



**MINUTES**  
**of the WORLD CURLING Executive Board**  
**Online Meeting #2026-06**  
**on 13 July 2026**

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**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          |
| Harri Lill (HAL)            | Athlete Commission Chair      |
| Colin Grahamslaw (CGR)      | Secretary General             |
| Saskia Müller-Gastell (SMG) | Projects Officer/Minute taker |

The meeting started at 13:00.

**President's Welcome**

President BWE formally welcomed Harri Lill to the Board as the new Chair of the Athlete Commission and expressed appreciation for the experience and perspective he will bring to the Board.

He then provided an update from the recent IOC Extraordinary Session, highlighting significant changes within the Olympic Movement. He noted that the concept of "core sports" has been removed from the Olympic Charter and will be replaced by a metrics-based evaluation system for sports and disciplines from the 2032 Games onwards. Curling is expected to benefit from being assessed as a single discipline, with men's, women's, and mixed doubles events evaluated collectively. The Board also discussed the importance of

continuing to expand the global footprint of curling to strengthen its position under the new evaluation framework.

An update was also provided on preparations for the French Winter Olympic Games. Current planning foresees all ice sports being centralized in Lyon, with the exception of long track speed skating. Board members were advised that planning remains ongoing following the challenges experienced during preparations for the Milano Cortina Games.

The Board discussed the likelihood that test events would take place closer to the Games, potentially in the November–December period rather than a year in advance, reflecting venue construction timelines. Concerns were raised about differences in seasonal conditions between test events and the Olympic competition period, and these were acknowledged. It was noted that the experience from Milano Cortina has reinforced the importance of holding appropriate test events wherever possible.

The Board was further informed that earlier contingency planning for Nice, including the possibility of relocating to Monaco, is no longer being pursued following the decision to centralize the ice sports, a development that was viewed positively for both the ice sports and the Olympic Movement. Further updates will be provided as planning progresses.

ARY emphasized that the key issue is how revenue will be distributed in future, particularly if summer and winter sports are grouped together and treated as a single category. He warned that the criteria and weighting used to allocate funding will be critical, as they could significantly affect Curling's share. While Curling has strong arguments based on its contribution throughout the Olympic Games, he recommended starting negotiations from the position that the federation should not accept less funding than it received previously.

BWE agreed that a political debate over funding allocation is inevitable. He noted encouraging signs that Curling is gaining greater recognition and legitimacy, citing comments from an NBC executive who described curling as fundamental to the identity of the Winter Olympics rather than a novelty. BWE argued that the federation should strongly advocate for the metrics that demonstrate Curling's importance to the Olympic movement. He also observed that organizers appear to be announcing broad funding concepts before providing implementation details, meaning the most important advocacy will likely occur as the specific allocation criteria are developed.

BWE summarized several other recent IOC developments, including the announcement of a \$10,000 participation grant for every Olympian beginning with the Milan-Cortina Games. While he welcomed the initiative, he noted that details on how the grants will be distributed and funded remain unclear, despite the IOC stating the money will come from reserves rather than reducing funding for International Federations or National Olympic Committees.

He also said the IOC is placing greater emphasis on commercial growth, recognizing the need to better monetize the Olympic Games while continuing to manage financial pressures

through cost-cutting. BWE reported that discussions with the Alpes 2030 organizers have been positive, with organizers receptive to ideas for improving Games delivery, spectator experience, and commercial opportunities.

Finally, he noted the IOC's continued focus on political neutrality, reflected in their recent Russia decision, and said that recent leadership changes in skiing and bobsleigh appear positive, with further elections in other winter sports still to come.

CGR said the opportunity for IOC representation is now stronger than ever, particularly because several other International Federations have recently had changes in leadership. He shared that Beau is being considered for one of these positions, citing his age and the upcoming Olympic Games in Los Angeles and Salt Lake City as potential advantages. However, he noted that the matter will not be discussed further until after the upcoming World Curling elections.

ARY stressed that securing IOC representation should be a key priority, as it would strengthen the federation's influence in upcoming discussions, particularly around future revenue distribution.

The Board noted the correspondence received from Serbia on behalf of a small group of MAs suggesting consideration is given to a working group on Marketing and Media. It was agreed to pass this to the new Board to consider after the elections as part of next season's discussions on priorities.

