

## AEC Meeting at the Annual Meeting

**December 3, 2008**

Alan reported that the Board voted unanimously to adopt the by-law revisions, but there are some questions as to whether or not they are legitimate. One issue is if the USOC is truly threatening to decertify us. We are specifically looking at the 5e organizations. One, Road Runners Club of America is challenging the revisions because all 5E's will only get one vote on the Board. The USOC said that only the NCAA qualifies as a 5e organization. Alan didn't know all the qualifications to be a 5e organization. The other piece is whether they split their vote or each get one vote. RRCA said the Amateur Sports Act says each 5e org should have a vote. Alan is concerned that we have three independent members with one vote, so if we have 3 or 4 votes for the 5e organizations, that will bulk up our numbers. We need to be inclusive, and the USOC wants to exclude. The other thought is to go ahead and get this process started because nothing is cast in concrete. The Board will be able to make changes that will ultimately be voted on by the general membership. So, the Board may make changes in their upcoming meeting, and Alan will come back and give a report on what transpired.

Steve commented that all the restructuring issues to be voted on will not likely impact the local Associations at all. We must still have people on the local level to perform many tasks and this will not affect day to day operations in 57 Associations around the country. Steve doesn't think it is practical for us to go in to a meeting and not agree with restructuring as there are no other alternative solutions. If there have not been changes brought forward by now, it is too late. If Masters, for example, wants to start their own federation, that's fine. It will free up a lot of time and work in the Associations since they would not have to put on any Masters championships. Karen added that the Board will now need to represent the whole organization, and not just their individual areas.

Harry stated that the Zone Meetings should be held before the general Associations meetings and not at the end. Alan said we could have the Zone meetings first during the second general session.

Alan reported that Scott Christianson was named the new interim Coaches Ed chair, but he is not going to be at the Convention. We also don't know if it has been announced yet. We are still having issues with Coaches Ed. We would like to move the DVD and on-line level 1 training along. Harry commented that we have been talking about the on-line for many years and have gotten nowhere. Karen responded that is why it is so important who the new Coaches Ed chair is so that person is amenable to on-line. We also need sessions more geared to youth. We put forth the name Matt Lydum, but Scott Christian was named as the new chair. We continue to have problems in Associations with being able to put on Level 1 schools. Time and money has been a barrier to many people who would like to attend a class. Even when a school is held, it can take five or six months to get the tests graded and returned. When the Presidential candidates come in to our meeting, we will ask them questions specifically regarding their position on Coaches Ed.

George Ragan has taken over as chair of the subcommittee for the Regional Championships. George would like to see clearer rules, especially regarding US citizens. It is important that we work toward having regional level events in all disciplines. It would be good to find a site for the meets and get a sponsorship as it is getting more and more difficult to find a University to allow us to host a meet. This led into a lengthy discussion on the Facilities Access Task Force, which has not really been functioning. We really need to have action from this task force so we can come up with policies and strategies. Alan suggested that this subcommittee should look at Associations who are not putting on championships in all disciplines and helping them to do so. Several Associations have come up with creative ways to partner with schools, like buying equipment that the school needs in exchange for the ability to use the facility for free.

Background Checks – Andy announced that about 2,700 coaches went through the program, but about 20 Associations have not done anything with the program at all. There is a wide range of how the Associations are administering the program. We are moving toward a national, centralized system that will be partnering with TClogiQ. We are negotiating price with them right now. Andy surveyed about 60% of the Associations who do not use TClogiQ now, and the sense is that the majority of them are very comfortable moving in this direction. The fee will be between \$6 and \$12. Notification should go out in a week or two. Andy stated that TClogiQ will be able to feed directly from their database into the National database, eliminating the need for the manual update by the Association background screening agent. Harry and Steve worked on the expiration issue and said that the background screening needs to expire at the end of the following calendar year. This could mean up to a two year period of time before the next background checked is performed. We discussed if the expiration should be at the end of the current or following year. Andy also talked about a 'perpetual' check,

where the existing background screened people could be checked every month, but we do not know how much this would cost. [Straw vote: yes to have background screening extend to 12/31 of the following calendar year in which the screening was purchased.](#) Harry passed around images of proposed badges that would cost around \$.50 each for all background screened volunteers, similar to Officials badges. This would assure the parents that someone working with their children has indeed been through a background screening process.

