

2024 USATF Ozark Association Mid-Year Meeting

March 17, 2024

Minutes

The Mid-Year Meeting of Ozark Association was held “in person” at the Grants View Branch, SLCL and virtually on the ZOOM platform. It was called to order by President Carlos Ross at 2:05 PM. Secretary, Eileen Morris, was present as were a total of 22 additional Ozark members.

The agenda was reviewed and approved on a motion by Frank Schultz and seconded by Bob Nichols.

Minutes of the Annual Meeting held September 17, 2023 had been provided. Bob’s motion to accept the minutes as presented was seconded by Ginger Mulanax and approved.

Treasurer, John Morris, presented the 2023 Annual financial report noting that we began the year of 2023 with a bank balance of \$36,440.23 and ended the year with a balance of \$29,770.49. He explained income and expenses, all of which are reflected in the bank statements as well as noting the various fund balances. He particularly noted that the fund for the 2023 Grow to Impact grant \$5000 was used and explained that the deficit in the Youth Fund was primarily due to a substantial loss sustained from the Region 9 JO meet in Arkansas. A copy of the financial report of the Region 9 JO could be made available upon request. He reported that there were outstanding checks, including the \$9900 of checks written at the end of 2023 for the Annual Meeting stipends and that there had been deposits from National of approximately \$8000 since January 1, 2024. Bob Nichols’ motion to accept the report was seconded by Peggy Rowold and approved.

Eileen reported that 2023 membership was 464 and had 18 clubs and 49 sanctions. She stated that Ozark currently has 712 memberships and 20 clubs for 2024. She also reported that we already have over 20 clubs. Bob’s motion to accept the report was seconded by Andrew Scott and approved.

There was no Communications Committee report.

Officials Committee Chair, Ed Rowold, acknowledged the participation of Ozark officials throughout the year. Noting that currently there are only 29 fully certified officials, he announced the New Officials Intro meeting being held on March 30 at the University City Library. He also announced that the upcoming Officials Committee Mid-Year meeting will be held at the Grants View Branch, SLCL, on April 7, at 2:00 P.M. during which certification requirements will be reviewed, particularly those that National allows associations to add provided they are not in conflict with any of the National requirements. Eileen advised us that reviews for 2025-2028 recertification are expected to be online by August 1, but that actual recertification will not begin until November 1. Addressing a concern expressed

regarding Emeritus recognition, Eileen informed us that NOC chair, Mike Armstrong, gave his assurance that the issue continues to be pursued and it is the intention for it to be resolved. Bob moved to accept the report and Ed Cockrell seconded his motion. It was approved.

Sports Committees Reports began with Race Walk Chair, Bob Nichols, reporting that the Racewalkers Club held their annual meeting in February and scheduled 2024 meets. Those will include an Open & Masters 1600M championship and an Open & Masters 3000M championship. It is expected that a 5000M championship will be held during the Outdoor Track & Field Championships. In addition to those meets, the August Duet will take place in Tower Grove Park. Earsene Andrews' motion to accept his report was seconded by Eileen and approved.

Adult Sports Chair, Peggy Rowold, announced that the Adult Sports Council will be meeting on March 26 at Eileen's home. She urged attendance, as plans need to be confirmed regarding the Outdoor Championships. Andrew Scott asked if "developmental" meets for adults would be held prior to that championship meet. Peggy advised him that current finances would not be sufficient to secure facilities and timing for such meets. It was agreed that the topic might be taken up at the March 26 Adult Sports Council meeting. Bob's motion to approve the report was seconded by Andrew and approved.

Youth Committee chair, Karen Searcy-Chism, began by declaring that the 2023 XC season was a success as was the Indoor series of meets held at Principia. She stated that the concerns and issues encountered at the Indoor meets had been addressed, such as athletes participating who had no USATF membership. She reported that 90% of the 2024 activities are scheduled and planned. She reviewed the topics discussed at the recent Youth Committee meeting held March 10, including: the opening of the Youth Outdoor season on April 14; membership issues presented by Eileen Morris which could affect registration processes; the importance of the 3-step SafeSport procedure and the use of volunteers; having adequate Certified Officials for consistency and giving youth athletes experience with the processes used at higher level meets; use of and publication in meet flyers and on social media of a Code of Conduct for all present at a meet including athletes, parents & other spectators, & officials. A link to the Code of Conduct was being developed and a task force, which would include AAU representation, was being organized to develop a discipline plan for those who violated the code at club meets and of great importance was concern that appropriate plans for "security" be made for each meet. Andrew's motion to accept the report was seconded by Bob and approved.

Para Athletics Chair, Ed Cockrell, began by expressing his concern that Para Athletics is not governed by USATF but by US Para Athletics Committee, a division of US Olympic Committee and that there is no common ground other than participation and

competition. He is working to “bridge the gap”, feeling that there are still inequities. He plans to reach out to Kelly Behlmann of DASA and others to help find ways to be more inclusive at our meets as is seen at high school meets. He believes that it is primarily just a matter of accommodation to include these athletes. He will be reaching out to other associations where they have achieved some progress and will have the information passed on. There was discussion of the liability to cover those athletes and that this issue also might be pursued with other associations. It was recognized that USATF membership might help to mitigate that concern. Bob moved to accept the report was seconded by Andrew and approved.

Eileen then reported that 2023 Grow to Impact grants were used to: assist 4 clubs with USATF sanction fees; marketing material, such as flyers and posters; a “New Official” stipend; purchase of indoor implements; purchase of an “OWL” for enhancement of meeting for virtual attendees; and advance monies for facilities and/or timing for indoor meet(s) which would be drawing new memberships, in which case we used \$2159.59 of the remaining funds. Initiative proposals for another \$5000 grant were submitted for 2024 based on a list presented at an Executive Committee meeting, but she noted that once a committee was formed those could be changed to assure membership growth or if an initiative was not considered feasible. A motion made and seconded to accept the report was approved.

Eileen reminded us that SafeSport procedures should be carefully followed, particularly for our championship meets. She informed us that National had required a form to be completed listing our championships. This information was to assist in possible audits of various meets to assure that SafeSport procedures regarding volunteers was being followed, including completion of a volunteer information form, signing of a waiver, and wearing of distributed bracelets to identify approved volunteers.

2023 Annual Meeting delegates present gave brief reports of the various meetings they attended. Those included:

Emma Whatley for Masters Track & Field;

Carlos Ross for Associations;

Ed Rowold for Masters LDR, also reported on Coaching Education;

Peggy Rowold for Men’s and Women’s LDR as well as Women’s Commission and several Officials Clinics;

Andrew Scott for Youth;

Eileen Morris for Officials Committee.

Andrew Scott was asked about the upcoming national youth meets. He reported that the JO Nationals will be held in College Station, TX and the Cross Country will be held in Louisville again this year.

Synopsis of reports given, as well as of those not present are to be acquired and made available. It was also strongly recommended that the Document Library for the USATF Annual Meeting be visited, as it has numerous and often more detailed reports.

Future meeting dates and sites were briefly discussed with concern of finding a site with audio visual capability particularly given the now routine use of ZOOM for hybrid meetings.

There was no further business to discuss. A motion by Bob to adjourn was seconded by Andy and approved. The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:24 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Morris, Secretary