



## **MINUTES of the WCF Executive Board on 26 and 27 April 2022 Geneva, Switzerland**

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### **Attendees**

#### **Executive Board**

Kate Caithness (KCA)	Scotland	President
Graham Prouse (GPR)	Canada	Vice-President (Americas)
Hugh Millikin (HMI)	Australia	Vice-President (Pacific-Asia)
Bent Ånund Ramsfjell (BRA)	Norway	Vice President (Europe)
Beau Welling (BWE)	USA	Director
Toyo Ogawa (TOG)	Japan	Director
Cathrine Lindahl (CLI)	Sweden	Director
Rob Niven (RNI)	Scotland	Director
Colin Grahamslaw (CGR)		Secretary General
Liz Munro (LMU)		WCF Office Manager
Saskia Müller-Gastell (SMG)		Projects Officer/Minute taker

### **1 Welcome / Housekeeping**

CGR welcomed everyone to Geneva. The schedule of the forthcoming days was discussed.

### **2 Conflict of Interest / Disclosure (CGR)**

A summary of relevant Conflicts of Interest of Board members had been compiled and distributed to the Board in advance and this was now discussed.

The following conflicts of interest were added/deleted/changed:

#### Rob Niven

Deleted: Director of British Curling

#### Kate Caithness

Deleted: Member of the IOC 2022 Olympic Games Co-ordination Commission

Changed: ~~Member of the Board~~ Vice-President of the International Masters Games Association

#### Bent Ramsfjell

Changed: Coach of son's and/or daughter's team, potential qualifiers for future WCF events

### Hugh Millikin

Added: Daughter might play in PCCC

### **3 Report of the President (KCA)**

The President welcomed the Board Members and reported the following:

“Since our last meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February I attended the Paralympic Winter Games in Beijing together with Toyo and later in the week Colin joined us.

It was a challenging first few days as IPC had initially taken the decision to allow Russian athletes to compete. I did address the issue of their participation prior to this decision to both Andrew Parsons, President of the IPC and in a Zoom meeting thereafter with the NPC and IPC Board. I encouraged the NPC to ensure the participation of their teams otherwise there could be a ‘snowball effect’ if one of the teams decided not to play against them. However, the next day the IPC had taken an about turn and now refused the participation of Russian athletes. Of course, this was a huge disappointment to the athletes who had trained for the last 4 years and because of their disabilities this could be their only chance of participation. However, to be frank this was the only decision possible otherwise the Games could have been totally disrupted. I did take the opportunity to speak to the Russian team.

Home for 6 days and then off to Prince George. The LOC were outstanding, supported by Curling Canada with Nolan Thiessen heading up the team. A really well run event with some great curling however there were challenges with Covid resulting in two teams having to exit the championship – Scotland & Japan. I inducted Bernie Sparkes into the WCF Hall of Fame and together with Graham hosted a dinner joined by Amy Nixon & Kathy Henderson from Curling Canada and Kevin Martin.

A short visit to my son and family in San Diego and then to Las Vegas for the WMCC.

I had been asked to throw the opening stone once the LOC had heard that I had changed my plans and would attend the Opening. Another excellent event - the 6<sup>th</sup> International event that Jon Killoran and his team had organised and a new record set with Niklas and his team becoming the first men’s team to win Olympic & World Titles in the same year.

Last week I attended meeting of the World Academy of Sport (WAS) Advisory Board in London, WCF continues to work strongly with WAS and Colin has a meeting with them later this week here in Geneva.

CGR added that there is an annual management meeting with the Academy of Sport to review the work the WCF does with them. They see WCF as one of their strongest partners which means if they have new programs to pilot WCF are the first ones they talk to about it.

### **4 Russia/Ukraine (CGR)**

KCA read out a letter that had been received from Kate Galkina of the Russian Curling Federation in which she asked for an opportunity to speak at the forthcoming Open Meetings. The Board discussed whether the Russian representatives should be allowed to attend the meeting. CGR explained that there is no legal possibility to prevent them from coming. The

Federation can only be excluded for a justified reason. The Board felt that if they would be allowed to speak at that meeting then there could be concerns about the good order of the meeting. The Board agreed to consult the WCF lawyer and to speak to the Russian representatives. The Russian representatives later agreed not to attend the meetings.