**Motion by George Regan; seconded by Ruth White: Each volunteer that passes a background check be sent an official badge through the National office. Unanimously approved.**

After a lunch break, Karen asked if we would like to use next year's convention meetings to do more of what we do at the Associations Workshop. Ruth stated that if we hadn't completed a topic satisfactorily at the Workshop, then we could bring it forward. We need to be flexible and continue to add to the agenda, so that we have a full agenda by the time we ever get to Convention. We could move the AEC meeting to the afternoon on Wednesday, perhaps 2:00 – 4:00 pm, so as not to conflict with Organizational Services and allow for travel in on Wednesday morning if possible. We would also put the Zone meetings in the first session on Thursday. Karen also suggested that the Zone reps should have a meeting once a quarter.

We need to figure out a way to get Associations to put in grant requests, because we keep getting cut back on grant money because we are not using it. We were reduced from \$20,000 to \$15,000. Jackie pointed out that there are restrictions on what the grants can be used for, and we need to see if we can get those lifted, like funding for championships. Karen said the Zone reps have a line item in the budget for championships. George said the money can only be used for administrative purposes, but no one knows why. Karen will discuss this with Andy. We will also discuss the needs of each area so that we can better formulate the future budgets.

We have a number of open positions for representatives to other committees. We can also appoint one member at large, and three members that the President will have to approve. Karen asked that if anyone is interested in representing Associations in other committees, please let her know. Steve pointed out that these representatives need to know that they must take an active role in the committee, letting them know that you will take back information from their meeting to the Associations Committee.

We also need to take a hard look at all of the Associations subcommittees. We have many, and some appear to be inactive. Karen feels that if you are on a subcommittee, you must attend our meetings and provide a report. If elected as our Chair, Karen wants this to be a very progressive committee, and not just let things happen to us. We represent a lot of people!

We need to have a hard stance on Associations that are not carrying on business as needed. We must enforce existing regulations and directives. We need to work with our Associations where needed, especially where the Association doesn't know how to do something. The Chair of the Associations Committee, as well as the appropriate Zone rep, should be contacted whenever an issue arises in an Association. Too often only the National office is contacted. We discussed being proactive and going to the Associations that we know are having difficulties with accreditation to help out. We have not done a good job of helping Associations that are weak get better. There is also a difference between an Association not knowing how to do something and 'thumping their nose' at the regulations.

We discussed at length the shortcomings with our legal department in regard to grievances. There are lawyers who would be willing to volunteer and help out and we should present this as an option. We only have one person in legal with a vast amount of work. This led into another discussion on background screening, after which, we adjourned.

## **Associations Committee – General Meetings**

**December 4, 2008**

Session: The good, the bad, the ugly. This is also the meeting where the candidates will come in and speak to us and address questions to them regarding grass roots.

### **Candidates Session:**

- [Stephanie Hightower](#) - Stephanie stated that she believes Associations are the pillars of USATF and told us that for the most part in the past eight years, she and Alan never bumped heads at the BoD meetings.

Stephanie doesn't apologize for being strong and aggressive in the past, because she had to fight for the small amount of money for the people she represented. Stephanie believes the National office should be handling more of the background screening and that all Associations should have their own page on the National website. We also need more value added benefits so that our membership can feel good about the value they get being a USATF member. We must ensure that this grass roots part of our organization is nurtured and feed in a way so that we can give the high performance division the feeder system of future Olympians. She also would like to see interactive websites to attract youth. We must have better support systems for the Associations. Stephanie also feels diversity is important to the Associations and that we cannot have dissention among our different groups. Perhaps it is time to look again at Reg 15 to ensure the requirements for Associations are ones that can actually be met. Our by-laws and policies are living documents, so if we need to go back and review them, let's do so. Stephanie is here to serve us, and if we elect her as our next President, we should feel comfortable with her working together with our representative on the Board.

