



**MINUTES
of the WORLD CURLING Executive Board
Montréal, Canada on
3 and 4 September 2024**

Attendees

Executive Board

Beau Welling (BWE)	President
Graham Prouse (GPR)	Vice-President
Hugh Millikin (HMI)	Vice-President
Sergio Mitsuo Vilela (SMV)	Director
Toyo Ogawa (TOG)	Director
Helena Lingham (HLI)	Director
Rob Niven (RNI)	Director
Kim Forge (KFO)	Director
Tyler George (TGE)	Athlete Commission Chair
Colin Grahamslaw (CGR)	Secretary General
Saskia Müller-Gastell (SMG)	WCF Projects Officer/Minute taker

Presidents Update

The President welcomed the Board to Montreal. He advised that the Congress would be attended by a record number of people.

The President reported the following:

- WOF is trying to organize a trip to Saudi Arabia in November 2024 to mainly discuss the Asian Winter Games in 2029
- There is still an issue with the Indian NOC getting into the Asian Winter Games: Raju's group had been approved by the previous regime at the Indian NOC, but there is now a new regime at the Indian NOC and they were threatened with legal actions from a different group in India who said they had more rights to be the Indian Curling Association. World Curling is keeping as far back from it as possible.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting had been distributed in advance.

To approve the minutes of the Board meetings held online on 20 August 2024 (with one correction under Sustainability Working Group the sentence 'but as it is a really important document that the group wanted to get right the group is going through some changes and is polishing the document.' by adding 'etc.' to the end of it.

*moved by HLI
seconded by KFO
and approved unanimously*

Conflict of Interests

No additions/changes

RNI, HLI and KFO's ongoing candidacies for the Board positions were noted.

Commission and Committee Updates

Finance Commission (SMV)

SMV had shared the minutes of the second Finance Commission (FC) meeting. The FC had asked for some adjustments to the budget and now recommended that the budget be approved. The only comment made by the FC was that World Curling was currently budgeting a loss – which is a management and Board decision – however, the Board should think about the sustainability of doing so in the long term.

HMI confirmed that the FC has had good and robust discussions. He also felt that the addition of Margaret Richardson and Kathy O'Rourke is fantastic.

Depending on the outcome of the forthcoming elections KFO recommended to have another expert and two more Board members to support SMV on the FC.

SMV recommended to have a full audit this year. As the process of signing off the accounts from last year was not completed by the time our Audit Manager had retired, the 2023 Accounts had been reviewed again and put into the new format which is consistent with the type of review they are conducting for 2024. He noted that we would be seeking the AGA's approval to allow the Board to appoint new Auditors.

CGR added that they had added a note regarding VAT and he was expecting a VAT audit during the next two years.

HLI queried the Board's view on the long term budgeting – are we aiming for a zero budget or do we seek to achieve a positive outcome, how long can we sustain a loss? CGR explained that the budget is based on what the Board sees as priorities. In terms of long-term forecasts the unknown is the IOC moneys. The summer sports will probably get a 10% increase from Paris. Generally, they keep the winter sports in line with summer sports so a small increase can be expected also for the winter sports.

The expenses are the expenses – we either stop doing things or we have to increase the income.

GPR stated that World Curling had not yet reached the reserve goal of having 1.5 times of the yearly turnover in the bank. The Board should decide if that is still applicable.

The President added that it is not guaranteed that Curling will always be part of the Olympic Winter Games (OWG). What also might happen is that some summer sports become part of the OWG-programme even though WOF agreed that only sports on ice and snow should be part of the OWG.

SMV suggested that as soon as the new Board has been elected it should have a look at the 'old' Forward Plan and then establish an updated Forward Plan with a corresponding budget. The Board agreed.

To approve the accounts 2023/2024

*moved by SMV
seconded by HMI
and approved unanimously*

To approve the budget 2024/2025

*moved by SMV
seconded by TOG
and approved unanimously*

Sustainability (KFO)

KFO gave a presentation on the World Curling Sustainability Strategy for the Board to consider.

Basically, World Curling will be copying what the IOC does. The commitments of World Curling will be:

- Reduce GHG emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2040.
- Align with the UNFCCC Sports for Climate Action Framework to integrate sustainability into all aspects of the sport.
- Regularly report progress on sustainability initiatives to ensure transparency and continuous improvement.

