MINUTES
of the WORLD CURLING Executive Board
Online Meeting #2026-03
on 02 April 2026

Attendees

Executive Board

Beau Welling (BWE)	President
Kim Forge (KFO)	Vice-President
Morten Soegaard (MSO)	Vice-President
Helena Lingham (HLI)	Director
Sergio Mitsuo Vilela (SMV)	Director
Rob Niven (RNI)	Director
Jill Officer (JOF)	Director
David Sik (DSI)	Director
Andrew Ryan (ARY)	Independent Director
Hong Zhang (HZH)	Independent Director
Tyler George (TGE)	Athlete Commission Chair
Colin Grahamslaw (CGR)	Secretary General
Saskia Müller-Gastell (SMG)	Projects Officer/Minute taker

The meeting started at 13:00.

Debrief Olympic Winter Games Milan Cortina 2026

CGR said the event overall exceeded expectations, with strong TV, social media, and ticket sales performance. Despite an issue during the Canada–Sweden game that prompted follow-up discussions, he believed the resulting attention actually boosted coverage and interest.

He noted that we are now entering a formal debrief phase, including an upcoming meeting with the IOC. Feedback across sports has been consistent - major problems with spectator experience and transportation, along with concerns about delays in organization by the host committee.

Looking ahead, there is growing momentum for winter IFs to take a more hands-on role in delivering the sporting aspects of the Games, potentially even subcontracting these responsibilities from organizing committees. The IOC appears open to this. CGR explained this would simplify operations significantly, based on challenges faced in Milan-Cortina where processes were overly complex.

Finally, he mentioned that a full performance report from the IOC (covering broadcast, media, and ticketing data) is expected within 6–8 weeks and will be important for future planning and program evaluation.

HLI said World Curling policies - especially around crisis communication – should be reviewed at the end of the season. She wanted to use this situation as a learning opportunity to evaluate how well communication and information flow worked. She asked everyone to reflect and provide feedback on whether they had received timely and effective information, so improvements can be made for handling potentially larger crises in the future.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

To approve both the updated January minutes and the minutes of the Board meetings on 18 February 2026

moved by SMV
seconded by MSO
and approved unanimously

Matters Arising Not Covered Elsewhere

None

Conflict of Interest

- MSO removed from Norwegian Curling Nominations Committee but added to the Norwegian Curling Control Committee
- TGE working on the broadcast team for Rock League.
- DSI has qualified for WSCC 2027

The Board agreed that the topic Rock League should be discussed during the Geneva meetings.

Russia / Belarus

Lativa and Estonia have withdrawn from the WJMDCC, Latvia have also circulated a letter to the membership questioning allowing Russia to enter the event as the Board's decision was taken after the closing date. This letter has yet to be sent to World Curling. A note has also been received from NZL because of this Latvian letter asking for consideration to be given to providing more written details ahead of the meeting in Geneva.

CGR proposed creating a timeline of consultations since the September Congress, cleared by our lawyer for pre-release ahead of Geneva to address likely questions, while noting there could be challenges due to ongoing CAS and potential Swiss court cases, requiring careful handling of sensitive legal discussions.

Discussions with the LOC for the WJMDCC seem to indicate that the threat of the venue withdrawing has reduced.

CGR said no other countries had indicated plans to withdraw and all had paid their entry fees.

The Russian Curling Federation have submitted an appeal to CAS over the Board's decision to not remove the suspension on adults.

Additionally, a request for an arbitration of the decision has been submitted by the Russian Curling Federation to the courts in Canton Uri.

DSI raised that "integrity of sport" should be clearly defined beyond just team withdrawals, noting that actions like political statements, refusals to participate in ceremonies, or symbolic protests could also impact integrity. CGR agreed there is need to consider these broader forms of protest alongside full non-participation and suggested aligning with IOC guidance on political expressions and adding the issue to their review. ARY cautioned that defining "integrity of sport" too precisely could create loopholes and strategic manipulation. He advised instead to assess it case by case, considering factors like athlete quality, rankings, and competition impact, rather than setting rigid thresholds.

MA Group Meetings

A paper by HLI outlining the common issues from the Member group meetings had been shared prior to the meeting.

CGR said they had responded directly to Norway, explaining that the mixed doubles stones had been properly prepared (though not previously used in competition) and that decisions on timing of treatment had been based on expert advice and scheduling constraints. He added that while timing may not have been ideal, they relied on ice technicians' judgment, and the Board discussed possible improvements like increasing the use of stones prior to future events.

Forward Plan

A final updated version of the Forward Plan had been produced following discussions during the Olympics. An update on the action plan will be produced for the next meeting in Geneva.

Geneva Open Meetings

The agenda for the Open Meetings in Geneva needs to be finalised.

- Future of DAP
- Forward Plan Update
- Finance Update and EQ Presentation
- Special Olympics 2029 Presentation
- Update on Russia Participation
- Future Subscription Model
- Competition and Rules Consultation
- Elections 2026 – Nominations Process

There is a request from the members to send out as much information in advance as we can, we maybe also need to consider where some items may need more time in ensuring there is a follow-up webinar arranged as this could be a very heavy programme for just under a day and a half.

MSO suggested that the agenda should follow a more logical order, prioritizing key topics like forward planning, the subscription model, and finance for deeper discussion, while allowing flexibility for less critical items. CGR agreed and said he would review the timing.

President Beau Welling joined the meeting following issues with a fire alarm at his location.

Future of DAP

A paper on a potential updating of the DAP system by MSO had been shared in the folder for discussion.

