

**Summary of the Meeting of the  
Board of Directors of the United Soccer Coaches Association**  
Friday, December 13 – Saturday, December 14, 2019  
Raleigh, North Carolina



Board Members in attendance: Lynn Berling-Manuel (non-voting, *ex officio* board member – CEO), David Carr, Jeff Farnsworth, Ashlee Fontes-Comber, Lesle Gallimore, Andy Haile (Friday only), Haroot Hakopian (Friday only), Warren Mersereau, Missy Price, Sue Ryan (voting, *ex officio* board member – Advocacy Council Chair), and Kevin Sims.

Staff in attendance: Geoff VanDeusen

Guest: Greg Hubbard (former CFO; in attendance the afternoon of Friday, December 13)

**Call to Order**

President Jeff Farnsworth called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Eastern Time, Friday, December 13, 2019. Mr. Farnsworth noted that the meeting would proceed outside the order of the agenda because of individuals' availability.

**1. Welcome Remarks – Jeff Farnsworth**

- Jeff Farnsworth welcomed the Board and provided opening comments. He congratulated Lesle Gallimore on a strong season coaching the University of Washington Women's Soccer Team as well as an exceptional career as the head coach of the Huskies. Ms. Gallimore had announced her intention to step down following this season.
- Mr. Farnsworth also noted that Board engagement has been high over the last year. He thanked the Board members for their service.
- Finally, Mr. Farnsworth thanked Erika Dyer for her hard work and patience in organizing the logistics of Board meetings.

**2. Minutes Approval**

- Minutes of the July 19, 2019 Meeting of the Board of Directors (Kansas City) were presented for approval.
- A motion for approval of the minutes from the meeting was made and seconded.

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- **The motion for approval of the minutes of the July 19, 2019 Meeting of the Board of Directors (Kansas City) was approved unanimously by the Board.**

**3. Approval of Consent Agenda**

- The Board of Directors and Committee Reports were received and approved by the Board.

**4. Strategic Planning Education Subcommittee Report – Leslie Gallimore**

- Ms. Gallimore reported that despite rolling off the Board in January, 2020, she is willing and happy to remain a member of the Strategic Planning Education Subcommittee.
- She noted that at this time any recommendations by the subcommittee are being held while additional data is generated about the effect of the new membership model on the Association's education program.
- Kevin Sims mentioned that he has interacted with the Association's academy staff and that several of those individuals share excellent ideas regarding educational offerings with him. Lynn Berling-Manuel stated that national office staff is in regular communication with academy staff and that ideas are shared back and forth between them.

**5. Ethics Committee – Kevin Sims**

- Mr. Sims notified the Board that Brian Crossman will be stepping down as chair of the Ethics Committee and that the committee is in the process of seeking a new chair. The Board expressed appreciation for the work Mr. Crossman has done in that role.
- Mr. Sims stated that the committee has taken initial steps to develop an e-course addressing issues of ethics in coaching. Dave Carr is participating in the development of that course. At this point, it appears that the e-course will be approximately 15-20 minutes in length and (depending on input from education staff) may serve as a pre-requisite for some of the Association's other courses. The committee will work with education staff with the hope of launching the e-course in April 2020. Warren Mersereau suggested that a possible topic for the course would be management of the playing environment, especially parent, coach, and player behavior. Other Board members suggested that the Association's Code of Ethics and the Commitment to Culture might serve as starting points for the substantive issues covered by the course.
- Mr. Sims then led a discussion about the High School Coaches Code of Ethics, which was adopted by the Board at the July 2019 Board meeting. This included discussion about next steps for introducing the Code to coaches.

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Board members suggested that the Code might be announced to the membership followed by posting on the Association's website and inclusion in a newsletter to high school coaches.

**6. Foundation Committee Report – Warren Mersereau**

- Warren Mersereau reported that 100% of Foundation Committee members contributed to the Association on "Giving Tuesday."
- As reflected in the Foundation Committee report, this year's scholarship recipients represent a broad demographic range, reflecting the Committee's emphasis on diversity and inclusion.
- Jeff Farnsworth noted that Foundation Committee Chair Jeff Vennell has been invited to attend the January Board meeting. Mr. Farnsworth also encouraged all Board members to give to the Foundation as their means permit.