### **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

***To approve the minutes of the Board meeting on 3 June 2026***

***moved by KFO  
seconded by SMV  
and approved unanimously***

### **Matters Arising Not Covered Elsewhere**

MSO reported that the Board evaluation is complete but proposed postponing discussion until the Congress Board meeting to allow time for more urgent matters. He said the executive summary would be shared after the meeting, and he and CGR would identify key areas for deeper discussion. JOF asked whether the Board would eventually receive the full report, and MSO confirmed they would receive additional data but not individual comments, in order to preserve anonymity.

### **Conflict of Interest**

- BWE, RNI, HLI, SMV are all potential candidates for election
- KFO: Daughter has qualified for WJBCC 2026

- HAL: Board member of Estonian Curling, should be sorted in 1-2 weeks

### **Russia participation update**

CGR updated the Board on the ongoing CAS case relating to Russia, explaining that the proceedings remain focused on preliminary legal questions about jurisdiction rather than the substance of the case.

CGR also reported that he is seeking guidance from the IOC on the practical challenges following their recent announcement. He recommended that World Curling not make any immediate decisions but instead consult with Member Associations and event hosts to better understand their views and any government-imposed restrictions.

BWE added that the Russian Curling Federation has new leadership. He noted that World Curling still has a strong argument at CAS based on the operational integrity of its competitions, citing recent visa issues and event disruptions. The discussion also raised the question of whether there is a meaningful distinction between a neutral team and a Russian team in future policy considerations.

It was agreed to move ahead with the consultation exercise.

### **Finance Updates**

CGR provided an update on World Curling's budget, reporting that the projected deficit for the non-Olympic year has been reduced from approximately \$700,000 to \$400,000, including a contingency for competition-related uncertainties. The draft budget reflects the new competition structure, one additional mixed doubles qualifier, and proposals from the Development Assistance Programme (DAP) working group, including removing the budget for junior flights.

He also outlined the potential financial impact of introducing entry fees for non-pathway events, noting that the proposed fees would generate additional revenue. He also highlighted that a potential event in the United Arab Emirates could have a positive budget impact of around \$500,000.

HAL and SMV declared a conflict of interest but the majority of the Board agreed to implement an entry fee for non-pathway events (WMxCC and WSCC) of \$800 for up to five players plus a coach, plus \$50 for additional accreditations as had been outlined at the Open Meetings.

DSI noted that while the current projected deficit is around \$400,000, World Curling should continue working towards its goal of achieving a balanced budget within four years. CGR agreed and said future budget scenarios can be developed, with entry fee decisions and Congress outcomes being key factors. He added that incorporating these changes could eliminate the deficit.

Following the Board decisions at today's meeting an updated draft will be presented to the Board.

### **Competition Updates**

CGR reported that Lohja have agreed to take the Wheelchair Worlds next spring, a contract is being finalized. Both WMDQEs have now been announced for the coming season. Unfortunately, Vernon are not able to do the WMxCC in autumn, therefore World Curling are now in discussions with Kelowna about both the WMxCC and the WSCC, with the Seniors being a deal for 2027 and 2029. They cannot accommodate the WMxCC on the original dates and we are looking at options and will inform the MAs that alternative dates are being considered. If these discussions are successful then we are only missing a host for the Pre-Qualifier events next April/May and this will be addressed once a decision is made on the format (Geographical vs straight ladder).

HLI supported moving towards a ladder competition system and asked why the proposal had not been progressed. CGR explained that he had been waiting for feedback from the Member Associations before proceeding. HLI said there had been no strong opposition, while BWE noted that although most members supported the idea, one group felt it was too soon to change the format again, and others were concerned about increasing the size and duration of pre-qualifiers. C&R were asked to review the proposal and update it for a final decision, noting that retaining the current zonal system could result in even larger events in the future.

A decision on the proposal from UAE is needed as soon as possible. A draft contract had been provided to them including 25% upfront non-refundable payment of the Hosting Fee. Despite the breaking of the ceasefire between USA and Iran in the past week travel restrictions seem to have been reduced in most of our main member associations with travel bans have been lifted.