MSO said they had been refining the proposal based on feedback and were preparing materials for the Geneva open meeting, where they would discuss it with MAs and form a working group to develop recommendations, short-term actions, and longer-term changes. He added that while feedback was generally positive - especially from smaller countries - there were sensitivities due to upcoming elections, so they planned a cautious, phased approach with a focus on funding allocation, increased development opportunities like camps, and a more structured, tiered system for member support.

ARY said he strongly supported taking time to fully review and refine the development program rather than rushing changes, especially given sensitivities around upcoming elections. He emphasized the need for a tiered funding approach, stronger monitoring of how funds are used, and a comprehensive but balanced review to ensure effectiveness without creating excessive administrative burden.

ARY emphasized that development funding should be considered as part of the overall financial picture and suggested increasing it by accessing external sources like Olympic Solidarity funds rather than raising costs internally.

Items for Decision from Commission meetings

Governance Commission

MSO explained that the Governance Commission had taken the existing election policy and had formalized it for public release as part of a broader policy review, proposing to establish an Election Committee aligned with the Nominations Committee, which required minor updates to its Terms of Reference. He added that the policy itself had been thoroughly reviewed by the Governance Commission and Nominations Committee, was well developed, and would now be presented to the Board for approval and publication as part of the Geneva agenda.

Approval of Nominations Committee Terms of Reference

To approve the Terms of Reference of the Nominations Committee

moved by MSO
seconded by KFO
and approved unanimously

Approval of the Election Policy

SMV, HLI, RNI and BWE indicated a conflict of interest as they are standing for election at the 2026 AGA.

To approve the Terms of Reference of the Nominations Committee (including the requirement that candidates must be members of a curling club beforehand)

moved by MSO
seconded by KFO
and approved unanimously

Topics to be covered from C&R Commission in Geneva (RNI)

RNI explained that he and JOF were refining two documents and planned to send a summarized version to members ahead of Geneva so they would have a clear basis for discussion, while keeping the full version for the Board, with only minor edits and removal of some less relevant details.

ARY noted that the material was quite extensive and suggested structuring discussions by prioritizing the most important topics to avoid getting stuck on one issue, while the Board acknowledged generational and cultural differences among umpires that could affect implementation. Overall, the Board agreed the changes would require a gradual, long-term approach - potentially over several years - focused on shaping future standards, particularly in relation to Olympic competitions.

Commission Minutes for information

Governance Commission

There were no questions

DEI Commission

SMV asked whether the new IOC policy on the Protection of the Female (Women's) Category in Olympic Sport would impact the commission's plans and timeline, particularly regarding upcoming meetings and decisions. HLI responded that they were actively reviewing the policy, since it' s release on March 26, 2026, and would soon need to decide whether to align with it or develop their own approach, though she expected to recommend alignment while emphasizing the need to protect the female category. HLI advised she was preparing an action plan to define the necessary decisions and steps.

Project Update for Information

World Team Championships

Colin reported that progress on the World Team Championships depended largely on securing a U.S. broadcaster, with ongoing positive discussions with NBC and its spin-off Versant. He noted that while they were hopeful - especially with strong U.S. team performance - they needed a firm commitment by the time of the Geneva meeting to move forward. Without a US broadcaster the project would probably not move forward for 2027.

CRM Project

An update on progress on the CRM project had been distributed to the Board prior to the meeting and is detailing the work with the new supplier which is progressing much quicker than with the previous group. The target is a working demonstration by the Open meetings in Geneva with Phase 1 live for next season and Phase 2 finalised in 2027 ahead of any move to a per head subscription model.

Hosting at Olympic Winter Games

CGR noted that World Curling had received good feedback for their role in the Ultimate Access program in Cortina, highlighting that the Board's efforts in hosting IOC members were well appreciated and generated good publicity. The Board agreed this demonstrated strong potential for future commercial and hospitality opportunities, which should be built into planning for upcoming Olympics and events.

President's Update

BWE apologized for his late arrival. He reported that since the last Board meeting he had attended multiple major events, including the Paralympics and the men's and women's World Championships, which he said had gone very well overall, particularly highlighting the strong execution and positive experience in the Olympic venue environment.

He then focused on developments within WOF, noting ongoing work to develop a future strategy for winter sports governance, which he described as complex due to differing personalities and interests involved. He explained that discussions were being shaped by lessons learned from Milan-Cortina, with a formal debrief scheduled in May in Lausanne with the IOC, aimed at improving how sport delivery is managed at future Games. BWE said there was a growing push among winter federations (the “seven of 40” sports within the Olympic system) to take greater control or at least have stronger influence over event delivery, and he indicated that the IOC appeared open to this direction, partly due to prior work led by CGR and others. At the same time, he stressed that the IOC itself was in a period of transition under President Coventry’s “fit for future” agenda, with rising costs, funding pressures, and possible changes to revenue distribution models, including a shift toward baseline funding with performance-based allocations.

He also highlighted significant upcoming leadership changes within WOF, with several federation presidents stepping down, which he saw as potentially destabilizing given the broader uncertainty about Olympic program changes, possible sport additions or removals, and evolving funding structures. Despite this, he suggested that the current period of change could also present an opportunity for winter sports to shape reforms more actively, especially if they presented a unified position. Finally, BWE concluded that Milan-Cortina had been very positive for the sport in terms of visibility and relationships with stakeholders such as the IOC and broadcasters like NBC, but emphasized that many developments were still in flux and that more concrete updates would follow after the major debrief meetings.

The meeting finished at 14:49.