Russ Ebbets asked where Stephanie sees the zones set up in her vision. She said we need to look at a strategic plan. She would like to form an advisory group that would include Associations in a significant way to start a strategic planning process.

Jackie Callender asked Stephanie her position on Coaches Education and Grievances. Stephanie is a strong proponent that we must change what Coaches Ed looks like from both the High Performance and Grassroots viewpoints. She also feels we schedule the classes looking at college coaches schedules, as opposed to looking at it from a grassroots viewpoint. It's obvious that there is an inherent flaw in the entire coaches' education process. We need to come up with a list of priority issues that we need to address. Stephanie is confident our new CEO, Doug Logan, will be able to implement and put in place services and responsiveness to Associations and other constituencies that we haven't had in the past. She also feels there is a problem with the number of people in the National office, which leads her to the issue of grievances. We need to find a way to minimize the number of grievances by better communications. Stephanie said using the robocalls and emails like she did during the campaign is how we move forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and how we communicate effectively to our membership. We need to make sure there is transparency and we don't have many blogs that perhaps have misinformation.

Candace Reynolds asked about background screening. Stephanie feels the lion's share of the ownership of the background screening process should not be at the Associations level, but rather at the National office. There are a number of people at the high performance level who cannot pass background checks, so this is not just an Associations concern. Stephanie concluded by asking us for our votes.

- **Bob Bowman** introduced himself and his background in Associations. He feels we really need a national program for Associations to share expertise. We also need to get more revenue through increased sponsorships as well as the USOC. 2.2 million is too little to receive when you consider that the top 5 salaries in the USOC is 2.2 million. USATF provides the bulk of the medals during the Olympics.

Russ Ebbets asked same question regarding Zones. Bob said that the Zones have been ignored and we need to develop more regional competitions. A weak Association can be helped by a stronger one in that zone. Jackie Callendar asked his question on Coaches Education. Bob said it seems like a no brainer to put Level 1 on the internet and it should be part of our strategic planning.

- **Dee Jensen** stated that while she has never been an athlete, she has been both an Official and a high school and college Coach. Dee thinks that growth can come at the Association level with the proper tools, the proper training and the proper leadership. Dee wonders if it would be of value to have a small cluster of Associations to have a one-day workshop. Dee would want a legacy of leadership in USATF that is so deep at all levels that we are never concerned when someone is ready to step back, we don't have to worry about finding someone to fill the position. Good leadership is about inspiring others. Dee feels USATF needs to aggressively educate our country at the high school, junior college and university levels about the values we bring. We need to provide the benefits that cause people to want to be a part of us. Dee has worked in the trenches and is very comfortable with that because in building relationships you build trust. Dee's bottom line is always to treat people with dignity and respect, but her training in track and field as a referee has prepared her to make the tough decisions and not be concerned about being popular. Jackie asked his question on coach's education. Dee agrees that we need to develop coaches that are not professional, at the university level, but to work with the youth.

**The Good, the Bad and the Ugly:**

Karen passed out the survey handout stating she was a little disappointed that there were only 16 responses, but happy to have that. Some of the comments from the survey detailing positive things that have happened in their Associations recently:

- better communication between committees
- elected a new consistent group of individuals
- worked to improve websites
- membership, sanctions and championships have all increased
- successful elections with no problems

Karen asked people to talk about how they went about putting these improvements into place. Many people wrote in comments indicating the problems getting facilities, volunteers and funding. Karen asked for people without these problems to let us know how they handle these areas. Joe Gentry stated he would like to find a way to help associations find money if they need it. Herb Nicholls stated that they have several available facilities, but that the cost of these facilities is starting to rise significantly. He asked if we could start thinking outside the box and started looking at ways to build our own facilities. We can then generate money for ourselves. We need to think long range, rather than just short term.