## **5 Sponsorship Policies (CGR)**

CGR explained that following the issues at the OQE it is appropriate to look more closely at the WCF's sponsorship policies and what is or is not acceptable as a sponsor in a particular circumstance. This has been discussed in the past in relation to betting, but a more wide-ranging discussion and consultation is appropriate.

The OQE was the first time the WCF had worked directly with a commercial company in hosting an event and it became clear that there was a conflict in that their prime driver was the commercial success of the event vs WCF's aim of delivering a first-class event for the sport.

The following proposals were made to try and ensure similar situations do not arise again in the future:

1. The WCF Board adopts a clear sponsorship policy as to what is or is not permissible, this should be reviewed on an annual basis.
2. The hosting arrangements for the OQE are reviewed. Having to wait to know who has qualified means that the event is always being organised in a rush with very little time to generate sponsorship income. The initial proposal would be for the WCF to take a more hands on role and appoint a host much earlier in the cycle, identifying a location that would be good from the event hosting point of view, and then utilising the existing partnership with Infront to generate sponsorship income. The format of the competition should also be reviewed: Is there really a need for the Pre-OQE? Do we have the right number of teams qualifying to the OQE? What size of event delivers the best teams to the Olympics? etc., This matter should be referred to the C&R Commission as a new qualification structure will be required by September 2023.
3. Within the staffing it is proposed to bring on a formal Marketing role within the structure. This would give the Secretary General a senior member of staff to work with in this area and to discuss issues with. It would also be proposed to look at the benefits of potentially bringing a marketing intern position on board to support the senior role with some of the marketing admin work.

The Board supported the sponsor policies grid in general but felt that it should not be black and white but every event should be looked at separately. It was also felt that it would be good to have such a sponsor's matrix but a mechanism is needed to preserve that.

It was confirmed that the OQE is not part of the Infront contract. Part of the Infront contract are only ECC, WMCC, WWCC and PCCC.

KCA emphasized that WCF should not only rely on IOC money but also has to find the right sponsors.

The Board agreed to the Marketing role. CGR agreed they would develop a more elegant version of the sponsorship policy in terms of what the process could be for operational and policy decisions on sponsors over the summer. The Board also agreed that the future of the

Pre-OQE should be discussed and the Member Association, Athlete Commission and the Competition & Rules Commission should be involved in this discussion.

The Board also discussed the idea of having a centrally located venue for hosting WCF events which could also be storage for material and stones. This idea would be discussed further.

## **6 Governance Policies and Emergency Rule (BRA)**

### Governance Policies

BRA explained that new documents that had been developed by the Governance Commission (incl. a communication policy) had been distributed earlier. Also, already existing policy documents had been tidied up by Alison Arthur in terms of the language used in them.

That all updated/new policies be approved

*Moved by Bent Ramsfjell  
Seconded by Graham Prouse  
and unanimously approved*

The policies that are sitting on the WCF website will now be updated and new policies will be added and the MAs will then be made aware of that.

CGR added that some policies have a timeline for refreshing which is at least once in an Olympic cycle.

### Emergency Rule

When the constitution was reviewed back in 2012, the clause was added to allow the Board to take action where necessary in exceptional circumstances.

Over the last few years this has been used on rare occasions; once to re-open nominations when no nominations for Vice President were received; secondly in relation to the brush issue and in more recent times in relation to COVID. In the case of COVID, regulation 16.13.6 has not been used as decisions had been taken and completed prior to the AGA.

In the recent case of the World Mixed Doubles Championship, and a decision on the format following the cancellation of the qualification event, a situation was flagged up that indicated that the current rule created a potential constitutional danger.

The decision taken by the Board was challenged by more than 10% of the Full members. According to the constitution this meant the matter should be referred to the next General Assembly of the WCF. However, in this case that would have meant taking the decision after the event was due to take place. After taking advice the Board agreed to put forward an alternative format, although the alternative could still have been objected to.

The Governance Commission of the WCF have reviewed the situation and believe there are two possible options:

- I. The Board has all the information and is best placed to assess all the potential risks and scenarios to take the right decision in the interests of the Federation in emergency circumstances. The decision should be taken following consultation with the relevant

commissions. It should still be subject to a confirmatory vote if it is to be accepted as a permanent change. It is felt that if the Board were to abuse these emergency powers, the membership could take action at the next elections to replace the Board. Additionally, the Members would also still have the option of calling a Special General Meeting to overturn the decision.