The five areas where World Curling can have an impact or influence are:

- Infrastructure
- Sourcing and resource management
- Mobility
- Workforce
- Climate

KFO emphasized that she would like the whole process to be more publicized through the World Curling media.

The Board was asked to give feedback by the end of September 2024.

Congress

CGR went through the Congress programme for the coming days and explained some of the congress programme items in detail (such as the Welcome Reception for First Time Delegates).

It was also confirmed that the Land Acknowledgement needs to be done on a daily basis.

E-Sports

CGR explained that the IOC Session had officially decided to create the Olympic Esports Games, with the inaugural event set to take place in 2025 in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Part of the discussion during the WOF meetings was looking at insuring that World Curling as an IF had the governance responsibility so there was no risk of someone coming in and steering the governance of the esports version of the sport from us.

Bobsleigh for example had just added one line to their constitution which basically says that they are the responsible governing body for all E-sport versions of their sport.

The issue was discussed by the Board.

To ask the Governance Commission to adapt the World Curling constitution to include governance of E-sport versions of Curling

*moved by GPR
seconded by KFO
and approved unanimously*

Events Working Group

BWE reported that the two big issues identified by the Events Working Group that need to be discussed are:

- Spectator / Fan engagement
- Profitability of ECC / PCCC

A presentation on the possible new pathway of ECC and PCCC had been distributed to the Board prior to the meeting. The same presentation would be shown to the MAs during the Open Meetings. BWE added that the plan was to then have feedback from both the Board and the MAs about the idea of not doing the ECC and the PCCC as qualifier for the Worlds and freeing up that space on the calendar to hopefully produce a different event that could be commercially more viable and more engaging with fans.

CGR went through the presentation, the Board mainly discussed the future event calendar in general and the following comments were made:

- It is difficult to find hosts. World Curling has to chase MAs for bids
- World Curling loses USD 600,000 for two qualifiers each year (ECC and PCCC)
- Looking at a possible event calendar, are we trying to polarize our athletes into being Mixed-Doubles athletes or four-person athletes or should we give the athletes the possibility to play both?
- The athletes do not want to have the WMDCC at the beginning of the season
- The WMDCC would be perfect for TV especially at the beginning of the season, but can an arena be found at that time? Must it be a full arena for WMDCC?
- You can stick WMDCC anywhere you want but if players do not support it then there is a problem (unless you give them better coverage or something else to compensate for the wrong dates)
- If an event is commercially viable do we care where it is?
- Any changes could be effective starting in 2026/27
- We have to get away from the business that everyone plays everyone every time
- A lot of the funding changes dramatically if they have a direct route to the Worlds in one year – that would help the C-division teams
- The event calendar is a Board decision – MAs do not have to approve it. The Board has to sell this new concept to the MAs
- The Europeans could continue but then it must be changed completely (structure, format) – but it needs to be commercially viable

Regarding the WJMDCC 2025 there had only been very few complaints about the introduction of an entry fee and those had come from traditional nations, not from small or new nations.

Nominations (GPR)

The three candidates RNI, HLI and KFO were not present when this agenda item was discussed.

GPR provided a verbal update on speed-dating and the election process.

He reported that one candidate felt it inappropriate that candidates have to fund their travel and accommodation when attending the Congress. Two candidates dropped out mainly because of language issues. World Curling needs to figure out what can be done to accommodate communication in other languages.

GPR advised that he would be happy to remain the Chair of the Nominations Committee until being replaced by the Board on the Committee (or by the members of the Committee as the Chair), same is with the Athlete representative until being replaced by the Athlete Commission. The other three members are elected (Alison Arthur, Mike Ferguson and Rosell Gonsalves). The members up for election will be Alison Arthur and Mike Ferguson.

After the Congress the Nominations Committee will write a post-election report and the plan is to do a survey with MAs and election candidates to see what their election experiences were. Also, in the ToR it is mentioned that the Committee is responsible for creating a pipeline of Board candidates and people that are interested in working for the Commissions. This is what the Committee will be doing as well.

Graham mentioned that it was the Nominations Committee's stated goal that the election process should be enjoyable for the candidates. He thanked his committee members for their empathetic and always fair treatment of the candidates.

