Niagara Association Executive Committee Meeting

December 15, 2025

Don Lawrence opened this EC meeting at 8:03pm EST. The following Executive Committee members were present: Don Lawrence, Kelsey Ryan, Jacky Mendes, Terry Eason, Kathy McLymond, Lexi Lindamer, Rayven Sample, Sonja Robinson, Rozanne Redlinski, Mike Nier, and Danielle Anderson. Absent were Sharon Gruttadauro and Matt Merrill.

The meeting stated with the approval of the minutes, where Don corrected the spelling of a participant's name. Don provided updates on the Buffalo Turkey Trot, highlighting the performance of Joey Whalen and Gabby Orie, who placed second to her sister Danielle Orie. He also discussed the USATF Annual Meeting, noting the busy schedule and decisions made, including the approval of a 3K sanctioned delegates run. The next annual meeting was announced to be held in Portland, Oregon, in 2024.

Annual Meeting and Athlete Development

The group discussed the annual meeting, with Rozanne requesting financial information from Jackie about last year's costs for comparison. Don noted that only one college coach attended compared to the usual 15-20, and suggested exploring ways to bridge the gap with USATF. Danielle shared insights from the virtual annual meeting, highlighting a shift towards athlete development across all levels, including initiatives to increase athlete capacity in jumps and educate athletes about various events.

USATF Youth Meet Management Issues

Kelsey expressed frustration with USATF's handling of youth cross-country meets, particularly regarding incorrect birth year postings and registration issues. She highlighted how these errors cause confusion and negatively impact young athletes and their families, emphasizing the need for better communication and accountability from the national organization. Despite these challenges, Kelsey and her team continue to manage the events to provide a positive experience for young athletes, though the

ongoing issues with USATF's competence and preparedness remain a significant concern.

National Meets Challenges Discussion

Don acknowledged Kelsey's concerns about the challenges of holding national meets in December, including the difficulty of kids training in cold weather. He expressed support for Kelsey's voice and suggested organizing a Zoom meeting with key stakeholders, including Jackie White and LaTanya, Mullins to address these issues. Don emphasized the need to focus on development and funding rather than solely on national championships, which benefit only a few athletes.

Coach Attendance Funding Challenges

The group discussed challenges with coach attendance at meets, particularly regarding travel costs and funding. Kelsey explained that clubs face difficulties covering coach expenses for away events, and suggested that USATF Niagara could help by paying for two coaches from different clubs to attend meets. Don agreed to discuss this with Sonja Robinson and consider adding it to the budget. They also briefly touched on the positive attitude of athletes despite challenging conditions at recent meets.

Budget Review and Revenue Updates

Jacky reported that W-9s for prize money were being sent by mail to ensure secure handling, and she noted a $2,000 revenue gap compared to last year, though overall revenue remains $2,000 ahead of 2023. She mentioned that the 2026 budget is nearly ready for approval after the annual meeting and will be shared with committees for review. Sonja requested an early look at budget proposals to better prepare for upcoming committee meetings, and Jacky agreed to share the numbers once finalized, emphasizing the need for accuracy given recent significant financial transactions.

Financial Planning and Youth Initiatives

The meeting focused on financial planning, youth engagement, and para-athletes' initiatives. Jacky discussed sharing financial information after completing a presentation, while Don emphasized the importance of reinvesting funds to attract new athletes and maintain engagement. Sonja provided updates on para-athletes' efforts to increase participation, improve coaching education, and address logistical challenges for events.

The youth committee addressed issues with athletic.net and discussed potential changes to the fee structure for nationals to enhance athlete experience.

U.S. Track and Field Challenges

Sonja discussed challenges in hosting the Junior Olympic Championships for Track and Field, including hosting junior teams and bridging the gap between youth and junior athletes, particularly in the Northeast. She highlighted issues with LLCs not fulfilling promises, such as providing heated tents for events. Don mentioned that the position of National Office Liason/Program Director for youth is currently vacant but interviews are ongoing. The group also discussed concerns about the World Cup affecting track and field events in the Philadelphia area, with Sonja raising this issue to LaTanya Mullins and Jacci White for further consideration.

National Events Attendance and Logistics

Sonja raised concerns about the impact of low attendance at national events on future bidding processes, emphasizing the need for accurate participation numbers. Kelsey inquired about proposed dates for Region 2 and Nationals, and Sonja explained the scheduling conflict with Senior Nationals and World Juniors in Eugene, which has led to a shortage of hotel accommodations due to FIFA's occupancy.

Danielle mentioned some technical issues during the virtual annual meeting, while Rozanne and Don discussed the logistics for next year's in-person meeting in Portland, Oregon, and the need to budget for travel expenses. Don expressed gratitude to Terry Eason for his support in securing full accreditation for the annual meeting.

Olympic Trials and Event Planning

Don discussed Eric's report, which included a calendar for next year and noted that the championship location is still TBD. He mentioned that Eric will be recommending elites to race at the Cornell-hosted Hartshorne Masters Mile event, which some officials are hesitant to change. Don also highlighted the achievements of athletes Joey and Ellie Ori, who qualified for the Olympic trials with impressive times. The conversation ended with a brief mention of Eric's efforts to distribute events across different areas of Niagara and the success of the master's team program.