2. The percentage of members required to object to a decision should be significantly increased. The suggestion would be that more than 50% of the total available votes should be needed in order to reject a Board decision taken in an emergency situation

The Board discussed if raising the threshold now to 50% could be viewed as quite a clumsy and awkward decision. It was agreed that the issue be presented to the MAs during the forthcoming Open Meetings for feedback.

## **7 SRG Update (BWE)**

BWE gave a presentation on changing the process for Approval of Rule Changes.

Part of the discussion process within the Structural Review Group has been looking at a principle of 'the right decision, by the right people, at the right time'. One of the suggestions received by the SRG was to look at the rules process and how it could be removed from the AGA as the formal format of that meeting is not ideal for getting rules approved and the timing of the meeting is also not ideal given that it is so close to the start of the season.

The proposal is as follows:

1. The final decisions on the Rules of Curling and the Rules of Competition are removed from the AGA and made a responsibility of the Board
2. A new process confirming the process and consultation opportunities will be put in place that allows the Rule Book to be confirmed before the AGA each year
3. The membership of the Competition and Rules Commission will be altered to include two individuals directly elected by the Member Associations
4. The new process will rely on a mixture of the expertise on the Competition and Rules Commission and the consultation with the membership to develop the rules, the Board will make the final approval of all rule changes which will ensure that the wider impact of rule changes is appropriately considered.

BWE confirmed that the two individuals directly elected by the MAs would be run through the Nominations Committee in order to ensure that they have expertise.

Following discussions on matters that the SRG have been discussing the SRG recommend the following:

1. The SRG is disbanded following the AGA in 2022 with any outstanding work transferring to the Governance Commission
2. Two Working Groups are set up to drive the WCF's work in the following areas:
  - a. A Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Working Group
  - b. A Sustainability Working Group

It was felt that a time frame for those two new working groups should be defined (e.g. 1-2 years) and also “sustainability” needs to be defined more clearly. It was agreed that the MAs should be advised at the Open Meetings that the WCF was planning to set up these two new working groups to see what the reaction from the MAs would be.

## **8 Membership issues**

### Poland (BRA)

BRA confirmed that the court process with PCA was still ongoing. Correspondence with the PCA has resumed recently as they wrote questioning why their appeal had not been dealt with. They were informed it had not been submitted to the correct authority and therefore was not valid. There was subsequent correspondence finishing with an email from our lawyer to them telling them we consider the decision final and will not be entering into any further correspondence.

An application for membership had been received from the PFKC and would be dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

Correspondence had also been received from the Polish curlers asking to enter the ECC-C next month even having no valid MA. This was not possible as the entries were closed and the event full, additionally it would have set a difficult precedent for the future.

### Georgia

We have been advised by the NOC of Georgia that they have withdrawn approval for the previous National Federation and have approved a new Federation. The final documentation is taking time due to delays at the Ministry of Sport. Hopefully this will be resolved by the AGA in September during which the first Georgian Association will be removed as a member and the new MA will be introduced later in the meeting. The previous Federation are not happy and are asking us to continue our support for them, however our constitution is clear without the NOC support there is nothing we can do.

### Unpaid Subscriptions

The National Federations of Bolivia, Serbia and Turkmenistan are now almost 12 months late with their subscriptions, that is they have not paid their 2021/22 fees. They have all received numerous reminders. There are two options now as the subs notices for 2022/23 are about to go out. The Board could choose to suspend them now and then have the AGA approve the suspension, or we could leave it until the AGA and then have the MAs suspend them at that time pending the payment of outstanding fees. If by the AGA of 2023 they have not paid outstanding fees they would then be removed from membership. The Board agreed to leave it until the 2022 AGA.

### Jamaican Curling Federation

A fully complete and valid application had been received from the Jamaican Curling Federation for membership of the WCF. Like Guyana before them they are primarily based in Canada as there are no rinks in Jamaica. They propose to use floor curling to promote the sport within the country whilst targeting diaspora in Canada, US and Europe to make up their competitive teams. The application is supported by the NOC and there is no reason not to give them Conditional Status at this time.

To approve the Jamaican Curling Federation as conditional members

*Moved by Graham Prouse  
Seconded by Beau Welling  
and unanimously approved*

Polish Curling Clubs Federation (PFKC)

A fully complete application had been received from the PFKC. They have now achieved a basic level of membership of the NOC, however they will not be able to be recognised by the Ministry until the PCA are dissolved by the Ministry. Our recognition will be seen as helping that progress, it will also allow us to re-introduce Polish curlers to international competition. We believe as the decision to exclude the PCA is final there is no reason for us not to adopt the PFKC as conditional members of the WCF.