**7. Establishment of At-Large Treasurer Board Seat – Jeff Farnsworth**

- Jeff Farnsworth led a discussion regarding the possible addition of a fourth At-Large Board position, as several Board members have expressed a concern about not having a financial expert on the Board.
- Board members discussed the need to ensure that the Board has expertise in the following areas: marketing/business, legal, and accounting/finance. In addition, adding a fourth At-Large Board position would allow for greater diversity of backgrounds and skills.
- **Following extensive discussion of the issue, a motion was made and seconded as follows:**
  - **Add a fourth At-Large Board position**
    - **Three At-Large positions (the marketing/business, legal, and accounting/finance positions) will continue to be nominated by the Association's president and approved by the Board;**
    - **The fourth At-Large position (the so-called "flex" position) will be selected and approved by the Board.**
  - **The allocation of three At-Large positions for individuals with expertise in marketing/business, legal, and accounting/financing will be reflected in the Bylaws.**
  - **The fourth (flex) At-Large position is intended to provide needed diversity in background, expertise, and/or demographics, as determined by the Board.**
  - **All At-Large Board positions will have three-year terms, with the potential for a second three-year term; provided, however, that given the current individuals holding the At-Large Board the new appointee to the accounting/finance position will have an initial**

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**two-year term to end in January 2022 (with the possibility of  
appointment to a second three-year term).**

- **Following additional discussion, the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.**

**8. Awards Committee – Haroot Hakopian**

- Haroot Hakopian reported that he has received inquiries from high school coaches organizations in Wyoming and Utah about their possible involvement with the Association. Lynn Berling-Manuel stated that those same organizations have been in contact with national staff members.
- Mr. Hakopian then presented three motions for consideration by the Board, as set forth in the report of the Awards Committee.
  - **The first motion would rename the Meritorious Service Award as the William Holleman Meritorious Service Award. This motion was seconded and approved unanimously, with the Board recognizing the fundament role that Mr. Holleman played in creating the United Soccer Coaches Foundation.**
  - **The second motion would expand All-American recognition to Division II of the Junior College division. This motion was seconded and the Board engaged in discussion about the size of Junior College Division II. Following this discussion, the motion was approved by a vote of six in favor, two opposed, and two abstentions.**
  - **The third motion would reinstate the awarding of plaques for college teams ranked in the top 25 at the end of the season. This motion was seconded and discussion followed. A subsequent motion was made to table consideration of this motion until later in the fiscal year (July 2020) in light of financial considerations. The motion to table was seconded and approved.**

**9. Nominations and Elections – Missy Price**

- Missy Price notified the Board that the Nominations & Elections Committee had identified two candidates for the fourth vice-president position on the Board. Those candidates are Rusty Oglesby and Shawn Danhouser.
- Ms. Price informed the Board of the process used to identify these candidates and moved that the Board approve the proposed slate of candidates. **Ms. Price's motion to approve the slate of candidates was seconded and approved unanimously by the Board.**
- Ms. Price reminded Board members and staff of the need to maintain neutrality throughout the election process. No candidate endorsements are

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permitted by Board members or staff pursuant to the policies previously approved by the Board.

**10. Strategic Planning**

- Following the report from the Nominations & Elections Committee, the Board commenced a strategic planning session.
- The Board created a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis for the Association.
- The SWOT analysis will be shared with and added to by national office staff as part of a broader strategic planning process.

*Upon completion of the Strategic Planning session, the Board broke for lunch and was joined afterward by Greg Hubbard for a Finance/Tech review.*

**11. Finance/Tech Review – Greg Hubbard**

- Greg Hubbard reported that despite taking a new position he has continued to serve as a part-time employee for the Association, supporting interim CFO Beth Sullivan. Ms. Sullivan has assumed Mr. Hubbard's previous responsibilities relating to finance and human resources.
- Mr. Hubbard reported that the 2018-2019 audit is complete and in draft form. In addition, the Association's tax return materials have been delivered to the auditors for their review.
- Mr. Hubbard led the Board through a review of the year-end (August 2019) and October 2019 financial statements.
- As anticipated, the Association ended the 2018-19 fiscal year with an operating loss, but there were positive signs at the end of fiscal year. Specifically, there were upticks in cash and receivables, and early indications showed that membership numbers were remaining steady despite the change in the membership model. At the close of the 2018-19 fiscal year, the Association had approximately \$837,000 in reserves.
- Following a lengthy discussion about finances, Mr. Hubbard provided an extensive explanation of the Association's current IT capabilities, focusing specifically on Salesforce, Fonteva, and Pardot.