On-Boarding for New Board members

CGR advised that part of the information that he had sent out earlier with the staffing report could be extracted and used as induction for the Board. CGR invited the Board to inform him what other information they think should be provided to new Board members.

The Board discussed the on-boarding process for new Board members and the following comments were made:

- The onboarding of new Board members is crucial for maximizing efficiency and ensuring valuable time is not lost. HLI observed that it took nearly a year to fully contribute in Board meetings, as the internal workings of the WC Board and organization were not initially clear. To enhance this experience and accelerate integration, a well-prepared onboarding process was recommended by HLI to be implemented. That process should be speeded up. Maybe a special Teams meeting should be set up to provide more internal information, perhaps with each Head of Department. To understand the organisation better an organigram should be provided, in other words kind of a hand-over should take place.
- HLI also said new Board members must be informed of what the calendar looks like, i.e. when are Board meetings, what are they supposed to attend etc. Also as employers we should seek to ensure work can, as much as possible, be performed during the working day.
- It must be assessed who in the Board is employed and who is self-employed in order to establish the most convenient meeting time for all
- Every new Board member should have a mentor to explain to the new Board member what the procedures are and what is expected of him/her, i.e. a person that can be asked the dumb questions without feeling dumb
- In the first Board meeting not all new members have an idea which commission they might want to chair
- For those who are non-native English speakers it would be great if the Board members could use easier terms. Maybe a glossary of terms or abbreviations could be provided.
- All Terms of Reference of the commissions should be pulled into one document
- Each new Board Member should read the constitution and the policies
- New Board members must be informed that the Board is strategic, not operational

In general, the Board felt that having monthly online meetings is perfect (compared to having only two in-person meetings per year some years ago)

Big Ideas Update

Commercial

Floor Curling Update: CGR confirmed that the web portal was now operational and able to take money for Floor Curling.

CGR also advised that World Curling was going through a due diligence process with another travel agent who had shown interest in low-level sponsorship of the WJCC. This would require World Curling to move the USD 400k worth of travel business to them which should only be done once it has been confirmed that they can do the job.

Athlete and Events

The initial proposal for the Athlete Licensing (Sales Force platform) had been distributed prior to the meeting. World Curling had successfully secured USD 10K from the IOC towards this project.

The model that is being looked at is a two tiered licence system: A-licence for Olympic pathway championships (Olympics, Paralympics) and a B-licence for non-pathway championships. Over time, the eventual rule will be that if athletes want to be on the world ranking list they have to hold an A-licence.

KFO felt the same courses should be mandatory for both A- and B-division athletes including juniors (all courses are free).

The time-frame for having this new system rolled out is beginning of January for the World championships next season, then it should be rolled out for the rest of the World Curling events the following season and effectively post-Olympics it should apply to the full ranking list events. In a next stage a coach or bench license will also be offered.

To approve an expenditure of USD 23,000 (originally USD 33,000 minus USD 10,000 IOC grant) for the Athlete Licensing I2C platform development through Sales Force

*moved by RNI
seconded by HMI
and approved unanimously*

Re-branding

No further update

Stakeholder Engagement

Covered under Congress discussions

Data and Digital

No update since last meeting

Facilities

CGR asked the Board for an authorization to SMV and himself to sign the contract with the World Academy of Sport.

To authorize SMV and CGR to sign the SVS contract with World Academy of Sport on behalf of World Curling

*moved by GPR
seconded by BWE
and approved unanimously*

The Technical Commission (TC) had met in Montreal prior to the Board Meetings and had forwarded various documents to the Board. The Board was instructed to forward any feedback on those meetings directly to TOG.

TOG offered to stay on as TC Chair for a period of 3-6 months to liaise with the new chairperson.

