



Advancing the Sport of Fencing.
Diversity. Unity. Equity.

Annual Meeting
Thursday, September 15, 2021
11:30 pm – 12:30 pm EST
Via Zoom

11:25 am **Open Zoom**

Attendees: Cathleen Randall, Vickie Miller, Jennifer Oldham, Carissa Hammonds, Kathy Vail, Christine Griffith, Taro Yamashita, Phil Andrews, Shannon Jolly, Adeline Chung-Feder, Anna Schielp, Annette Moore, Lisa-Campri Spaery, Jaime Ayala, Nat Goodhartz, Jeff Kallio, Jennifer Uthoff, Jill Feldman, Julie Seal, Liz Mayerich, Margaret De Long, Richard Weiss, Sara Kass

11:30 am **Call to Order (Cathleen Randal)**
Welcome and Opening Remarks

11:35 am **Speaker Introduction (Jen Oldham)**
Speaker: Phil Andrews, CEO, USAF

Phil Andrews provided an overview of his background and initial priorities he and the USAF staff are undertaking. Specifically, he is giving focused attention to outreach and listening. Phil believes collaboration looks like “showing up,” as he is doing with the WFencing Annual meeting. He identified a few goals which includes growing the number of women in the sport by up to 50%. He acknowledged existing barriers for women and people of color and vowed to work collaboratively with WFencing and

other organizations to utilize the expertise of and to benefit from the lived experience of women in the sport of fencing. He further shared that he will look to examples of Wrestle Like a Girl and USA Golf/Sally Roberts to also guide/facilitate the work of USA Fencing. He introduced Shannon Jolly of his staff to provide additional commentary on USA Fencing efforts in DEIB.

Both Phil and Shannon expressed willingness for there to be a liaison between WFencing and USA Fencing.

11:45 am Reports (5 minutes each)

- 1. Chair (Cathleen Randall)**
- 2. Treasurer (Jen Oldham)**
- 3. Professional Development (Christine Griffith)**
- 4. Marketing and Development (Julie Seal)**

Reports were delivered verbally but also have been submitted in writing (see attached).

Highlights:

- Cathleen Randall, Chair – WFencing has made a positive impact in the world of sport fencing and the need for the organization's presence continues. Many changes are occurring, and collaboration opportunities are emerging.
- Jen Oldham, Treasurer – The organization is solvent. Current account balance is \$3,014.82. WFencing is awaiting reimbursement from the Durham Sports Commission in the amount of \$3,000 which will bring the total account balance of a little over \$6,000. It is recommended that the WFencing Board of Directors put together a development drive to increase revenues with the goal of hiring a part-time Executive Director.
- Christine Griffith, Professional Development Committee – Online workshops, an in-person coaching clinic, and the Summer Colloquium were all successful. Online workshops, coaching pods, social/peer gatherings (in person and online) are in the works for this year. The PD Committee has been the most active in community outreach this season.
- Cathleen Randall on behalf of Julie Seal, Vice-President - Marketing and Development - Membership is at 53 paid members, with many more contacts interacting with the organization in other ways. Website and social media have

seen significant traffic. A pre-Annual Meeting membership push paid off and generated increased member engagement.

12:05 pm Board of Directors Election – Announcement of Results (Vickie Miller, President)

Recognized current WFencing Board Members (Cathleen Randall, Jen Oldham, Julie Seal, Kathy Vail, Iris Zimmerman, Laszlo Sbado, Vickie Miller) and also acknowledged those Board members whose terms/service ended (Vinnie Bradford, Nzingha Prescod, and Tasia Ford).

Announced the results of the WFencing Board of Directors election.

- Christine Griffith
- Carrissa Hammonds
- Taro Yamashita

The new Board members were congratulated and welcomed to the WFencing Board of Directors.

12:10 pm - Open Forum/Member Comments

Networking/Mentorship - Members expressed continued support for networking opportunities for both professional development and general engagement. USA Fencing/Phil Andrews mentioned an upcoming mentorship program and made a call for people interested in serving as mentors.

Idea: Sara Kass put forth the idea of WFencing hosting a monthly virtual coffee hour.

Collaboration - Comments made for exploring further and enhanced collaboration among interested parties and organizations. USFCA/Margaret De Long and USA Fencing/Phil Andrews shared support for exploring collaborative opportunities with WFencing.

Coaching/Referee Development - Several comments shared the need for increased coaching and referee development. Discussion on “culture of fencing” centered on what needs to be done to make fencing environments safe and less threatening for athletes, referees, and others. Additionally, need was expressed for a continuum of

coaching development to help new coaches learn the rules/regulations and support veteran/experienced coaches with elevating and highlighting their expertise and their approach with athlete-centered development which would help change the fencing culture and make it more inclusive.

Idea: Nat Goodhartz suggested that a “coaches” column/category be added beside names of athletes on the National Points list.

Divisions - Comments mentioned about ways Divisions can support efforts with professional development and other WFencing initiatives. WFencing will look to stand up a Business Development Committee to explore these and other opportunities. Jen Oldham and Rich Weiss have volunteered to start this discussion. The group will be looking to leadership of USA Fencing on ways to serve greater community based on leadership directives with coaching and referee education in particular.

Other Comments:

Lisa Campi Sapery thanked WFencing for its work as it enabled her and a colleague to advocate for changes to the Referee Code of Ethics which did not have a statement on inclusion.

12:50 pm

Closing/Adjournment (Cathleen Randall)

Thanked members for attending the annual meeting. New Board Members were congratulated and thanked for their service. Phil Andrews and Shannon Jolly were also thanked for their participation. Next WFencing Board meeting was announced for October 13th.

Meeting adjourned at 12:48 pm EST.