To approve PFKC as conditional members unless the WCF lawyer has an objection

*Moved by Bent Ramsjell  
Seconded by Hugh Millikin  
and unanimously approved*

Appeal against a Fine

The Women's team from the Netherlands withdrew from the ECC-C in Lithuania citing fears of the Russia / Ukraine War and potential escalation. As this withdrawal came after the closing date there is a fine of US\$1000. They asked that this was waived because of the war and their fears around travelling. It was proposed that the fine would stand as they are the only team to withdraw and the competition is going ahead as planned with the LOC indicating they have no concerns about the security situation. The Dutch have asked that the Board review this decision.

The Board decided that the decision on the fine would stand.

CGR added that applications from Egypt and Iran can be expected shortly. Mongolia is in touch with the WCF's Head of Development regarding potential facility developments. Saudi Arabia have been in contact with HMI to propose the introduction of single's Curling as an Olympic discipline.

## **9 Finance**

Budget 2022/2023 (CGR)

CGR explained that the budget for the coming season had been made on the assumption that WCF receive from Beijing roughly the same amount as WCF had received from PyeongChang.

- Target a small surplus of circa \$45k, once we know the actual amount we will receive from the Beijing Games we will know if we have more or less to utilise in the future. All indications are for at least the same as we received from PyeongChang
- Add two new members of staff
  - One new member in the CDO team to enable a more formal split of duties into a Head of Competitions with 3 staff members and a Head of Development with one dedicated staff member. This will allow more time to be dedicated to

development creating more online and in person courses which will increase our income in the longer term.

- One new member of staff in the Media team. This will be aimed at content production for the social media channels and will also provide event support. This will then allow Chris to move away from event support to focus more on strategic communication and to take on a role overseeing the Marketing work of the Federation. This will be key as we look at unifying our branding moving forward.
- Not renewing the contract with iXO for the management of the Weibo Channel. We would expect growth here to slow down following the Beijing Games and it is difficult to continue to justify an investment of over \$50k per annum. Instead, a local contractor will be found in China for circa \$12k who will be part time and will focus on translating our English language social media content into Chinese to keep the channel moving.
- In Competitions savings from the PACC / WQE / Americas Challenge have been directed towards the new PCCC event, although it is hard to judge the budget required for this event as yet. We have assumed a similar scale to the ECC.
- Broadcasting drops in expense as there is one less full broadcast production as there is no OQE. Income increases as we expect a strong performance from the new PCCC and we have estimated around \$75k income from the Recast platform which is a similar amount to what we are projecting we will make this season. If we can work with MAs and the Slams to use the Platform we would hope this would increase. Additionally for next season we would propose that from our top events games should cost £1 per game, this gives room for a lower charge for 'lesser' productions which we could be in a position to test out.
- Investment income increases as our level of investments increases in this part of the Olympic cycle as we receive our funding from the IOC.
- Board costs increase slightly as there will be more members on the Board next year and the Congress is in a more expensive location in Lausanne.

Regarding the micro-payments that viewers need to make to Recast it was stated that younger people are prepared to pay whereas the older demographics seem to have a problem with it. KCA added she had complaints from people stating how they loved watching Curling free of charge on YouTube and it would be interesting to see the viewing figures from Recast. She also said that the information on where to find the coverage must also be published on the website and not only in the social media.

Another comment was that the budget should in future be structured into departments and should also be presented in more detail.

BRA mentioned that WCF was facing two risks at the moment: the Beijing income and the investment income as well as the current inflation and the Russian/Ukraine war. With this in mind he raised concern regarding the increase of two staff members as of 1 July 2022 and wondered whether the focus should be on media/marketing or on development. The Board discussed the issue and agreed on the following motion:

That the budget be approved pending confirmation of the IOC income and assuming this is as expected we will move forward with the additional staff as budgeted.

*Moved by Bent Ramsfjell  
Seconded by Rob Niven  
and unanimously approved*

#### European Legacy Fund (RNI)

RNI reported that during the Lillehammer meetings there was unanimous and an overwhelming desire to try and release the funds and make them available to the MAs in the European zone for developmental purposes. The group consisting of Morten Soegaard (NOR), David Sik (CZE) and himself had discussed how to release those funds.