*Following the Finance/Tech review, the Board proceeded in Executive Session (with Ms. Berling-Manuel present).*

**12. Executive Session – [Redacted]**

*Upon completion of the Executive Session, the Board adjourned for the evening. When the Board reconvened on Saturday, December 14, 2019, Mr. Farnsworth noted that the meeting*

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*would proceed outside the order of the agenda as changes in the Friday agenda pushed some additional items to Saturday.*

**13. Presidential Recognition Awards – Jeff Farnsworth**

- Mr. Farnsworth supplied a list of his suggestions for the Presidential Recognition Award.
- The group discussed the award group making some suggestions.
- **A list of honorees was finalized for the Presidential Recognition Awards and approved by the Board.**

**14. Delay of In-Person Membership Presentation**

- New Membership Director Christopher Wojcik's first in-person presentation was delayed to the January 15, 2020 Board meeting due to the necessity for him to return home early because of an emergency health issue with his wife.

**15. Operations & Events Report – Geoff VanDeusen**

- Mr. VanDeusen answered questions on his written report and shared Convention housekeeping items for the Board.
- Convention registration is similar (within a couple of hundred registrations) of previous years.) It was noted that Baltimore historically registers later and with more on-site registration.
- The Convention app is now live and Mr. VanDeusen previewed it for the Board.
- The annual 4-a-side tournament will be replaced at this year's Convention by a TeqBall tournament. The table game will have less liability, cost and general difficulty than the field tournament.
- The Convention Emergency Plan will be shared with the Board at the Jan. 15 Board meeting as the members will be on the Emergency contact list. A WhatsApp instant messaging account will be set up exclusively for emergency announcements to the contact list.
- Mr. VanDeusen informed the Board that 48% of presenters at this year's Convention are individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Ashlee Fontes-Comber complimented Mr. VanDeusen on the Association's commitment to diversity.
- Mr. VanDeusen then reviewed the President's and Board of Directors' Convention assignment schedule, making adjustments at the direction of President Farnsworth and Board members. A final updated version will be developed and supplied to the Board.
- Mr. VanDeusen briefly updated the Board on the planning that is already underway for the Anaheim2021 Convention.

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**16. CEO Update – Lynn Berling-Manuel**

- Ms. Berling-Manuel answered a few informational questions on the marketing and education reports since both those directors did not travel to the meeting. It was noted it will likely take a full-year cycle of the new website to have accurate year-over-year statistics.
- Ms. Berling-Manuel confirmed that monthly CEO Notes to the Board are largely complete and current through the November edition.
- The education research in the 2019-20 budget will get underway in late winter. After assessing proposals from various research agencies, the Association will undertake a member-centric research approach that will do formal qualitative telephone interviews with 100 members (50 career coaches and 50 part time coaches – these two groups make up approximately 80% of membership). The survey will explore the issues, problems and concerns that members experience in their daily lives and careers as coaches. The purpose will be to identify the most significant needs our members experience then conceive education, resources, services or benefits that may be solutions to those needs. The timing objective is to have useful data for the 2020-21 business goals and budget cycle.
- Greg Hubbard's departure has presented the opportunity to reconsider the organizational structure of the national office staff. Ms. Berling-Manuel is exploring structural approaches that continue to increase the objective of integration and collaboration between all functional areas of our professional staff. Beth Sullivan will continue with the interim CFO title until this exploration is complete so as to maintain structural flexibility across all departments. It is possible that this title may change if a reorganization takes place.
- There was a brief discussion on the annual Member Satisfaction Survey which had over 2,000 total responses. Highlights of the survey results had already been shared with the Board but it was confirmed that there were two changes to this year's survey. First was the change for members to select their top three benefits (rather than a single top benefit). Even with the change, the top benefits continue to be Online Education, Resources and Activities (65%), Soccer Journal (53%), the annual Convention (44%), and In Person Education (36%). Others were \$1 million general liability policy (29%), awards and rankings (25%), networking and mentorship (24%) and advocacy for coaches (22%). The second change was converting the satisfaction scale to a Net Promoter Score. This is a standardized scale used in both non-profit and for-profit organizations which asks whether you would recommend the organization to a friend or colleague and offers a 1 to 10 ranking. The scale is from -100 to +100, with +50 considered excellent and 75+ considered world class (examples of this level include Nordstrom, Costco and Apple

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computers). The average score for a membership association is 21, while United Soccer Coaches earned a score of 47. There is more work to be done in analyzing the survey by levels of coaching, age, etc., but the staff goal for 2020 is to move that score to 50.

