

USATF Ozark Association Executive Committee

June 13, 2023

Minutes

On June 13, a virtual meeting of the Ozark Association Executive Committee was held on the ZOOM platform. It was chaired by President Carlos Ross. Secretary, Eileen Morris, was present. Others who attended were Andrew Scott, Ed Rowold, Bob Nichols, Peggy Rowold, Brian Sheble, Nick Barron, Angie Miller and Earsene Andrews. The meeting was called to order at 7:40 P.M.

It was pointed out that Minutes of the previous meeting held in May had been previously distributed. A motion made by Bob Nichols to accept the minutes as presented was seconded by Peggy Rowold and approved to be accepted without exception.

Eileen presented the following reports: **Membership** - 353 including 125 Youth and 228-Adults; **Clubs** – currently at 14 with one pending and one in the process of completing requirements for submission; **Sanctions** – currently at 36. A motion made by Bob and seconded by John to accept the reports was approved without exception.

John Morris, **Treasurer** then reported that he will be giving the mid-year financial report at the July meeting and announced that he will discuss the insurance issue(s) during Old Business.

**Officials Committee** Chair, Ed Rowold spoke of the upcoming meets needing officials, including the Association's JO Championships and the Open/Masters Championships, as well as the Region 9 JO Championships which we are hosting. Bob made a motion, which was seconded by John to accept the report. The motion was approved.

Peggy Rowold, representing the **Adult Sports Council**, reminded us of the Open/Masters Championship meet on June 24 at Parkway Central which still needs officials as well as more registrants. Several suggestions and offers were made to help recruit additional participants. Bob made a motion which was seconded by John that her report be accepted. It was approved without exception.

Bob Nichols **Race Walk** chair, reviewed the RW meet schedule, noting that the Spring Series had been completed and that the Summer Series had begun at Parkway North HS having completed two of those already. There will also be a Fall Series as in the past which he has yet to sanction. John's motion, seconded by Eileen to accept his report as presented, was approved.

When Carlos noted that Karen Searcy-Chism, **Youth Committee** chair was absent, a discussion began about having little information regarding the Region 9. John informed us that he discovered that it was no longer scheduled at Jefferson City High School when he wrote Karen about the contract information which he requested at the last meeting but had not received. He was adamant that the executive committee needs to be more informed, especially regarding facility contracts which should be reviewed by the committee. Andrew explained that he was working with Karen to find a new venue including possibly Mizzou or Battle High School, both in Columbia.

Concern was expressed that there seemed to be a second day added to the Association JO meet on the flyer which indicated that races were on Sunday the 18 and Saturday was field events. Frustration was expressed that we were told only on May 9 that Belleville West High School informed Karen that the facility was no longer available to us on the 17th and that she had no choice but to move it to the 18th. After much discussion it was believed that there was an error Karen had not corrected on the flyer, and Andrew confirmed that it was a one-day meet. Angie asked if there was a minimum number required to be registered for the meet to be held. It was agreed that while USATF did not set such a minimum, the host might feel a minimum was needed for the meet to be financially feasible. The issue of clubs hosting meets and their responsibility to include the executive committee when it is a championship meet was discussed, including concern of some coverage of the issue in the Bylaws and National's stance on the practice. Carlos asked Andrew to report to him any information he received from Karen. Carlos agreed to share it with Eileen who would distribute it to the entire executive committee.

Andrew remarked that the website was probably not where most would be looking for meet information and questioned what social media outlets were already employed to publicize and market the meet. It was confirmed that there were none and that Jayne was more focused thus far on our website as it is an important part of our accreditation. He suggested several social media outlets, as well as one site which would manage all of a group's social media. He agreed to ask Dave Searcy about the Ozark FB page to which he once had access and to investigate those other social media outlets. He was urged to pay particular attention to costs due to our budget constraints. It was suggested that he should pass the information on to Jayne Jackson, and perhaps work with her to begin some implementation. During the discussion of the Communication Chairs activities, Eileen shared that she thought recruiting someone to do Campaign Manager would spread to allow Jayne the time needed for the website and social media. She believed she knew someone who would be interested.

John then informed us that we have been rejected by three companies thus far for Directors and Officers Insurance because of a shift of interest of the industry in coverage of organizations like ours. He shared that he has two more applications out. Carlos added that he would talk to PAL regarding their coverage for information they could share to help us. John encouraged members to read the brief explanation of the need for the insurance he provided and was attached to the meeting's announcement email.

Eileen reported that the flyer with QR code for which she was allowed up to \$75 to produce, was discovered not to be the best option for her plans and also that they did not reproduce as well or as cost efficiently as she was led to believe. She explained that she took it upon herself to select other options but did not spend nearly \$75 and would accept the cost if not approved. Bob made a motion that she be reimbursed for the costs as it was in the spirit of the intent to get information out to the people. It was seconded by John and approved.

Eileen reported that contents of the storage unit in Belleville, IL which cost us more than \$900 a year, has been removed and relocated to the Morris' carriage house. The contract was officially ended and there was nothing owed on Ozark's account.

Discussion began of an incident at the USA club meet on May 28 Brian Sheble experienced and the letter he wrote to members of the executive committee that evening. Brian was asked to speak first. He explained that he chose not to recount the incident of which he wrote but rather he wanted to deal with the issue constructively. Sharing his background of 15 years as a psychologist and noting that inappropriate behavior at meets was a problem, he stated that he wanted to be proactive and offered to assist forming a committee to create guidelines to deal with the issues, including officials' safety as he felt behavioral issues at meets had gotten out of hand.

Carlos then called on Angie Miller, as administrator of Ultimate Speed Academy. She reported that she had investigated the issue and then asked Andrew Scott and Earsene Andrews to share what they witnessed. Andrew reported that there seemed to be a lot of commotion and some misunderstandings. Earsene described what she saw take place in more detail and stated that she believed Brian egged the issue on. Angie then proceeded with her presentation stating that she felt Brian's letter was more destructive or divisive and that she felt that his letter had racial overtones. Brian took great exception to that particular statement, interpreting it as being called a racist and began interrupting incessantly, not allowing Angie to proceed regardless of Carlos' or others' requests to maintain order and allow her to speak. Muting was suggested and Carlos suggested that the meeting might be ended.

Brian left the meeting. Angie was then able to give more information of her investigation including that when questioning the two meet directors, neither of them had been aware of the incident. She acknowledged that parental behavior this year seems to have gotten worse but could not offer any specific explanation as to why. Many items were then discussed regarding solutions to behavioral problems and safety plans, including a possible clinic. It was also suggested that officials should be included in coaches' meetings at track events. It was agreed that guidelines were needed and should address the behaviors of all involved in events, including athletes, coaches, officials, and parents. It was agreed that this was something that should and would be pursued.

Eileen asked Andrew if he could get the dates of any Cross Country meets with which we would want to avoid being in conflict when planning our association cross country championships. Meets of concern included the "Nike" as well as a "coaches" meet many of our youth attended last year. Andrew agreed.

It was determined that the next meeting of the Executive Committee will be July 11 totally on ZOOM or hybrid and begin at 7:30 P.M.

A motion made by Earsene and seconded by Ed was approved that we adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 9:28 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Morris, Secretary