Two facility-based applications had been received since (HUN and ENG - each for USD 10,000) but the group felt the money should not be spent exclusively on facilities. Concern had been raised that the money might be spent badly if none of the facilities came to fruition. Therefore, the proposed strategy is to pay 50% of the application amount at the feasibility stage and then release the second half of the amount during the realisation phase.

In order to receive payments the MAs would need to present certain documents (e.g. blueprints of the plans, invoice for feasibility study, long term (10 years) commitment of the facility to Curling) and the MAs would also be required to share their learnings.

The Board agreed to delegate the decision making for the European Legacy Fund to the European Board members, Morten Soegaard and David Sik.

#### Loan Deferment Request

CGR explained that the policy for facility loans is that these are delegated to a small group to look at. Only when there is an issue this comes back to the Board.

WCF have now received a request from San Francisco to defer their first facility loan installment due to delays in construction from extended conditions and the COVID pandemic. They are requesting the annual payments of US\$25,000 be delayed from 2022-2029 to 2023-2030 if possible. What WCF have done in similar cases is to take the first year and split it over the remaining 6 so the loan is repaid over the same time period. The Board agreed to that.

CGR added that the whole loan program had been on hold since Covid. A decision on re-starting the programme should be taken once the IOC monies have been received (June 2022)

## **10 Competition Update**

#### Proposed Rule Changes

HMI made a presentation on proposed rule changes. HMI added that further topics are currently being discussed by the Competition & Rules Commission such as the Mixed Doubles throwing order modification (M/F split), WCC number of teams, Junior Mixed Doubles, Pre-OQE, etc.

The Board discussed in particular a possible 16-team WCC. HMI explained that back in 2017 there was the fear that an increase to a 16-team WCC would weaken the field. That might have changed by now. Because of existing contracts the WCF would need to make a decision on a new format three years in advance. CGR explained that a WCC with 16 teams would mean a significant change to contracts, both with the LOC and also with broadcasting. There

would be a major impact on the broadcast income because it would mean reducing the number of games from the TV market from 12 round robin games to 7 round robin games.

Any change would be a complex decision:

- Broadcast revenue in key markets
  - (13 team) 12 RR games plus Q + SF + F
  - (16 team) 7 RR games plus Q + SF + F (\$250k-\$500k income reduction)
- Event length - 9 days vs 7
  - (lost ticket revenue & event Host cost reduced?) Weekend days lost
- Athlete welfare
  - Current max 15 games vs max 10 games
- Dovetails into MTV results

HMI advised that the updated/corrected presentation would be given during the Open Meetings.

### **11 Replacement of Board Member on Ranking List Committee (CGR)**

CGR explained that since when WCF took over the management of the World Team Ranking List there is a small committee that looks after that. Currently, it is someone from the Slams plus two members from the Athlete Commission (Nolan Thiessen and David Murdoch), Gerry Geurtz, who does the admin as well as Hew Chalmers, who had been appointed by the Board. Hew is no longer on the Board so he needs to be replaced. The Board agreed unanimously that Rob Niven should fill that vacancy.

CGR added that obviously the Athlete Commission needs to replace their delegates as well.

### **12 MTV Update (GPR)**

GPR gave an update (presentation) on the Maximizing The Value Group.

The group had come up with three trial rule proposals (No-Tick Zone, Thinking Time Per End, No Extra End in Round Robin) in order to

- encourage offensive strategy and play throughout the game
- limit an excessive advantage of hammer in the last end (10th or extra end)
- reduce outcome predictability
- enhance come-back potential
- establish a more consistent length of time to play each end by reducing the difference in time between long and short ends
- reduce the length of time to complete a full game and establish a more consistent length of game
- more consistently play a full game within the allotted time and to more regularly fill that time frame
- better compare the records of teams at the conclusion of round robin play by placing a higher value on winning in regulation as compared to winning by a tie-breaking method

After listening to the concerns and feedback from key stakeholders — which included engaging in consultation with the athletes and a number of World Curling commissions — it had been determined that the No-Tick Zone rule would be the only proposed rule trialled at WWCC and WMCC.

