

MEETING MINUTES
Western PA Division / US Fencing Association
Annual Meeting and Elections – June 21, 2015

A.) Call meeting to order:

- Meeting called to order at 1:13 PM

B.) Roll Call:

- Attendees (alphabetical order by last name)

Erik Blank

Nathan Forbes

Dave Theriault

Deb Theriault

Storm Walden

Olivia Weiss

Renee Weiss

C.) Adoption of minutes from last annual meeting on July 19, 2014:

- Minutes from last annual meeting, held July 19, 2014, were adopted at this time.
- **Motion:** to accept Minutes; moved by Nathan Forbes, seconded by Storm Walden.

D.) Reports:

1.) Treasurer's Report: Deb Theriault provided the Treasurer's Report.

- As of 6/21/15, the ending balance of the WPD Treasury was \$8833.77. The bank balance was \$9094.15, with \$260.38 in outstanding checks.
- Total income for the 8/1/14 – 6/21/15 period was \$710.00 (meet fees, US Fencing dues share rebates, and miscellaneous {WPD scoring equipment rental}).
- The US Fencing dues rebate amount included a seasonal adjustment from the end of the year.
- Total expenses for the 8/1/14 – 6/21/15 period were \$982.32 (clinics, website costs, Fencing Time upgrade, and annual meeting expenses).
- WPD rebate program had no claims throughout the season.
- Website costs and Fencing Time upgrade cost remained the same as the previous year.
- **Motion:** to accept Treasurer's Report; moved by Nathan Forbes, seconded by Erik Blank.

E.) Old Business:

1.) Year-End Review:

- Twenty-one tournaments were held in the WPD this season.
- En Garde hosted 5 of these events; IUP hosted 2; USCFC hosted 1; Tiger also hosted 1.
- There were also a number of unsanctioned tournaments: 4 at En Garde, 3 at FSAI, 1 at Pine-Richland HS, and the Holy Grail at CMU.
- Tiger also held an RYC.
- Thirty ratings were awarded this season: 3 C's, 7 D's, and 20 E's. Of these, 6 were renewals, 24 were new ratings.

2.) Referee Issues

- The difficulties of acquiring, developing and retaining referees were discussed.
- Nathan Forbes acknowledged that these are regular issues.
- Erik Blank agreed that these are chronic and perennial issues, that despite sending out requests up to four months ahead of time, he still had difficulties getting referees.
- Deb Theriault stated that clubs should start looking for out-of-division referees if they are unable to fill their referee needs within the division. She suggested that the WPD should think about coming up with a policy that would provide a stipend to clubs to offset travel expenses for out-of-division referees. She felt this would use up some of the excess monies in the division treasury.
- Deb Theriault then brought up the issue of referee clinics. She said that Iana Dakova will hold two referee clinics a year, but is not happy with the turnout/lack of response. Deb suggested that the division may want to reimburse potential referees for their first attempt at the official exam, as well as the differential for +Professional membership from US Fencing, as a way of the division helping its member clubs to be SafeSport compliant.
- Erik Blank and Nathan Forbes discussed the acquisition of referees from Ohio and from Virginia. Erik felt the costs of referees coming in from Ohio was excessive. Nate stated that the referees from Ohio had, in years past, asked for more money than ones from Virginia. He agreed that the division should start looking into a policy to reimburse clubs for the travel expenses of out-of-division referees.
- Deb Theriault believed that a meeting should be scheduled in late August to plan on getting something together on both these issues, as the WPD needs to be assured that the tournaments that it sanctions are staffed by SafeSport compliant officials.

F.) New Business:

1.) Elections:

- There was much deliberation in re the slate for elections.
- It was decided to save the voting for the last item of business of the meeting and address the bylaw revision and upcoming tournament schedule first.

2.) Bylaw Revision:

- There was discussion about the revised by-laws (re-written by Storm Walden), and the exact eastern boundary of the WPD (a longitudinal line going through Altoona). Erik Blank wondered if there was a map, and Deb Theriault said she had one that was about 5 years old, which incorporated the changes to the division in 2005, when Cambria, Somerset and Westmoreland Counties were relocated to the Central PA Division. Storm questioned if a more precise definition would be by county boundaries, as the longitudinal line cuts through several counties. Deb said that when the Sections are absorbed, perhaps the WPD could change it at that time.
- Nathan Forbes added, in reference to the Section dissolution, that he has been in discussion with the other chairs from the Mid-Atlantic Section as to what is to be done with the section monies and equipment. There is apparently the New Jersey concept, wherein the equipment is spread on membership numbers, and the Maryland concept, where it is distributed evenly. Deb felt that said equipment must be rather old, so there probably is money involved. Erik said the equipment could be used to build new clubs; Deb agreed that the equipment could be very useful to the division's clubs.
- Reverting back to the division boundaries, Erik said that if/when the WPD wants to redefine its boundaries, it will have to go through the BOD of US Fencing.
- **Motion:** to approve the new by-laws; moved by Nathan Forbes, passed unanimously.

3.) Fall 2015 Events

- Fall 2015 events being planned:

IUP: Erik Blank proposed a Halloween event to be held Oct 31st, as well as potentially an E and Under on December 5th. Erik needs to see if IUP has gym availability on those proposed dates. Nate agreed that Erik would be lucky to find out for sure 6 weeks ahead of time.

CMU: Storm Walden stated that Stowe at CMU would like to host an event but is having difficulty rallying the club behind him: dealing with the organizing, set-up, tear-down, and the CMU administration.

TFC: Tiger has an RYC scheduled for November 21st; they may hold an E and Under in the spring of 2016.

USC: Renee Weiss said there a D or E and Under competition is planned for the fall; Walter Ullrich is trying to schedule a gym for November 14th.

PITT: Storm Walden said he has heard suggestions that Pitt and En Garde may co-host a meet, something that was discussed at last year's meeting as well.

PFE: Deb Theriault said that they cannot host anything as they don't have a space, which at any rate, is located in Westmoreland County. Since any meet hosted by a division club must be geographically within the division boundary, any request to hold such a meet must be made through the Central PA Division. Nathan Forbes thought that the space at his school would be ideal (also in Westmoreland County) and that it would be worth contacting the Central PA Division to see if this could be done.

WVU, FSAI, NHFC, TRFC: No information available.

WPD: Junior Olympic Qualifiers will be held prior to the qualification report deadline of January 4, 2016.

- Erik Blank brought up the possibility of having an ROC hosted by the division: he had presented this idea at last year's meeting, as part of a long-term plan, and wanted to keep it as a goal for the division. The logistics of venue space, referees, and equipment have been a barrier to the division putting in a bid for this with the National Office; a concerted effort will be needed to follow through.

5.) Elections (cont'd):

- Elections were held for the positions of Chair, 1st Vice Chair, and Treasurer.
- The WPD Nominating Committee's recommended candidates were Erik Blank as Chair, Storm Walden as 1st Vice Chair, and Deb Theriault as Treasurer.
- The election results were Olivia Weiss as Chair, Storm Walden as 1st Vice Chair, and Deb Theriault as Treasurer.
- The current Executive Committee includes Erik Blank as 2nd Vice Chair and Renee Weiss as Secretary.

G.) Adjournment:

- Nathan Forbes made the motion to adjourn. Erik Blank seconded it. The meeting adjourned at 3:03 PM.