Ken Roubichad stated that New England started a grant program and formed a partnership with the city by providing needed equipment for a reduced fee structure. Colorado partners with high schools by allowing their teams to have the concessions and entry fees. Youth meets are open to all age groups and they have tried to help the Masters out by having them piggyback on their meets. Al Davis asked how to get all disciplines involved in getting new membership, not just the membership chair. George Ragan commented that we must make our membership more valuable to members of the long distance running community. This led to a discussion on member benefits and their lack of movement out of the National office. Some Associations make sure they move their meetings and championships around so that all of their members are better able to attend.

One of the overwhelming questions always asked was how to get volunteers and how to keep them. Some of the suggestions were to:

- solicit help from parents and athletes
- foster an environment where volunteers are treated well – food and drinks always works
- don't ask volunteers to come out and work and then ignore them the rest of the year
- work to identify the people who help out at the high schools and then get them involved
- work with the Kiwanis clubs
- mentor with the volunteers and be available for questions
- use the National Guard or other military groups
- use high school kids who have a community service requirement for graduation
- use college athletes as officials - Division III offers a track and field course and the University of Alaska offers college credit for Level 1 classes

The next question was to name one thing you could change at the National level if you could.

- Less expensive merchandise
- More appealing member benefits to attract more members
- Faster turnaround on mailing membership cards
- Youth committee full time position
- Batch on-line membership processing
- Help getting elite athletes to participate at the Association level
- Legal counsel needs help – maybe we could get some pro-bono help
- Retain the dob verification check mark if someone buys new and does not renew
- On-line meet entry
- Increase funding for Associations

We wrapped with a discussion on Association strong points and how to identify those exceptional associations. There are a lot of good skills that Associations have; how to get the word out.

**December 5, 2008**

**Session: Officials membership and insurance.**

Last year the officials committee voted to require USATF membership for all officials. That makes it much more expensive at \$30 each to be a certified official. Because of that, we wanted to provide a benefit – liability

insurance for meets that aren't sanctioned. However, the cost of this insurance is very high so we have to work through how to cover the cost of that insurance. Bill Hickman, President and Officials certification chair of Pacific NW, is also an insurance agent. Bill stated that a third party liability insurance policy is when you are sued for your negligent contact that caused injury to them. It is not first party; it is not accident insurance; it is not health insurance. There are two insurance policies - the primary one through USATF that covers officials at sanctioned events and this second policy that will cover non sanctioned events. For example, events put on by a school district or an NCAA meet. The theory is that this insurance will cover member certified officials at whatever track meets they work. These policies are excess policies, meaning that they kick in after primary insurance up to \$2 million aggregate and \$1 million per occurrence. The funding for this new policy will come out of the \$30 membership paid by all certified officials. Under this new plan, membership fee for officials will be split with \$22.50 to the National Office and \$7.50 to the Association. Meaning the Association will now lose \$7.50 in revenue on each official. So it will have some economic impact at the Association level.

Irene Herman talked about coverage at non sanctioned events. This policy is wrap-around coverage. It will cover events from January 1, 2009 thru November 11, 2009. All certified officials in your Association will be covered. The Officials Certification Chair, Jim Flanik, has a database of all current officials, and that is where the list of covered officials comes from. So, no Association will be charged incorrectly. This policy has a general aggregate – this one policy covers all certified officials in the 57 associations. The most this policy will cover before it becomes exhausted is \$2 million. However, attorney fees are outside the limit, so that does not dig into the \$1 million. This is really important to know because this is definitely a benefit.

