

Minutes
National Officials Committee
Executive Committee Mid-Year Meeting
March 19-20, 2017

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 3:00 pm, Mar 19th in Bentonville, Arkansas.

Executive Committee members present: Mike Armstrong, Rich Schornstein, Doug Allen, Roger Burbage, Laurie Boemker, Scott Rose, Marty Johnson. Members absent: Don Berry.

A motion was made by Rich Schornstein to accept the Minutes of the NOC Executive Committee Meetings, Dec 1 & 3, 2016. The motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Rich Schornstein to adopt a floating agenda for the meeting. The motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote.

Chair's Report.

- The Chair's written report is attached to these minutes.
- The Chair further shared his view of overall goals for the NOC; the process for certifying and training officials; and on our preparations for the next generation of officials.
- The Chair reported that Bob Podkaminer is working on a fillable PDF form for an officials' resume template.
- The Chair asked for all NOC members to forward to him their recommendations for Chair's Awards to be presented at the Annual Meeting.

Treasurer's Report. The NOC 2016 budget was approximately \$80,000; approximately \$60,000 was spent, but we do have 2016 accounts payable, notably for the 2016 NOC Hall of Fame & Awards banquet. The NOC 2017 budget is approximately \$149,000. Large obligations against that include \$35,000 for distribution of the new officials' polo shirts; and \$31,000 for officials' insurance. The 2017 budget spreadsheet is attached to these minutes.

Vice Chair Certification Report.

Goals: 1) standardize certification upgrades nationwide; 2) appoint four regional certification individuals, to assist with the Certification processing workload; and 3) produce a periodic Certification Chair newsletter to keep chairs informed on key/developing matters.

Additional certification matters:

- The beta version of the new certification chair website has been up for several weeks. It's not yet fully functional, and access remains limited to the test group at this time.
- Officials' ID cards – the national office now has the card printer and will produce the cards, but there are problems with the printer. The Vice Chair Certification will work with USATF to resolve those issues.
- Discussion on certification of officials under the age of 18, regarding their background checks and liability.
- Discussion on continuing or discontinuing the use of the old Certification Numbers for officials (since USATF will now key off the official's USATF membership number). The plan is to retain the numbers for all current officials, and have The Vice Chair Certification enter a number for all newly certified officials. We'll re-evaluate the matter in 6-12 months.
- Discussion on certification for EDM officials. There was agreement that due to technical aspects, this requires hands-on/face-to-face training and evaluation for certification. There is thus a need for

standardized training requirements and procedures, and identification of qualified people to conduct such training & evaluation.

- Discussion regarding the practice (specified in the Certification Regulation) of “grandfathering” the certification for officials first certified in an Olympic year, for the following four year Olympiad. Should they be required to take the rules review in the year following the Olympics? Not decided.
- Discussion on the need for efforts involving recruitment and retention, to increase numbers of younger officials and retain current officials. Generally agreed that factors which could help are: stipends; shorter meets; mentoring; and outreach to contact potential new officials.
- Discussion on handling of certification fees. Fees are collected by certification chairs and deposited to association accounts. Then the \$20.00 national fee is to be forwarded to USATF (they will specify payable to and address details). Cert chairs should provide notice to both the Vice Chair Certification and the treasurer of the transmittal amount and date. The Vice Chair Certification will inform certification chairs of the process.
- Need the ability to get an accurate count of currently certified officials – for associations and for the nation – for awards and voting purposes.

Vice Chair Rules Report.

Goals: 1) Have the rules reviews for the next Olympiad finished by late summer, 2020; and 2) send a survey to all current officials to gain feedback about the content and coverage of the current rules reviews.

Additional Rules matters:

- Reported that she is working with the USOC Paralympics staff regarding their test for officials.
- Discussion about whether to develop rules reviews for specific disciplines; decision not to pursue this.

Vice Chair Awards Report.

