discussion on how to manage these funds moving forward took place.
 - Financial Committee: A need for a financial committee to assist the treasurer was identified.
 - Tax Concerns: Sean raised a question about tax issues related to fundraising for the nonprofit. Teri noted that Mike will assist with this matter.

- Proposal to Vote: Brian Heeney suggested voting on the new bylaws as submitted by the committee, with Sean's suggestion to be added later.
- Motion Approval: Proposal to approve the bylaws as is and send Sean's suggestion to the committee was made by Jerry Kanawyer and seconded by Sean Qualey. The motion was approved unanimously.

2. Treasurer's Report – Jerry Kanawyer

- a. 2025 Income & Expenses YTD (5)
- b. Account Balance (6)

Jerry conducted a review of the 2025 budget, identifying a current bank balance of over \$100,000. The net positive balance for the year was \$16,543.

3. Rules & Bylaws Committee - Mark Shank (7)

- a. [Memo to the Board](#) (7a)
- [2025 Revised ABC Bylaws](#) (7b)

Sean highlighted that the treasurer and secretary do not include voting privileges. He proposed that the treasurer and secretary should have voting rights, suggesting adding another elite athlete to the board would help the 1/3 elite athlete requirement. Brian advised that we should consider Sean's feedback and bring this matter to the committee for further discussion.

Teri reminded the BOD that the Code of Conduct has been forwarded to us via email from the USA, and it is required that we review and sign it.

4. Officials Committee – (8)

No report provided. Teri emphasized the need to fill this committee as soon as possible.

5. [Awards Committee](#) - Megan Adams (9)

Megan reviewed the Winter Awards winners who will receive their award at the Winter Awards on Jan 31, 2026, in Auburndale, FL

6. [Technology Committee](#) – John Garrity (10)

- Ship to Shore: The ship-to-shore operations have been successfully implemented and are functioning effectively.
- Judging Process: Land-based judging is operating smoothly, with positive feedback from the tournaments.
- Discussion on Judging Shorthand: A brief discussion took place regarding the use of shorthand for judging. The focus was on developing better symbols for AI to enhance efficiency.
- BOD Sentiment: The BOD expressed a unified view of embracing change, with no objections raised regarding the proposed improvements.
- Potential Hardware Update: There was a mention of the possibility of replacing the large computer currently in use.

7. [Records Committee](#) – Brian Heeney (11)

- a. [Record Dossier Edits](#) (11a)
 - b. [ABC Records](#) (11b)
- No formal changes proposed by Brian.
 - Discussion:
 - Changes in slalom scores and new records.
 - Proposal to retire current records and transition to a new scores standard, similar to the retirement of the jump records.
 - Inquiry regarding objections from the Board of Directors (BOD).
 - Brad raised a question regarding the impact of record categories:
 - Clarified that if a record was broken under the new standards, the record still exists even if it was achieved under the old rules up until that date.
 - Sean questioned why these changes are made for slalom and jump, but trick values are frequently updated without similar record retirement.
 - Brian responded that changes to trick values are typically minor adjustments rather than significant changes.

8. [Marketing and Social Media Committee](#) – Paul Stokes (12)

2025 Initiatives: Focused on sending regular newsletters to stakeholders.

2026 Recommendations:

- Implement one snail mail letter alongside ongoing electronic newsletters.
- Plan for two to three additional newsletter editions throughout the year.

- Seasonal Focus:

- Spring Edition: Primarily to promote upcoming tournaments.
- Fall Edition: Review and analyze results from the tournaments.

Junior Involvement

Discussed the initiative for kids to take a more active role in tournament organization and operation, particularly focusing on junior participants.

Resources for Tournament Directors

Paul's Proposal:

- Develop an instructional handbook specifically for tournament directors.
- The handbook should encompass strategies to enhance social media engagement and overall tournament visibility.

Journey to World Championships

- Documenting Preparedness:
- Create a series of updates or a blog highlighting the preparation journey of the US team members from the spring leading up to the World Championships.
- Content Ideas:
 - Personal reflections and feelings throughout the preparation stage.
 - Video clips and updates to keep the community engaged on progress and challenges faced.

9. [History Committee](#)- John Cornish (13)

There were no significant updates or developments to share.

10. [Skier Development Committee](#) – (Bryan Koehn) (14)

Junior Ski Tournament is a two-week series of clinics ending in a junior ski tournament at Paul Adams Lakes. We are actively seeking to recruit 20 new skiers to participate in this program. The clinics will include a variety of engaging activities and are designed for athletes of varying skill levels, including those who are boom, shoe, and record capable.

The event is scheduled for the last two weeks of June, providing an excellent opportunity for junior potential athletes to receive training and compete in the tournament. Bryan suggested that Team USA representatives and junior skiers be present to inspire and mentor participants. Landen and Bryan will be addressing the inclusion of junior potential skiers in the clinics and tournaments.

11. [Team Select](#) - Scott Jones (15)

Scott reviewed the report and presented two more skiers. A motion was made by Ben Groen and seconded by Jerry Kanawyer to add Grant and Sage Lieb as junior skiers, which was approved. We currently have a total of 35 skiers in the pool.

There are concerns about announcing the team at the banquet. Scott proposed that we consider reserving some rooms for these skiers and canceling them if they are not needed.