Andy passed out a handout that was partially derived from the membership database, so it is not 100% accurate as people may check boxes incorrectly. However, the third column, the number of certified officials, comes from the Officials database using the number from 2008 with a reduction of 20%. The Associations can project how much revenue they will lose based on 50% of the fee coming out of the Associations portion of the membership fee. It is also felt that there will be newfound money coming in to the Associations since officials must now be members, whereas they did not have to join USATF previously. Herb is concerned that no one was consulted when the decision was made. A lot of officials are also coaches or volunteers. Up until now PVA has used the money from the membership fee to pay for the background screening program. This will put the association in the hole since they are losing the membership money. Also, the multiple year membership is also less money, so will we also lose more money? Bill Roe explained that the BoD could not find any new revenue to match this new line item in the budget for officials insurance. As an organization, we have less than 6 months reserve in our operating fund, which is not good for any organization. We do not have money to spend on new projects yet as we are still trying to build a reserve. The Board felt that the Associations would get additional revenue from the new members who join because officials membership is now required. However, they also recognized that not all associations would benefit from this, and in the future, they may be able to address this. This was the only way we could start this program out. Bill asked everyone to work with it this year so we can determine what this does to all Associations. We can evaluate the program after working with it this year.

Background screening – Andy reported that effective January 1, 2009, USATF will change to a centralized program using TClogiQ. We are making this change for several reasons, one of which is that this will be a more secure system as the volunteer initiates the background screening online and does not have to submit their social security numbers and other sensitive data to the Association screening agent. The cost is \$8.00 to the coach, with USATF National subsidizing the other \$10. Once the candidate has passed the screening, TClogiQ will provide an automated flow of data to our membership database so that the Screening Agent no longer has to manually update the date of screening. This will in effect, put the Screening Agents out of business, but we still need to have that point of contact within each Association for correspondence. Unless there is a compelling reason why the Association cannot use TClogiQ, all Associations must go to the new process for background screenings.

#### **December 6, 2008 – morning session**

Doug Logan addressed the meeting. Doug is more enthusiastic today than when he first talked to us at the Associations Workshop in August. USATF is a fascinating fabric of people from all over the country – multiple disciplines; multiple ways we have of governing ourselves; multiple ways of representing grass roots and elite. It has been a really great entry into what Doug considers to be a very serious job of stewardship of this great sport. Doug has a variety of bosses, but he believes his true boss is the sport itself and he works for what is in the best interest of track and field. Should he make a mistake, as he is sure he will, he knows we will let him know about it. That is one of the great things about having a membership that is not only intelligent and talented, but vocal as well – you get to hear things. Doug encourages people to think of questions to share

because he wants this conversation to be interactive. With our vote at the Opening Session to accept the new changes, we now have a toolbox for the 21<sup>st</sup> century that will enable us to get to work. Doug feels he has a job, rather than a position, and he is going to work. The hard work starts now. That consists of taking a sport that has not taken its rightful place in the US as we are a major sport. USATF is the custodian of a major sport. When Doug is asked who are competitors are major league baseball, hockey, etc. This is because he has been asked to guide a major sport. Our peers are other major sports and we must elevate ourselves. Currently, we have no business model and to a large degree we are not a sport since we do not have episodic events on television. Right now, we can only say every four years we get people pretty excited and WHEN we appear on TV, we get pretty good ratings. We have some indoor stuff, some outdoor stuff, we have colleges doing some things, we have some things with youth, some things with masters, some things with road racing and some things with race walking, and we go to the Olympics every four years. We need to start harnessing all our parts and fashion them in a way that is comfortable and 'easy on the eyes' of the American public. We're going to get some of the marvelous story lines out there. We need people to know the American drama within our sport and witness what we do. Our storylines will attract people to us.

Jackie Calendar asked Doug about the timeliness of grievances that go to the National Office. Doug acknowledged that Lamont has a full workload with a full inbox. They are reassessing the entire structure of the National Office. They are working on a new organization chart and adding new positions. They understand that customer service is important and they are changing the culture. Look for improvements in the next 3 to 6 months. With regard to tapping the volunteer base that we have, we're doing that all the time. We have a mother load of resources out there and we will continue to draw from the pool.

PVA Pres asked what tool he is in Doug's toolbox. Doug said the Associations are his regional/district/local offices. We are an organizational subset of the toolbox itself. We are the regional managers and are managing the great fertile asset we have, the volunteer membership base.