- Reported that the 2016 Hall of Fame and Awards banquet was conducted in about 3 ½ hours. His plan is to have shorter introductions for the HOF inductees, by an individual selected by the inductee.
- The Hall of Fame webpage content is current, and he’ll work with the USATF staff to update the pages for NOC awards to make them current.
- Nominations for the Hall of Fame and Andy Bakjian awards will be valid for a period of three years.
- Nominations for NOC awards – all nominations will be valid for one year. All nominations from the past year will be returned to nominators with a request that they be reviewed for resubmission or to be allowed to expire.
- He will create a fillable PDF format form for Hall of Fame nominations.

A motion was made by Mike Armstrong to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 pm. The motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Rich Schornstein to reconvene the meeting at 8:30 am on March 20th. The motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote.

Vice Chair Training Report.

A major goal is to standardize new officials training materials nationwide.

Additional Training matters:

- The chair has sent communications to subcommittee members, seeking those who will work on: webinars, training videos, and annual meeting clinics – topics & presenters.
- Intends to learn more about the capabilities of, and to continue use of the e-Learning suite.
- Intends to work with the USOC Paralympics staff regarding their training.
- Discussion on making and posting videos of officials at work – showing proper and improper techniques.
- Discussion on selection & assignment of individuals to shadow Technical Managers and Implement Inspectors at national championships – to gain hands-on knowledge.

- Discussion of various training materials produced by officials around the country – incorporate into national materials; or allow or discourage the creation of these.

Secretary's Report.

Goals: send a request for meeting agenda items and officer & subcommittee chair reports 5 weeks in advance of meetings; receive reports 3 weeks in advance; send an approved agenda 2 weeks in advance; and post minutes within 2 weeks of the conclusion of meetings.

- Minutes of the Annual Meeting Officials' General Sessions and the Executive Committee meetings have been posted on the website since late December.
- There will be a special election at the 2017 Annual Meeting to fill the unexpired term (one year) of the Vice Chair Certification position.

Old Business.

Young Officials Grant Program. The chair advised that there were 9 officials selected from 12 applicants for this year's program. Discussion centered on the need for better program publicity to draw additional applicants; to set a specific timeline with earlier milestones/deadlines (applications due at the same time as applications for national championships); and to incorporate certification chair evaluations into the process. The committee concurred with all of the above points.

NCAA partnership/certification endorsement – awaiting NCAA movement on starting this process – likely with Referees.

New Business.

Insurance – The Chair advised that the USATF staff assured him officials liability insurance would be fully funded for the foreseeable future. There is still an issue regarding a waiver required by one of the policies for USATF sanctioned events. We intend to propose a waiver acceptable to all.

A motion was made by Mike Armstrong to adjourn the meeting at 11:30am. The motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Rich Schornstein to reconvene the meeting at 1:00 pm on March 20th. The motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote.

Committee appointments – Discussion on candidates for NOC representative to various USATF committees, and candidates for various NOC subcommittee chair positions. The Chair will contact individuals and make selections. The committee will consider future changes to the duties and titles of two NOC subcommittees.

Evaluations – Rich Schornstein made a motion to revise the evaluation system as described in the attached paper. The motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote.

In discussions, there was agreement on the need to extend evaluations to officials at USATF Masters, Youth, and Junior Olympic national championships.

There was also agreement on the need make create the means to submit these online, and to post them on the website for individual officials to have access for review of their evaluations and performance appraisals.

Discussions involved making event heads aware that their evaluations would include an element addressing their completion or non-completion of evaluations for their crews.

Discussions also identified a need to address officials who are assigned to a crew as an additional duty, with consideration for when they may not be able to perform such duties due to a conflict with their primary assignment.

NOC Operating Procedures.

The committee reviewed a draft of proposed changes to the Operating Procedures, and with two small revisions, agreed that the Secretary would forward the proposed changes to the entire NOC for consideration and voting upon at the next Annual Meeting.

IAAF and NTO Considerations.

