



USA Rugby Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, April 2, 2026

Time: 12:00 pm – 3:30 pm Mountain Time

Location: Virtual: Google Meet

1. Administrative Matters

The Meeting was opened at 12:03 pm

- **Welcome:** Tom Cusack
- **Roll Call:** Tom Cusack

Board Members Present: Tom Cusack, Chair; Steve Argeris; Jamie Burke; Victoria Folley; Koma Gandy-Fischbein; Rick Humm; Tom Kelley; Paul Keeler; Denis Shanagher; Bill Stevens; Brett Thompson; Julie Uhrman.

Board Members Absent: None.

Others Present, USA Rugby Staff: Bill Goren, CEO; Todd Sowl, CFO; Tamara Sheppard, High Performance Director; Kelly Burton, Director of Compliance.

Others Present: Bob Latham, World Rugby; Steve Tew, World Rugby.

Conflict of Interest Statement & Declaration: Tom Cusack asked if anyone saw a conflict based on the agenda, and no conflicts were reported.

Minutes Ratification:

Bill S. moved to approve the **Minutes from February 12, 2026**, as corrected. Koma seconded.

Motion approved unanimously.

2. Leadership Updates

- **Chair Update:** Tom Cusack
 - **Hosting/Commercial Agreement**
 - Tom introduced and reminded the Board Members of the history and status of Commercial Rights and Hosting Agreements with World Rugby.
 - Denis and Steve shared the state of the ongoing negotiations of Commercial Rights and Hosting Agreements.
 - Denis and Steve answered questions from Board Members and discussed next steps. The Board will need to approve the Agreement. A draft may be available for the Board Members to review before the next scheduled meeting.



- **CEO Update:** Bill Goren
 - Staffing Update
 - There have been two part-time hires in the membership department.
 - There have been very good interviews for the Director of Business Operations position. The job title and description were appropriated from a legacy position that is no longer entirely aligned with the state of operations. The position requirements have not changed materially, but the priorities of the job function may be realigned to better serve the operational structure, and the job title of that position may change.
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3. Governance

- **Policy Updates:** Bill Goren
 - Five policies were presented for Board approval.
 - Conflict of Interest Policy: Tom Kelley moved to approve. Paul seconded. **The motion passed unanimously. Approved.**
 - Code of Conduct: Paul moved to approve. Koma seconded. **The motion passed unanimously. Approved.**
 - USA Rugby Integrity Policy: Rick moved to approve. Bill S. seconded. **The motion passed unanimously. Approved.**
 - Whistleblower Policy: Paul moved to approve both the Whistleblower Policy and the Financial Policy. Koma seconded. **The motion passed unanimously. Approved.**
 - Financial Policy: Please see above, Whistleblower Policy. **Approved.**
 - **National Competition Membership Application - Deaf Rugby:** Bill Goren
 - Bill reported that Deaf Rugby had applied to be considered for a National Competition Membership.
 - Bill had requested information from Deaf Rugby, but he had not received the information in time for the meeting. The Board will consider this request at a later meeting once the information is received.
 - **Competition Eligibility Policy Update:** Bill Goren
 - Bill reported that USA Rugby had received approximately 60 emails protesting the Competition Eligibility Policy that was published on February 27, 2026.
 - Bill asked the Community Representatives about the feedback they had received. That feedback was discussed. It was reported that the vast majority of the feedback was received from the Senior Club Council. Rick shared the feedback regarding certain frustrations and questions about the Open Competition Division.
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4. Philanthropy

- **USA Rugby Legacy Fund, Inc. Bylaws:** Denis presented updated Bylaws for USA Rugby Legacy Fund, Inc. Denis discussed changes from previous drafts and answered questions from Board Members. Rick moved to adopt the USA Rugby Legacy Fund, Inc. Bylaws. Paul seconded. **The motion passed unanimously. Approved.**
 - **USA Rugby Legacy Fund, Inc. Board:** Denis presented the names for certain individuals identified to be board members of the USA Rugby Legacy Fund, Inc.
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5. Committees

- **NCAA Emerging Sports Update:** Bill updated the group on the development of the NCAA Emerging Sports working group. Julie Uhrman has been leading that development. The members of the working group are being considered and selected.
- **USA Rugby Committee Update:** Tom Cusack opened a discussion about the state of the USA Rugby Standing Committees. The current status of the Standing Committees is as follows:
 - Nominations and Governance Committee:
 - The purpose of the Committee is to recruit, vet, and nominate at-large members to the board.
 - Tom (Non-voting chair), Denis, Victoria, Bill S, Paul, and Rick make up this committee.
 - Composition is one Board Member representing the Community Councils and two International Athletes. This committee is NGB compliant.
 - This committee meets regularly as needed.
 - Audit and Risk Committee:
 - The purpose of the Committee is to oversee financial integrity and compliance.
 - Denis, David Pool, Olivia Benzen-Daniel, Tim Cowley, and Sarah Murphy make up this committee.
 - Composition is one Committee Member chosen by each of the Community Councils and two International Athletes. The Chair must be a Board Member. This committee is NGB compliant.
 - This committee meets regularly and provides its minutes to the Board
 - Diversity and Inclusion Committee:
 - The purpose of the Committee is to oversee ensure accessibility to all who want to play rugby.
 - This committee has been dormant since its former board member chair left the Board.



- Discipline and Grievance Committee:
 - The purpose of the Committee is to maintain the integrity and safety of the sport.
 - This committee has not met in over a year.
 - Referee and Laws Committee:
 - The stated purpose of the Committee is to serve as the primary technical authority over the Laws of the Game to ensure consistency across all levels of play; recruitment, training, and management of Match Officials.
 - USA Rugby has an exemption from the USOPC for athlete participation for this Committee.
 - Medical Committee:
 - The purpose of the Committee is to assist with and oversee compliance with comprehensive health, safety, and player welfare standards.
 - This committee is NGB compliant.
 - This committee does not currently meet regularly.
 - Tom sought feedback to help make the committees more effective for the work of USA Rugby. Suggestions and discussions included committee composition; possibly redefining or reframing the purpose of certain committees to align with the needs of USA Rugby; and adding ad hoc committees to support other efforts.
 - The Board will continue this discussion at the next meeting.
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6. Financial/Risk

- **Financial Updates:** Todd gave the financial report. He shared explanations for any variances and fielded questions from Board Members.
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5. Legal

- **Legal Updates:** Bill gave a brief report on the status of outstanding legal matters.
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6. High Performance Update

- **Men's 7s Pathway to Tier 1**
 - Tamara shared that the Men's 7s has qualified for the HSBC World Championship Series and shared scenarios that will lead the Men's 7s team to Tier 1 competition next season.
- **Anthem**
 - Tamara shared that Anthem defeated the California Legion in MLR's Week 1 and thoughts on the 2026 Season
- **Women's XV's**
 - Tamara shared thoughts and perspectives of the Women's XV's Pac4 series.
- **Calendar**
 - Tamara discussed an outline of the schedule for the remainder of the season.

7. **Closing** Tom Cusack closed the meeting at 2:45 pm Mountain Time.

8. **Executive Session** No Executive Session was held.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Burton on behalf of Bill Goren