Question: we are an organization of about 85,000 members; how will we grow the membership? We are going to create a number of reasons to carry the USATF membership card. We are brainstorming and Doug has a goal that is very adventuresome with where he wants to grow the membership.

Diversity is not a tool, it is a native resource that we have that is greater than any other organization Doug has been part of. Diversity is who we are, rather than it being one of our tools. Our sport represents America more than any other sport in Doug's view.

Alan stated that we need to change the terms of our elected officers from two to four years. The first two years is when you are just getting a feel for the job. Ken Roubichad asked to limit the term of office to two terms. Alan commented that sometimes there is not a person available to fill the position. Denise asked if we could stagger the terms of officers so we don't have everyone leaving at the same time. Question why do we need two vice chairs. So there is a better chance that one of them will be able to take over.

**Irene Herman, as Women's LDR, made a motion that the term of officers be four years.  
Seconded by Patti Petesch.**

**Voice vote – one opposed; all others in favor.**

#### **Elections:**

**Chair – Karen Krsak** was nominated and seconded (Ruth White). No other nominations; motion to close nominations - Jim McKee and Frank W?.

**Voice vote – all in favor.**

**Vice Chairs –** nominees: **Ron Mascarenas**; Sue Polanski nominated **Jim McKee**; Ruth White nominated **Clif McKenzie**. All nominations were seconded. George motioned to accept names and close nominations; seconded. All in favor to close nominations. The three candidates were given time to speak. The eligible voters were called forward by roll call to receive their ballots. Each voter was to select two names. Organizational Services conducted the election. The **results** of the Vice Chair election are **Ron Mascarenas** and **Clif McKenzie**.

**Secretary -** Harry nominated **Linda Bommicino**. George made a motion to close nominations; accepted. Ruth White made a motion to elect Linda by acclamation.

**Voice vote – all in favor.**

**Treasurer** - Karen nominated **Richard Messenger** from WV. No other nominations; moved and seconded to close. Move to accept by acclamation.

**Voice vote – all in favor.**

**Ruth White made a motion to destroy the ballots; seconded. All in favor.**

Alan introduced us to Barbara Palma, our representative on the NGP. We will name three candidates to be considered by the NGP for the GCD position on the Board of Directors. Alan explained that the members of the new Board should have a history with the constituency group from which they were nominated. The NGP will also look at the qualifications of each candidate and strive to ensure the diversity of the Board. Once a person is elected to the Board, they will then be tasked with considering the overall organization. If the Board rejects our candidates, they must come back to us for new nominees. Barbara and Darlene, as members of the NGP, stated that the three independent people may come from outside of our organization. We are trying to build an image as a business so we can attract more money and support to our brand, our sport. We will submit names from our committee with a brief bio for the NGP to consider. We are looking for diversity and balance on the overall board. Anyone can submit a name towards the independent positions. The NGP will take the three names from the various constituencies and select one to sit on the Board. Then they will also go through the names for the three independent positions. We need to develop our method for nominating the candidates. There is also no guarantee that the NGP will accept any of the names we submit.

**Chris motioned that we have an election of the full committee for our candidates to the Board, prefaced by a full description of the positions and an emphasis on diversity. Russ seconded the motion. Alan added an amendment that the AEC have authority to do the nomination work if it is needed before the committee meets again. This was acceptable by Chris. Seconded.**

**Majority in favor; a couple of nays.**

Mary Stroud from the Audit committee reported that there is no financial person per se on the new Board. They hope that there will be at least one person on the new Board who at least has a financial background. She asked that when we think about independent people, please keep that in mind. A CFO from a large corporation will be welcome.

**Nominations for the Board.** Karen stated that we keep in mind that any person who is elected to the Board will have to give up any and all positions they currently hold in USATF. The Board commitment must come first. The wording is in the by-law amendment. You must be autonomous. We are moving in the direction of a business model. There are four in-person meetings and at least one conference call a quarter. However, the Board can change all this. The Board can vote in by-law amendments, but they would only hold until the next Annual Meeting where the entire membership would have to vote on the amendments.

