

AEC Conference Call March 29, 2009

Attendees:

Karen Krsak	Val Foss	Richard Messenger	Harry Simonis
Linda Bommicino	Jesse Johnson	Gary Morgan	Steve Vaitones
Katherine Branch	Kevin Lucas	Pat Pretty	
Jackie Callender	Ron Mascarenas	Bill Roe	
Pam Fales	Clif McKenzie	Alan Roth	

Conference call began at 8:05 pm ET.

Karen reported that she and Andy have been discussing having a more prominent Associations page on the National website. We have a draft that is already posted that will include a message board and a restricted list serve. Linda will be able to upload to the page. This will give everyone who is not able to attend the calls or meetings easy access to the minutes.

The Background Screening program information was sent out to all Associations explaining the transition to the National program. If you did not get a copy and want one, let us know. An email announcement will also be sent to all the clubs and members. A letter will also be sent to clubs and parents and we discussed that it will be difficult to reach all parents since we do not have addresses for all of them. Many coaches still continue to use their own addresses as opposed to the athlete's address. Steve feels sending a letter to all parents is overkill and asked if this is what other sports do, or if the AAU does it. No one knew the answer. Karen pointed out that by alerting the members we are doing our due diligence as far as the law is concerned. Val said she is having a problem with some of the local clubs who are having background screenings done for free through the local police departments. Steve mentioned that there should be some process in place that allows other background checks if the person has to have them for another purpose. Bill said the critical factor is to ensure that the other background check covers what the USATF Board passed in 2005.

Bill reported that Jack Wickens, one of our Foundation members and a new Board member, is working on a mentoring and intern program for emerging and elite athletes who are interested in moving toward a career level track. He is seeking job descriptions and wants to get athletes involved either on a part time or full time basis; either paid or unpaid since it is basically for the experience. Steve has used interns in the past and said it did not work to well because they have to be supervised. If you have a specific project, it works better. They are not there just to do manual labor. They must be given direction and the reason why we do certain things, so it takes a dedicated person to teach them. This way they will learn. Steve said he had two kids from his Association work as interns at the National Office without his knowledge. If there are interns at the National Office, they should let the local Association know about it, if for no other reason than a courtesy. Bill said about 15 interns a year go through the National Office and they are basically selected from their college resume. Bill said Steve's point was well taken, that we need to try to connect the interns back to the Association, having spent the time to educate them. One of the things Bill and Jack talked about was using an intern to help establish an office in Associations who don't have one. That would be something they could brainstorm on and develop guidelines on what that person would do.

Clif attended a Coaches Ed conference call where Level 2 was one of the topics. The Level 1 on-line program was also discussed. They are looking at developing a survey to get thoughts from the youth coaches to determine what they would like. The Level 1 and 2 classes do not normally deal with youth coaches concerns. A concern is that Level 1 and Level 2 has no certification attached to them at all. Bill said Doug Logan sees certification of coaches one of the things we must do in the marketplace. Karen said that the Level 1 school in Denver in July states that when you complete this you will have certification. Pat interjected that from as far back as 10 years we were told we could be certifiable, but not certified. We do not have all the pieces necessary to be certified. Although there was a very good discussion on this conference call, the Chairman of Coaches Ed was not on the call and refuses to be involved. This is frustrating many people involved in the committee. It appears that two people are running Coaches Ed and not involving anyone else in the process. Pat suggested that Karen call Kathy Sellers to find out about the certification process. Bill said that while he was acting CEO he discussed this with Duffy. To certify someone it means that you state someone has a breath of experience and knowledge that goes far beyond what you could obtain in an 18 hour program. What we do is skimming the surface, but is not getting in-depth enough. Level 2 comes closer. Bill said there are about 15 states requiring our Level 1, as a certificate program, to be a coach. So there's a conundrum – they are requiring something that we don't call a certificate. Suffice it to say, Doug is going to insist that the program be dissected so that we can market it to all 50 states that acts as a certificate program that people can use for employment and/or merit purposes. If we don't do it, someone else will do it, like USTCA and we will be left hanging. Steve was concerned that people who took Level 1 in the past will be upset that we are now saying it is no good. But, it will most likely be re-branded, if Doug has his way, and marketed in a different and more ambitious way. Bill commented that Karen should be all over congratulating Doug on that statement and making sure that he is impressed with how important this is to our larger community of coaches and making sure it gets done sooner rather than later.

Katherine reported that Stephanie Hightower addressed the group at the Youth Workshop and said that we must all work together for a successful organization. We must work with an I've-got-your-back attitude. Lionel Leach called for a vote of the committee to include sub-bantams at the National level and call them Pee-Wees. This was tabled in the past, but he wants it brought back before the committee as he believes this will increase membership and revenue. Steve voiced his disagreement with doing this and Pat brought up the fact that this subject comes up at almost every convention and gets tabled. The bottom line has to be what is best for the athletes. Some Regions already have Sub-Bantams competing through the Regional level. Karen said she was surprised to hear this subject brought up at the Workshop because she attended the Youth Executive Committee meeting the week before and this subject was never brought up.

At the February board meeting they discussed that some Associations are having to pay more of the cost towards the Officials membership because they discounted their membership fees. Doug said the Associations were not going to be penalized for encouraging their officials to recertify and to become members by offering a discounted membership fee. Bill stated that Stephanie insisted that we do a year-long study at exactly what the parameters and consequences would be. We also need to remove 'Uncertified Official' from our membership categories. The Official's database will be used as the trusted source for the number of officials.

Harry asked if there is any progress on the Associations having web pages under the National website. Jesse told us he just received an email from Andy and they are slowly starting to move in that direction. Jesse is going to be building the West Virginia website under the National website, but he does not yet have login information to start the process. One of the problems is how to get all of the information from some of the larger Associations onto the National site. Jesse said the web pages won't necessarily have to be hosted by the National site, but we would all use the same template so all Associations would look the same. This will help with branding USATF. We are waiting on Wasserman to design the template because we have an agreement with them. Once the template is designed, we can go forward. Jesse believes the National Office has hired someone to take over the webmaster position. Andy and Jesse have talked about on-line track meet registrations. Harry suggested that we lose the 'About' link on the website. Bill suggested we need a search function on the website. Jesse said that is very easy to do.

Any suggestions for the Workshop should be sent to Karen, Ron Mascarenas or Jim McKee.

Next meeting is April 26, 2009.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Submitted by
Linda Bommicino, Secretary