Laurie Boemker proposes to develop an IAAF certification/endorsement test. She will also propose appointment of a number of new NTOs in preparation for world championship meets in upcoming years.

Return of Equipment & Funds.

A motion was made by Rich Schornstein that if the former Vice Chair Certification does not comply with the USATF direction to return all USATF and NOC property and funds, that the NOC would send him a communication specifying a deadline for return of those items, and specifying the consequences of a failure to do so. The motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote.

Selection Committee

The Vice Chair Certification will manage the application process for national championship meets, and production of books of applicants for committee members. The Secretary will manage evaluations prepared by Certification Chairs for all applicants, and provide that information to the Vice Chair Certification.

Discussion ensued with agreement that the NOC should make the process more transparent, with publicity prior to the selections on the process, make-up of the committee, and elements given consideration by the committee; and publicity after selections on demographics of the applicants and selectees.

Athlete Input.

There was agreement to reach out to the Athlete's Advisory Committee, to solicit their input on officials matters – our procedures in conducting events and our treatment of athletes. The Chair will invite athlete representatives to meet with us to discuss the foregoing.

USATF Support on Certification Matters.

A conference call was conducted with Desiree Friedman of USATF, focusing on the new Certification Chair website and database. Several issues were discussed and USATF will seek to resolve these. A decision was made to have ID cards printed by USATF and sent to Certification Chairs for further distribution. Instructions on entering shirt sizes into the database, and instructions for return & exchange of incorrect size shirts will be provided by USATF.

A motion was made by Mike Armstrong to adjourn the meeting at 5:00 pm. The motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Rich Schornstein to reconvene the meeting at 8:30 am on March 21st. The motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote.

Best Practices.

There was a discussion about the relocation of the Best Practices and Resources library from Jimmy Stuart's server to the USATF server. There will need to be a scrub of the materials posted. The Editor will identify support needed from USATF, and will document the need for the Editor's access to directly add, delete, and update the content, in order to have complete and timely information posted in the most efficient manner.

Website and Database Issues.

A conference call was conducted with Desiree Friedman of USATF, focusing again on the new Certification Chair website and database. She reported progress on the functionality of several aspects of the site. The NOC gave her the go-ahead to go live with the site for all Certification Chairs in the country. She will publicize and conduct a webinar for Certification Chairs on how to conduct business on the new site, and will record and post the webinar online for viewing by others and for reference.

The Secretary will review the content and layout of information on all NOC web pages, and forward suggested changes to the Chair, for dealing with USATF to accomplish the changes.

A motion was made by Mike Armstrong to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 am. The motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote.

2017 Mid-Year Meeting of the NOC Executive Committee

Chairman's Report

Certification:

This has been our pressing issue since I took office and it continues to be. Every time I think we are about to turn a corner, things don't happen as planned. I do believe that the direction we are moving is the right one and will be the best for our officials in the future, but the transition has been frustrating for all. Of course, the previous year+ was also frustrating! I have communicated via phone calls and emails with frustrated officials across the country, just as you have.

Thanks to Rich, Laurie, and the others who got the rules reviews together and published. This was another area where the ball was dropped and others had to pick up the slack at a late date.

I believe the new website is about ready to be released. There will be fine-tuning that needs to continue, but certification chairs will be able to do their work. I have been using it for the past few days without an issue.

Background Checks and SafeSport continue to be frustrations for many, but they are not going away. The Background Check is difficult for those who are not familiar with the technology and frustrating for those who have had to have them for other situations. SafeSport has been problematic because some have not received credit for completing it either through a glitch at the USATF national office or because a membership number was not included or because the proper verification forms were not submitted.

I anticipate a drop in the number of certified officials because of frustrations with certification, SafeSport, and Background Checks.

I have notified Jimmy Stuart, on behalf of USATF, of the transition and the need for him to turn over all proprietary information and USATF property, including equipment, checks, money orders, etc. We are also in the process to transitioning anything for which he handled payments (such as MailChimp and the E-Learning site) over to payment by USATF. All of this was already in our budget. It appears that Jimmy has already shut down the previous officials database.