**Names submitted for nomination: Sue Polansky, Dee Jensen, Linda Melzner, Alan Roth. Ed Koch's name was also submitted, but he declined. The eligible voters were called forward by roll call to receive their ballots. Each voter was to select two names. Organizational Services conducted the election. Alan and Dee were nominated.**

New relationship with AAC. One person will be named from the AAC to interact with Associations, as well as one person from Associations to sit on AAC. Gary Morgan, one of our reps from the AAC, has been elected as the USOC rep alternate on the AAC. Gary said if we need any athletes in the future, please contact him. He is working to have athletes available to support our events. The athletes are excited about some of the new opportunities. There is a large base of athletes to draw from. Andy will send out an email blast with Gary's email address and other information.

Skip Stolley reported on the Club Championships. 88 club athletes competed in the 2008 Olympic trails – four times the number we had in 2004. So Club based programs are working. They are developing elite athletes. Skip has asked that our Club Development programs be part of the strategic plan in this next quadrennial. He is optimistic that this will indeed happen at a level never seen before. Last year's club cross country championships had more than 1,000 athletes representing 40 clubs. This year's club cross country championships in Spokane exceeded both those numbers, so participation continues to grow. In track and field, last year we had 40 club representing 26 states, and this year we expect those numbers to continue to grow.

## December 6, 2008 – afternoon session

Karen reported that 52 of the 56 associations went to the Associations Workshop. Two cities have bid on the 2009 workshop, Buffalo, NY and Des Moines, Iowa. We will probably ask one city to do one year and the other the next year. The highest rated session was the critical new tax law changes. We got a good rating for the Olympic fest – free food! Lowest rated session was diversity, possibly because it came in so late. However, Harry reported that the Leadership and Diversity session held here was excellent, so we should plan on it for next year. The Conflict Resolution session was excellent, so much so that Clif McKenzie asked her to come to Arizona to speak to his school district. Karen asked for suggestions for the next Workshop as she needs lots of ideas.

Zone elections - The North Zone reelected Ruth. The West Zone reelected Harry. The East Zone elected Pam Fales. The South Zone reelected Jackie.

Jesse Johnson, Communications Chair, talked about branding and marketing. To start branding at the Associations level, he believes we need to start with similar websites hosted at the National website. This way, each Association will have the same look and feel, and it will not limit what you can put on the website. This will also facilitate batch uploading of membership and online data entry. He stated it would be a 15 or 20 minute change to Hy-Tek's program to allow us to do direct entry from the National website. Jesse has not talked to Andy yet, he is just presenting this idea to us as where we need to go. This will keep us in line with the goal of branding to become a major sport. Jesse said we can do a lot more on a hosted, National website than what we can do on a local level. This will also facilitate Associations communicating more with each other. We need to have athlete times on our website as opposed to going to sites like Dye Stat. We also need to have message boarding available. We have a listserv that was set up by Tom Light several years ago. It is restricted to people who have active roles in administration. Many people want to get on our listserv because they want an audience for their ideas and they can't find any others for USATF. But we want it limited to Associations. We will try to move from yahoo groups to our own server. The cost to the Associations would be around \$5.00 a month to be hosted on the National website. You would lose your existing domain names because you would have to come under usatf.org. Linda pointed out that the biggest question is whether or not the National website has enough storage to handle all 57 Association's website. Since Jesse has not yet spoken to Andy on this, he didn't really have an answer other than it is likely that they may need to get another server.

Conflict of Interest statements in the by-laws will be mandatory at the Association level. Expect to see this added to Reg 15. Clif McKenzie is the chair of this subcommittee.

We have been struggling with member benefits since we have a requirement to background screen the companies we wish to do business with. We don't want to get a company involved with us that may embarrass us down the road. The problem has been that after doing all the legwork, we sent them to the General Counsel and they have sat there for two to three years. Some of the benefits are great – like Roadside Assistance, which is similar to AAA. But it is rated higher than AAA. It is not advertised because it is only sold through organizations. So, that would be a great benefit if we could only get it out of legal.