Membership and Awards Review

Don and Kathy discussed the recent awards won by Terry Eason and Don Lawrence, including Don's appointment as U.S. Racewalk coach (in Brazil) for 2026. They also talked about official assignments for the Cornell event and the need to follow up with Adirondack officials. The group reviewed membership numbers, noting they were slightly below the 1,500 goal but satisfied with the youth percentage at 48%. Sonja emphasized the importance of youth sponsorship for future events. Don expressed hope for securing additional sponsorships to support larger events. The conversation ended with a brief mention of Lexi's absence due to recruiting duties and the need to review her reports.

Track and Field Championship Updates

The meeting covered several updates and announcements. Terry shared his honor as the 37th recipient of the Horace Crow Award and mentioned his upcoming role as head for the U.S. Outdoor Championship, pending confirmation from World Athletics. He also discussed his selection as an International Visiting Official for Daegu, Korea, in mid-August to September, and his ongoing issue with customs regarding equipment seized in Mexico City. Don highlighted the upcoming U.S. Indoor Championships at Ocean Breeze and the Cornell indoor meet on January 18th, noting that youth participation is welcome. The group discussed the status of the U20 Worlds and the need for further communication regarding selections. The conversation ended with well-wishes for the holidays.

New Steps: .

Don, Sonja, Kelsey, and relevant parties: Organize a Zoom meeting with national youth leadership (LaTanya Mullins, Jacky Mendes, Sonja Robinson) to discuss and provide feedback on youth cross country nationals issues.

Jacky: Share detailed budget/proposal information (what was spent last year, this year, and next year's proposal) with Sonja and committees as soon as annual meeting numbers are finalized.

Sonja: Review and prepare committee input for the upcoming budget proposal once information is received from Jacky.

Jacky: Process and send out 1099s to relevant recipients by the end of January.

Jacky: Follow up with prize money recipients who have not returned W-9s by January 1 via email if needed.

Don, Sonja, Kelsey: Consider and discuss including coach travel funding for youth clubs in the upcoming budget.

Jacky: Work with CPA on sponsorship wording and next steps after budget approval.

Kathy: Send out notifications to those selected for U20 Worlds after the announcement.

Jacky: Address any detail work for the indoor meet at Cornell when back from travel and coordinate with Don and Matt as needed.

The meeting was adjourned at9:12 pm EST.

Treasurer's report:

12.15.2025 Board Call

1. Sending out W9s and preparing for 1099s.
2. 2026 budget is nearly ready for President approval. Once that is done I will work with CPA on Sponsorship.
3. We are roughly $2,000 behind in revenue compared to this time last year and $2,000 ahead compared to 2023.

4. As of 11.30.2025 our financial standing is:

Checking:	8,766.68
Savings:	42,824.96
CD:	51,167.89
Total:	102,759.53

5. Summary of all deposits

	Individual	Club	Sanctions	Total
2025	$15,907	$1,366	$11,578	$28,851
2024	$22,499	$4,475	$15,986	$42,960
2023	$19,256	$3,700	$11,559	$34,569
2022	$20,754	$2,350	$14,221	$37,234
2021	$9,235	$1,100	$8,882	$19,217
2020	$6,664	$850	$5,640	$13,154
2019	$13,650	$2,725	$20,577	$36,952
2018	$17,455	$2,450	$22,101	$42,006
2017	$17,205	$3,000	$19,033	$39,238

6. Summary of Sanctions Deposits

Month	Association Fees	Post Fees	Refunded	Refunded Post	National	Late Fee	Total
01/01/2024	48	1	4	0	0	0	$4,464
2/1/2024	17	0	6	0	0	0	$1,393
3/1/2024	13	1	1	1	0	0	$820
4/1/2024	10	1	1	0	0	0	$563
5/1/2024	19	4	0	0	1	1	$1,309
6/1/2024	8	4	0	2	0	$0	$160
7/1/2024	20	3	0	0	0	$0	$1,267
8/1/2024	12	1	0	1	0	$0	$581
9/1/2024	16	3	4	0	0	$0	$933
10/1/2024	10	1	0	0	0	$0	$653
11/01/2024	16	5	0	2	0	$0	$1,324
12/01/2024	37	2	0	2	0	$0	$2,519
1/1/2025	27	1	0	5	0	$0	$2,732
02/01/2025	18	2	3	0	0	$0	$1,407
03/01/2025	17	1	0	1	0	$0	$1,246
04/01/2025	16	1	0	2	0	$0	$872
05/01/2025	14	1	0	0	0	$0	$1,123
06/01/2025	10	1	0	3	0	$0	$493
07/01/2025	24	2	0	4	0	$0	$1,124
08/01/2025	12	3	0	2	0	$0	$895
09/01/2025	14	0	0	4	0	$0	$726

LDR Report:

1) Joe Whelan 2nd overall at the USATF marathon championships, 2:09:41!!! Ellie Orie ran 2:37:11 in her first marathon. She was 11sec away from the otq.

2) 2026 LDR schedule

Races.

3/14
Runnin' of the green 5 mile hosting 5mile championship
Rochester, NY

5/3
Mountain Goat 10mile hosting 10mile championship
Syracuse, NY

6/TBD
USATF Niagara T&F Championship
Event and Location TBD

7/17
Subaru 4 Mile hosting 4mile championship
Buffalo, NY

8/1
Swain Mountain Race hosting Mountain Running championship
Swain, NY

8/15
Queen City mile
1 mile road championships
Buffalo, NY

9/6
Oak Tree 5km hosting the 5km championship
Geneseo, NY

10/18
Ridge Walk/Run 25km Trial Race hosting the Trial Championship

11/TBD
XC championship
Location TBD

3) wrapping up 2025, communicating with Jacky relating to all the finances for LDR.