The results of this trial were:

- When the teams aggressively engaged in the NTZ, more stones were in play longer in the centre of the sheet and likely accounts for some of the increase in the number of stolen ends.
- In all four competitions played using the NTZ, the number of stolen ends went up compared to the 2021 events.
- In three of the four competitions, the number of blank ends decreased compared to the 2021 events.
- The win ratio of teams with hammer tied in the 10th end or in an extra end really hasn't changed much with the deployment of the NTZ
- While the win ratio did not change significantly other than noted above, the shots required to win those games were generally more complex than the typical draw to the eight-foot or an open hit in a relatively empty house, when the tick shot is deployed.
- The average number of ends played at the Men's Players Championship went up by almost a full end, which may speak to an improvement in comeback potential or at least keeping games in question longer.
- Media reports on the NTZ were generally fair and balanced.
- Despite initial concerns about teams being unfamiliar with the NTZ rule and having it negatively impact strategy and outcomes, there really hasn't been much talk about that by media or athletes. The highest ranked teams going into the competitions were generally the most successful.
- Despite concerns about the NTZ complicating ends and causing significant issues with teams regularly having very little time remaining at the end of the game, there didn't appear to be many more cases of this situation than would have been seen in previous years.

Thinking Time Per End and No Extra Ends had not been trialled. Covid related cancellations for past two years have resulted in no additional trialling opportunities. Grand Slams and other elite Tour events have indicated support for assisting with rule trials in 2022-23. Despite the rules trials not being concluded, WCF expect proposals as early as the 2022 AGA to consider the length of game for championship play (8 vs 10) and competition format for world championship play (13-team round robin vs 16 team / two pools). However, the Curling stakeholders are divided.

There are now two possible scenarios:

- Complete the rules trials this coming season and provide data/make proposals/commit to decisions by 2023
- Compile the data assembled to date and consider the length of game and format question in 2022

The important dates to consider are:

- Next Olympic quadrennial begins in September 2022
- Next Olympic qualification period begins September of 2023
- Deadline for significant rule changes prior to start of 2023-24 season

The Board discussed the presentation and the following comments were made:

- The Board was supportive of a new Athletes' Survey to go out.
- In order to make a game shorter it might also be possible to play half the game off-camera and the second half live – although that was not thought to be an attractive solution.
- CGR explained that if the Norwegian motion on 8 v 10 ends comes in for the AGA in 2022 and it is not voted on the motion is then tabled to next year's AGA.

GPR advised that the updated/corrected presentation would be given during the Open Meetings.

### **13 Transgender rules + 15 Brush Summit 2**

Late last year the IOC updated its' guidelines on Transgender participation in sport (now called 'IOC Framework on Fairness, Inclusion and Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity and Sex Variations'). They have effectively removed their own guidelines and put the requirement for rules onto the IFs recommending IFs look to take an evidence-based approach to promote inclusivity whilst protecting fairness and sporting integrity.

The last few years have seen increasing controversies regarding the involvement of transgender athletes in female competition. In the US, the swimmer Lia Thomas had been winning collegiate titles and breaking records, whilst in the UK Emily Bridges was cleared to compete in the British Track Cycling Championships only to be banned at the last minute following a ruling from the UCI, the IF for cycling.

There are many different approaches to transgender inclusivity across sports and nations. In Canada and the US the approach has very much been to give the widest possible opportunities by allowing self-identification of gender promoting inclusivity, whereas the UK Sports Councils have advised that sports should take a much more restrictive approach to be seen to protect the 'integrity' of the female sports categories.

Previously regulations were mainly based on rules requiring post transition athletes to regulate their testosterone levels for a period of time, a number of sports continue to adopt these rules. However, there is a growing view that this does not work, it does not take into account that many cis-gender females have varying levels of testosterone and it does not recognise the potential retained advantage of transgender athletes who go through puberty as a male.

Within Curling both Canada and the US have adopted Transgender policies promoting inclusion of transgender athletes within their declared gender category.

For the WCF to follow the recommendations of the IOC and develop evidence-based guidelines for the sport WCF need to do some formal scientific research to:

1. Establish scientifically whether male curlers have advantages over female curlers due to their physiology - this would seem to be a reasonable assumption particularly when looking at the impact of brushing and the power of delivery
2. Whether the retained advantage of a post-puberty transition is significant enough to warrant regulations limiting the involvement of Transgender athletes within the female category.

WCF have been approached by Swansea University to do an initial survey on current athletes attitudes to transgender (and DSD) involvement in curling. This would seem to be a good starting point as it would allow us to understand the concerns of the athlete community over any rules we may or may not put in place.

The proposed subsequent actions are to:

1. Set up a small group to lead the WCF's work in the area
2. Develop a brief to be sent to a number of universities to do the required research that will allow us to develop a clear set of regulations that are defensible.