Hall of Fame Presentation

The members of the Hall of Fame Induction Committee joined the meeting:

Elisabet Gustafson, Sweden (H of F 2012) – Appointed 2021
Egil Ramsfjell, Norway (H of F 2014) – Appointed 2020
Warren Hansen, Canada (H of F 2016) – Appointed 2019
Patrick Huerlimann, Switzerland (H of F 2014) – Appointed 2016
Keith Wendorf, Canada (H of F 1994) – Appointed 2018 – Chair

The Committee had had two days of meetings in Montreal. Chair Keith Wendorf gave a presentation to the Board on the outcome of those meetings and brought up the following 12 main discussion topics:

1. Age of inductees (Athlete – 50 & Builders – 60) – age restriction should be removed
2. Number (5-6) of inductees (3+ Athletes & max. 2 Builders): Keep the limit to a maximum of 5-6 per year. Not necessary to put that number in each year. Remove the number restriction on each category. A team induction to be considered as 2 places.
3. Long-term selection plan for inductees – this is something the Induction Committee is working on.
4. Athletes have to stop trying to be competitors at world events. If a team, or individual, is worthy of getting into the Hall of Fame, remove the restriction as it pertains to them being able to continue to curl.
5. New categories (equipment inventors, technicians, etc.) Remain with two categories “Curler” and “Builder” but rename “Curling” to “Athlete”

6. Induction Committee members have to be in the Hall of Fame. That unwritten rule should be removed.
7. 5 year term for the members – members should commit to a five year term
8. Structure of the Committee (regions, genders, etc.) - Keep the number of members at five, both genders must be included
9. Selection of new Induction Committee members: Recommendations made by the Induction Committee, but final decision solely made by the World Curling Board & Secretary General.
10. Creation of a virtual Hall of Fame on the website: Highly recommended that this be done. Should contain a photo and all relative information pertaining to every inductee. Important that the site has to be maintained.
11. Create an “Award of Merit”: Or call it the “President’s Honour List”. No set number of people honoured each year. Approved by the Board.
12. World Curling museum to preserve curling artefacts and memorabilia: The Committee thinks this is extremely important. It would be a shame to lose our history and this could be a time sensitive issue.

In addition to the 12 above items the Committee raised the following:

- The H of F criteria manual needs to be updated once we know what has been approved by the Board. The Committee is willing to help with that.
- Inductees receive a pin and plate, a certificate (wall hanging type) should be added to that in the future.
- The actual induction ceremony needs to be reviewed. It should not be during the 5th-end break, especially if it is during a bronze medal game that starts at 09:00 in the morning.
- All past presidents (4) should be inducted.
- A deadline for announcing the new inductees should be set (somewhere between 15-31 January).
- Could the committee be doing more to assist in the follow-up after the new inductees are announced?
- New inductees must supply proper photos (jpeg) and bios before their induction ceremony.
- The Committee is in-house doing additional evaluation of the Athletes based upon a point system:
Olympics - Gold = 7, Silver = 5 and Bronze = 3
Worlds Men/Women/MD - Gold = 5, Silver = 3 and Bronze = 1

The Board thanked the Committee for their presentation. The Committee Members left the meeting.

Farewell to leaving Board Members

On behalf of the current World Curling Board and all previous Board Members BWE conveyed his thanks and his deep sincere appreciation to the three leaving Board Members Toyo Ogawa, Graham Prouse and Hugh Millikin for all their work, service, guidance and mentorship over all the years. There is no doubt that World Curling would not be the same without their

work and them having been part of it. He added that he personally would miss seeing them at the Board Meetings but he expressed his hope that they would still be available to provide guidance and help whenever needed. The Board is highly appreciative of the work that those three Board members have done.

Toyo Ogawa said that the Board had experienced a big transition from Kate to Beau and the Board was now even working more strategically instead of operationally – he had enjoyed this very much. He expressed that he felt fortunate having been given the opportunity to work in the World Curling Board.

Hugh Millikin said that one of the challenges is to bring perspective. He added that he had always brought up a lot of questions, he had always tried to challenge his fellow Board members. He admitted that sometimes this may have come across as if he did not agree or believe it was right what was done. He said he always asked questions that he felt the Board would be asked from the audience. Having disagreements or perspectives and different points of view, different cultures is good and important. At the end of the day we mostly got the right answers as we are a global organisation – we represent the world of Curling.

Graham Prouse felt that a lot had been accomplished. He felt that traditions are a huge part in this sport but they can also hold back. He really hoped that the new Board thinks about being brave and is not afraid of making mistakes. One of the things he wished he had learned years ago from Hugh Millikin is his willingness to be wrong and to make mistakes. The sport can be in fantastic shape if we are brave and are willing to make a few mistakes. He closed by saying how grateful he felt for being part of World Curling.