Coaches Education – Pat Pretty reported that the Level 1 committee became a little dysfunctional for several months. Their chairman quit after the Olympic Games and without a chair, things fell by the wayside. They have now nominated a person for the chair. They are thinking about tweaking some of the items, which is good and needs to be done every couple of years. The Level 2 school is at the University of Boulder in July. However, this is right in the middle of youth season, and we need to address holding a school that youth coaches can attend. We need to find a time that we could fit this in that is acceptable to youth coaches. They are hoping for summer of 2010 for the Level 2 youth. They are looking for youth oriented instructors as opposed to college coaches. Karen went to the Coaches Ed executive meeting to introduce herself. Karen has talked to many people, including Stephanie Hightower, Dave Schrock and Lionel Leach, and they are all in agreement that they are not happy with the current chair. They do not think that he has the youth best interest in mind. They do not need him to change his program, just to add the youth to it. One way or the other, they will get the Level 2 coaches Ed for youth.

Andy Martin had random topics to go over with the group. One issue that just came up during this meeting is the use of the USATF logo. There was a vendor in our Expo who was using our logo without license. Andy reminded us that the Associations are only allowed to use the federation logo with the Association name underneath. Once the Association name comes off, we get into licensing issues with Nike. We have a very good deal with Nike with our merchandise and apparel program that we do not wish to jeopardize. What we

found was our logo going on non Nike materials and violating our license. Associations need to keep in mind that we can put the logo on anything as long as it has your Association name on it.

D&O insurance will be offered to all Associations again for 2009.

Andy had many staffing challenges this past year, losing several key people. Marilyn Turner replaced McKenzie Murphy as Grassroots administrative assistant. We just hired Tricia Floyd as Grassroots Events and Programs Manager. Tricia came up through the JO program and was an athlete with Norte Dame. Keith Lively, who left in September, has not yet been replaced and Andy is filling in part time in that position. Andy thanked his staff who really stepped up and filled in throughout the year.

We had about \$28,000 requested through the Grants program, and we awarded about \$20,000. Please put some thought into wording the grants. You need rationale behind how the program will help your association.

Forms – we need to update the existing forms so more of them are handled on line, especially those for the Annual Convention. The same information must be entered onto many different forms and could better be handled on-line in a table that could then replicate the information on as many forms as needed.

Mobile Marketing Unit – send in requests in you have an event you would like to have the trailer at. Our vision is to have an interactive webpage where you can see where the truck goes. It's getting around and it's really helping to brand the organization and get it in front of people. It must go to the Visa Championship events first because it does carry around all our equipment and signage for those events. But after that we can fill requests from the Associations.

3,100 volunteers have gone through the background screening.

Membership is steadily increasing hitting 86,275, which is almost a thousand more than last year. Still not where we want it to be but with the initiatives that Doug has in mind – the increase in staffing – Andy is very hopeful we will be able to get out there to build it up. Our number of clubs has increased substantially this year, going over 2,500 for the first time.

Sanctions will go over 5,000 for the first time in a long time, maybe ever. Andy strongly encourages every Association to take a close look at their fee structure since they are all over the place. In some cases the fees are higher than the National fee, which is strange. We need to do business in a more professional manner.

Alan introduced Lee Ann Myer who spoke on Association Athlete Development Program. AADP is a joint program with Associations and Long Distance Running and there is both a Men's and Women's program. At the Association level, we can nominate an athlete who is doing quite well but couldn't get into an elite field on their own. Through this program, the athlete would actually be an elite for the weekend that they're at the National championship. Most all of our National championships do have some slots reserved for the developing athlete. There are time standards on the website. There were slots that went empty this year, so please keep this program in mind.

It was a very emotional close from Alan who told us it has been a wonderful 10 years working with us.

Submitted by  
Linda Bommicino, Secretary