- There was also a brief discussion on U.S. Soccer bylaw amendment that has been submitted for a vote at the February 2020 Annual General Meeting. Berling-Manuel thanked Board member Andy Haile in his absence for his critical help in both preparing the amendment language and working with the U.S. Armed Forces Sports Council, which is the co-sponsor of the amendment. They are also in the Associate Member category that does not have a vote for a U.S. Soccer board member. Berling-Manuel is now speaking with each of the U.S. Soccer member councils in advance of the AGM vote.

**17. Advocacy Council Update – Sue Ryan**

- Sue Ryan gave the Board a general update on how far the Advocacy Council had come in the last year with new chairs for the Latino, Youth, Women and Black coaches' advocacy groups. In each case, the new chairs are building on the legacy put in place by their predecessors and are moving their groups into new areas of both internal and external advocacy projects.
- Convention 2020 in Baltimore is expected to have a new level of involvement of the advocacy groups in both networking events and Convention programming. All groups have been involved in working with the Events team for group-specific and collaborative sessions.
- Ms. Ryan also mentioned that although new Membership Director Chris Wojcik had to leave the Board meeting early, she did have the opportunity to have a long conversation with him on his perspective of using Advocacy and the work product of the groups (newsletters, articles, webinars, etc.) as part of the member benefits used in new and renewing membership materials.
- As part of the advocacy discussion it was referenced that the Play With Pride event may be causing concerns by some members about whether the Association is taking on a more political or "politically correct" tone. This was a program originally conceived by the LGBT Coaches Advocacy Group and supported by the national office. Ms. Berling-Manuel noted that this was the third year of this activity and the communication campaign supporting it has been similar year over year without any negative comment that the staff has received. In fact, it has generated considerable positive response on social media and by the teams involved.

**18. 2020 Meeting Schedule**

- Incoming president Kevin Sims discussed prospective dates for spring and summer board meetings, with the objective of bringing the spring meeting into



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March and the summer meeting in conjunction with an Atlanta United game in Atlanta, GA in July.

- Mr. Sims asked that Board members provide him with their availability so that he can find the best dates for most Board members to attend these meetings. A fall meeting continues to be challenging for active coaches sitting on the Board that have fall weekend playing schedules (notably college coaches) and bringing it into post-season puts it very close to the Convention meeting in January. That issue was left pending further discussion.

### **19. Strategic Planning**

- There was a group discussion of approaches to how the strategic work groups should move forward.
- David Carr expressed concern that the preliminary presentations that were made at previous board meetings had not seemed to prompt action on the part of staff.
- Berling-Manuel noted that staff is waiting on more fully formed strategic recommendations and the research/data to support them rather than tactical or project ideas before moving forward with vetting and tactical planning.
- Warren Mersereau addressed an email that Kevin Sims had sent to Jeff Farnsworth and Lynn Berling-Manuel and later forwarded to him for comment. It included the suggestion that in the New Year the professional staff use the work that had been done by the Board and proceed to a more granular research and vetting process to ultimately come forward with a fully formed plan for the next three years.
- Ashlee Fontes-Comber suggested that the groups have their recommendations finalized and ready to present at the January 15 Board meeting. This would allow for focused discussion on how the process should move forward.
- President Farnsworth accepted Fontes-Comber's suggestion and directed the work groups to have their strategic recommendations ready for presentation and in January.

### **20. Discussion of January Meeting Agenda**

- The January 15 meeting is currently planned for 1-4 p.m., but as discussion progressed of topics to be included, it was noted that it may need to start earlier. The meeting room is available starting as early as 9 a.m.
- The Finance Committee will be presenting the audit results and IRS 990 Form and an invitation to the Legacy Coaches Group leadership was already in President Farnsworth's planning, but there are now strategic planning

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recommendations and the presentation from the new Director of Membership to be included. As the final agenda comes together, President Farnsworth will advise the Board if there is any revision to the start time.

*Upon completion of the discussion of the January meeting, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved.*