This is a topic that whichever way we go, inclusion or protection, we will take criticism, however because of the IOC decision we have no choice but to develop our own regulations and doing so in a scientific manner is the safest approach to take.

For the group the suggestion would be to have one Board member to lead the group, one medical person from within curling, two Member Association nominees and the ability to appoint two external experts (potentially one from each side of the debate)

The Board discussed the issue at length. The following was agreed:

#### Transgender Rules

As suggested a small group also led by Scott Arnold will be set up to lead the WCF's work in this area. An attitude survey as explained above will be conducted and once WCF has the physical evidence only then a decision on transgender rules can be done. These can then be decided on in September 2023.

Additionally the Board felt there might be economies of scale in looking at continuing research into sweeping so it was agreed to look at:

#### Sweeping Summit 2

Prepare by July/August 2022 a project plan and a corresponding budget for a possible Sweeping Summit 2 (led by Scott Arnold with the assistance of the Athlete Commission and the Technical Commission). This Sweeping Summit should investigate the two following issues:

- Is the WCF preparing the ice the right way? What does a varied ice preparation mean?
- Does the sweeping (under certain ice conditions) exceed our perceived or real philosophical view as to what it should do?

## **14 Technical Commission Report (TOG)**

TOG made a presentation on the work of the Technical Commission.

An in-person meeting had taken place in Geneva earlier in the week with the following outcome:

- In-person ice-tech course, a must. It will be coordinated with the WCA on-line courses (education of level one ice-techs, and education of educators). Better communication with the CDOs needed.
- The technical commission are happy to be involved with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sweeping Summit proposed by the C & R commission. Looking for this to be carried out later this summer.
- New electronic stone handle must be sought/developed as a top priority. Set specs on the handles (including ordinary handles w/o lights). New handles will not go out, until rectified and thoroughly tested by the commission. As the opinions of C&R and Athlete commissions are considered when proposing a new rule, equipment related to ice-making including handles must be reviewed by the technical commission.
- Ice technician's honorarium needs reviewed. CGR to discuss possible revisions with TOG.
- CIE to be revisited to check modified portions and rationales behind them, updates can then be issued to those using it.
- Competition ice requirements included in the event hosting applications revisited.
- Template of the Chief Ice Technician's (CIT) report was revisited. Existing CIT reports will be compiled to make them accessible by the commission members.
- Working Groups were organised for each important assignment of the commission. Main objectives (benefits from) of each assignment will be laid out with the timeline for 2022-2024.
- Huge concern was raised that the standard of commentating from Canadian sources in relation to the World Curling Championship in Las Vegas was unfair and largely biased. The commission felt it is necessary to contact TSN to request to commentate during coverage on the game rather than on the circumstances. Richard will contact TSN.
- WCF Loan programme remains on hold until final confirmation of IOC monies
- Las Vegas: Ice Not Level, Ridged, and Inconsistent... This should not happen again.

Failsafe measures:

- Championship Ice Technical Support to be appointed for each of the events and will be in contact with the assigned Chief Ice Technician.
- The Technical Commission has appointed Richard to liaise with Eeva as to who is assigned as the Chief and Deputy Ice Technicians for all WCF events.

With regard to the latter CGR explained that this is already done today. Also, there are a number of people on the Technical Commission who are looking for appointments themselves so there is a massive conflict of interest in having them involved in appointing Chief-Ice Technicians. Therefore, Hans, Stefan, Mark and Greg have to be removed from any discussion about the appointment of Chief-Ice Technicians.

BRA asked whether WCF does in fact recruit more Ice Techs? CGR explained that they are constantly brought in (they come in as DCIT in order to improve) and the Ice Technician pool has indeed been increased over the years. BRA also questioned the process regarding electronic handles. CGR explained that a number of companies had been approached but as it is not a big business not many companies came back. The company that CC and WCF went to seemed to offer the best option. The handles have already been used at a number of Canadian events and have not reported the same level of issues. However, it is clear there are a significant number of issues with them when they are used at WCF events and it needs investigated as to why this is and all the issues must be resolved before they are used again.

The MAs will be informed of the activities of the Technical Commission during the 2022 Congress in Lausanne.

## **16 Open Meetings**

The order of business for the Open Meetings was discussed and agreed.

The President thanked the staff for their hard work. She also thanked the Board Members for very constructive meetings.