In terms of apparel, it was suggested that everyone representing the USA wear the same apparel, whether they are independent athletes or part of the team. Discussion that we should buy apparel as a package for all skiers approved by the board. Fundraising efforts will be necessary to help offset costs, and we will use an electronic means for collecting contributions. Ken and Bryan offered to assist in setting up an electronic system for this, and Sandy will coordinate with Andrew about a Venmo account to facilitate a donation to ABC.

12. Athlete Reps - Landen Ehlers (16)

Landen reported that Noah and Carter were added to the athletes' committee. He reported that the skiers thoroughly enjoyed Nationals and are enthusiastic about participating again this year. Landen offered to gather any necessary information from the athletes as part of our Board of Directors' duties.

13. Regional Reports

- a. [Western Region](#) - Jerry/Francois/Ted (17)
Ted provided a comprehensive overview of the report.
- b. Midwest Region –Scott/Bryan/Ken (18)
Scott provided a comprehensive overview of the report.
- c. [Southern Region](#) – Ben/Trey/Todd (19)
Ben provided a comprehensive overview of the report.
- d. [South-Central Region](#) – Brad/ VonL/Kelly (20)
Brad provided a comprehensive overview of the report
- e. [Eastern Region](#) - Derek/Sam (21)
Sam provided a comprehensive overview of the report

14. WBC/Pan Am – Lauren Ehlers (22)

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

- The official 2026 list of prohibited substances has been approved and is available on the IWWF website as well as through her report.
- There will be a bulletin released in March, with details accessible via the official website.
- The qualifying scores for the upcoming 2026 World Championships have been published. The "Intent to Enter" forms will be distributed shortly.
- Information on slalom judging can be found on the World Barefoot website and within the report.
- Regarding adding Jumping to the Master category, Brad inquired if there have been any developments. While no updates are currently available, discussions with Mark S. regarding this potential change are ongoing, as it remains a topic of considerable interest.

15. USA Waterski – Dale Stevens (23)

There were no significant updates or developments to share.

16. [USA Waterski & Wake Sports Hall of Fame Foundation](#) (24)

There were no significant updates or developments to share.

17. USA Waterski Waterways Committee - Jay Leuck (25)

There were no significant updates or developments to share.

18. USA Waterski Safety Committee - (26)

There were no significant updates or developments to share.

19. Safesport & EMS Rep - Tina McCauley (27)

There were no significant updates or developments to share.

Old Business: None

New Business:

1. Bids for the 2027 Nationals

Teri announced there have been no bids for the 2027 Nationals. Sean reported that Midwest is submitting a bid, specifically for Ninovan Lake (with 2,200 usable feet and turnaround islands). The local ski community supports this initiative, which is why Thor is participating in the call. Plans include night jumping and freestyle events in the evenings to attract spectators.

2. Upgrade of Barefoot.org (Vote Required)

Sean highlighted the decline in engagement with the current WordPress site. Many "footers" are active on Facebook, yet the current subscription lacks social media compatibility, limiting outreach. An upgrade is proposed to increase storage and enhance the site, with an estimated cost of \$200 more than the current subscription. Ben noted that it's not permanent, allowing for reassessment if necessary. Teri opened the discussion, leading to a motion to approve the WordPress upgrade. Sean Qualey motioned for an amount not to exceed \$1,000 over three years, and Brad Ripp seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

3. Domain Payment for www.usbarefootnationals.com

ABC will assume responsibility for the domain payment at \$15 per year starting in 2027, ensuring continuity for future LOCs. A Squarespace website will be created for consistent information dissemination on Nationals. The link will be made more prominent on the ABC website. A motion from Ken Reynolds was made, seconded by Bryan Koehn. The motion was approved.

4. Financial Committee Formation

Teri discussed establishing a committee to oversee financial investments. Brian referenced the USA Water Ski nonprofit's Executive Finance Committee, suggesting a similar structure for the Board of Directors (including the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, along with around seven additional members). This proposal will be sent to the Bylaws Committee to develop a formal plan. Brad emphasized the need to invest in growing the sport, particularly in junior development initiatives. Teri indicated that this new committee would explore potential spending avenues. Lauren suggested that the President visit various regions to gather insights on specific needs.

5. Shorthand Notation for Trick Scoring App (Bryan Koehn)

The need for shorthand notation was referred to the official committee for consideration. Teri mentioned an upcoming online judging meeting to assess the system's efficiency, especially as competitions approach. Lauren and Jerry volunteered to assist with this initiative.

6. Alternative Tournament Formats for Grassroots Events (Paul Stokes)

Paul proposed reconsidering the necessity of all tournaments being record-capable, suggesting regions should have more flexibility in tournament formats.

7. Team Select submitted a request for the U.S Team budget. Jerry Kanawyer motioned to approve the budget, and Ben Groen seconded. The motion was approved.

8. Reminder for Conflict-of-Interest Document Submission

A reminder was issued for all members to sign their Conflict-of-Interest documents for USA Water Ski & Wake Sports.

9. Approval for Athletic Apparel

Lengthy discussions were held regarding the athletic apparel for the upcoming events. The board agreed that all U.S skiers should wear the same apparel similar to the Aussie team. Ken suggested that a package of apparel is more convenient and easier to acquire for the skier. Team and Independent Managers will research a plan to present to the board.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Lauren Ehlers and seconded by Ben Groen.

Adjourn: Next meeting: 8:00 am on July 28, 2026 at the US Nationals in Auburndale, FL