As no alternative hosts have come forward, the Board would need to decide whether to proceed, with an exit clause tied to any future government travel restrictions. The discussion also emphasized the broader strategic value of the partnership. CGR noted that the UAE sees the event as part of a wider development programme for curling in the region, while ARY argued that hosting profitable events in new markets should be a priority, as the financial

returns could significantly strengthen the federation and reduce pressure to cut costs elsewhere. The majority of the Board agreed to move forward with the event in Abu Dhabi.

### **Future of DAP**

MSO updated the Board on the Development Working Group's progress, noting that it had focused on short-term priorities for the coming season while also developing a definition and guiding principles for development within World Curling. He said longer-term issues, including a proposed tiered approach, would be discussed at Congress and sought Board approval for the group's recommendations.

DSI supported the overall programme but argued that it did not adequately address long-term infrastructure needs, emphasizing that developing curling facilities is essential for sustainable growth. MSO acknowledged the concern but explained that the current proposal focuses on strengthening the core Development Assistance Programme through clearer criteria, reporting, and accountability, with broader infrastructure discussions to come later.

***To approve the new DAP 2026-2027 structure and operating model board***

***moved by MSO  
seconded by JOF  
and approved by majority with 3 abstentions***

### **Items for Discussion from Commission Meetings**

#### **Conditional Membership**

The Board was asked to approve the Conditional Membership of the UAE Winter Sports Federation.

***To approve the application of UAE Winter Sports Federation for Conditional Membership***

***moved by MSO  
seconded by HLI  
and approved unanimously***

A new application from Peru is currently being processed.

Following a proposal by HLI the agenda item "Approval of Policy Updates" was postponed to the next meeting prior to the Congress due to time constraints.

#### Competitions and Rules Commission

##### *Rule changes for Board Approval*

A paper looking for Board approval and decision on the proposed rule changes for next season had been distributed in advance. A full folder with more detailed copies of the various policies and rules involved had also been included in the meeting folder.

**To approve the proposed rule changes en masse**

***moved by RNI  
seconded by JOF  
and approved unanimously***

##### *Uniform Policy*

Board approval for the updated Uniform Policy was requested

**To approve the 2026-2027 Uniform Policy**

***moved by RNI  
seconded by JOF  
and approved unanimously***

##### *Wheelchair Advisory Group*

The Board approval was requested for the updated and formal Terms of Reference for the Wheelchair Advisory Group.

**To approve the updated and formal Terms of Reference for the Wheelchair Advisory Group**

***moved by RNI  
seconded by HLI  
and approved unanimously***

HLI said that it was an important step making the group an official advisory group. She also suggested addressing the group responsible for the World Rankings to formalize its position in the governance structure, JOF/RNI were asked to look at this.

##### *Classification Code Update*

CGR explained that the classification code update will be presented to members for a vote at Congress. He also noted that no motions were submitted by members, so the only motions going to the AGM/Congress are constitutional housekeeping changes, the Anti-Doping Code, and the Classification Code update.

CGR also asked commission chairs to upload approved meeting minutes to the next Board folder after each commission meeting. This will make it easier to keep track of meetings. CGR confirmed he would handle organizing and renaming the files when preparing the board papers.

### **Project Information Updates**

#### World Team Championships

Vegas have confirmed given the current position with tourism from Canada they are not in a position to host. Calgary have shown interest but not in September, they would prefer December, we are looking at the possible free weekends in that period, Everest have confirmed they would be happy with this window.

#### WCTRS Competition Series

Building on the discussions around formalizing the calendar the first step has been to develop the concept presented to the Board earlier in the year to create a number of sub-series within the points rankings. An explainer paper is included in the meeting folder. This will be announced next week. In year one the prizes will be limited with the winner of each level receiving a banner to display in their home rink like the World Champions banners. A proposal for a formal end of year competition is being worked on to see if there is appetite among hosts and sponsors for such an event.

#### Floor Curling

A World Open Floor Curling Bonspiel will be held in Turkey in December. There will be no costs to World Curling but we will work with Turkish Curling and Rock Solid to promote the event and will receive a share of any profits generated. The event is being fully supported by the Turkish Government and information will go out to the MAs shortly. The hosts are targeting an entry of around 200 teams split between four person teams and pairs teams

The Board noted a report from the Protection of the Female Category Workshop provided by HLI following her attendance at an IOC Workshop for IFs, noting that international federations are working toward a common approach on the issue, and updates will continue to be provided.

The meeting finished at 15:06