Championships:

The Indoor Championships in Albuquerque went well and the officials did a great job. I believe that there were two protests filed: one on a lane violation (denied) and one on a shot put foot foul (upheld). We did have more officials decline than I expected: Four selected officials declined, six alternates declined, and three selected officials cancelled within two weeks of the meet. But the officials there did a good job of stepping in to fill spots. All of the Race Walk officials also worked other events, as well as our Combined Events Coordinators.

We only had one official decline a selection to the Outdoor Championships.

Insurance:

Bob Tice and Irene Herman reviewed our insurance policies and brought to my attention that the policy for USATF-sanctioned meets requires all to sign waivers. I have been told by the USATF National Office that officials will be covered without waivers because of our USATF memberships, but we asked Shelby Sharpe to examine the policy and he does not share that opinion. But waivers can also be problematic. We have asked Shelby to draft a waiver that we can present to USATF that will cover both our interests and theirs.

Committee Appointments:

I have filled many spots, but there are still some vacant ones. You have received that list and it will be an agenda item.

Young Officials Grant:

Don Berry did a great job of putting together the Young Officials Grant program, including creating and processing the applications and rankings. While he did that, I communicated with the Youth and Masters Committee Chairs and then with the Officials Coordinators of the championship meets available to the recipients. When the nine selections were made, I worked with the recipients to select the meets they wanted to work and then helped them contact the appropriate Officials Coordinators. We had at least one recipient select each of the six meets available to them.

Officials' Evaluations Proposal

For consideration by the NOC Executive Committee

Currently, there are two different evaluations performed for USATF certified officials.

- 1) Evaluations prepared by event heads at USATF national championship events.
These evaluations list eleven topics/areas where the event head provides a "Yes/No/Not Observed" answer regarding the official's performance at the competition; plus a "Yes / No" answer on whether they are capable of working that level meet again in the future; plus an area for written comments about the official.
- 2) Evaluations prepared by association certification chairs on their officials who have applied to work at future USATF national championship events.
These evaluations ask for a rating on a scale of 1 to 5 (see below) regarding the official's suitability to be selected for and to work a national championship meet; plus an area for written comments about the official.
(Scale: 1 = Head Official; 2 = Important Position; 3 = Worker; 4 = Unknown; and 5 = Not Recommended)

Proposed evaluations.

- 1) Evaluations prepared by event heads at USATF national championship events. Split the evaluation into two segments:
 - a. Performance feedback – Retain the current eleven factors and space for comments regarding the official's performance at the meet. Add a topic with space for suggested areas which could be strengthened.
 - b. Selection recommendation – create a separate section with ratings identical to those in #2 above.
- 2) Evaluations prepared by association certification chairs on their officials who have applied to work at future national championship events – no recommended changes.
- 3) Evaluations prepared by association certification chairs on their officials who have applied for the Young Officials Grant Program.
These evaluations should ask for a rating on a scale of 1 to 5 (see below) regarding the official's suitability to be selected for the grant; plus an area for written comments about the official.
(Scale: 1 - Definitely select - high quality official; 2- Select if possible - good official; 3 - Select - average or very inexperienced official; 4 - Unknown; 5 - Do not select)

Rationale.

- 1) Evaluation of performance and feedback to an official is a distinct and separate matter from a recommendation for selection or advancement. They should be clearly separated in the process for championship event heads.
- 2) The selection committee for championship events has limited time in which to review officials' records. They really need just a basic recommendation for selection; having identical rating tools and reports from the event heads and Cert Chairs would streamline and simplify the process for the selection committee.
- 3) The Executive Committee currently has insufficient information with which to make an informed rank-ordering of the grant candidates. There's no information about an applicant's abilities or performance - just a list of meets worked. We may have someone whose experience looks pretty good on the application form, but they could be a weak official or not a team player. The Cert Chair is in the best position to provide some assessment of the official's suitability for the program.