Executive Committee Meeting
Niagara Association
February 16, 2026

The following Executive Committee members were present for this meeting: Don Lawrence, Terry Eason, Jacky Mendes, Eric Boyce, Kathy McLymond, Sonja Robinson, Matt Merrill, Mike Nier, Jim Glinsky, Danielle Anderson Rozanne Redlinski, and Rayvon Sample

Meeting Summary:

Competitor Updates

Rozanne Redlinski inquired about competitors attending the Albuquerque meet, and Kathy McLymond informed her that Chris Cummings was going. Don shared that Joey Whalen won the Austin Marathon.

USATF Events and Sponsorship Updates

Don Lawrence reported on various upcoming events and competitions, including the Indoor Championships in New York City and the Running of the Green on March 14th. He mentioned that the association is encouraging members to participate in sanctioned events to qualify as delegates for the USATF Annual Meeting. Don shared that the new USATF committee that will review potential sponsorships to ensure compliance with legal requirements. He asked Danielle Anderson to check with this committee about Niagara Sponsorships.

Financial Performance and Medal Planning

Jacky Mendes reported that January financial results were strong, with $10,000 more in membership renewals compared to the previous year and $8,000 ahead of 2024. She noted that while the association is down due to prize money and hosting events, they are halfway to their financial goals. Don discussed purchasing 600 USATF medals at $2

each to be used for various events, with the plan to charge events based on usage to break even. Sonja Robinson inquired about the availability of medals for youth athletes, and Don confirmed they would have both association and Junior Olympic medals available, with Sonja offering to help with inventory counting.

Athletic Awards and Region 2 Meet

The group discussed the use of ribbons versus medals for athletes, with Sonja raising concerns about the perception of ribbons and the need to consider alternative rewards. Matt explained that the cost of medals has increased significantly and that the national office has limited options for medal suppliers. The team also addressed the status of Region 2 cross-country meets, with Sonja and others discussing challenges with participation and potential locations. They agreed to make a decision on Region 2 by March 11, with Sonja planning to reach out to adult clubs to increase participation and potentially turn the meet into a cross-country festival.

The group discussed the youth budget and the decision to hold the meet at Roberts Wesleyan on June 27th. This meet will be combined with Open and Masters, with the Youth meet in the morning and the Open/Masters in the afternoon. Don explained that the low cost was due to splitting expenses with Open and Masters. They chose Roberts Wesleyan because of its accessibility and previous success with hosting the meet. The group also discussed past locations for the meet, including Cortland, Nazareth, and Penfield, with Don noting that Roberts Wesleyan was the most cost-effective option at $1,000 for the facility.

Youth Event Growth and Logistics

The group discussed the potential growth of youth entries and athletes for an upcoming event, with Sonja Robinson noting positive momentum but acknowledging the challenge of maintaining participation through the spring. They considered extending the event to two days to accommodate larger numbers, though Don warned of increased expenses and logistical challenges. The conversation also touched on volunteer coordination, with Don explaining they typically rely on club members and officials, and Sonja suggested exploring master's athletes as potential volunteers. The discussion concluded with a brief debate about Safe Sport requirements for athletes, with clarification needed on whether these apply to all competitive situations.

LDR Budget and Race Updates

The board approved the LDR budget, which remains unchanged from last year, to allow Andy to update the website with prize money information for the upcoming race series. Don and Jacky clarified that the timing budget for hosting two meets in one day would remain at $1,500 per event, and Matt raised concerns about Region 2's budget not being finalized, though Sonja assured the board they would have a clear picture within 60 days.

2026 Niagara Budget Approval

The board approved the 2026 Niagara Association budget as presented, with the exception of Region 2 cross-country hosting, which will be discussed further in March. The budget includes LDR expenses and income, though Jacky noted some income numbers are placeholder. Rozanne Redlinski suggested using funds from the Association's treasury savings to support meets if needed, and the board agreed to approve the budget with a 9-1 vote, with Jacky abstaining.

A copy of the budget proposal is found at the end of the minutes.

716 Sports Complex Project Update

Don discussed the resolution of an issue regarding membership points and expressed gratitude to Mike Nier for bringing it up. He also mentioned the upcoming Buffalo Marathon Expo booth, for which he needs assistance covering Sunday morning. Don provided an update on the 716 Sports Complex project, detailing its progress and potential features, including a removable 200-meter track and multi-use facilities. He noted that groundbreaking is expected in early May, with a budget of $50-60 million and the possibility of an additional $20 million for enhancements.

Event Booth Planning and Promotion

Don and Matt discussed plans for an upcoming booth at an event, focusing on design elements and promotional strategies. They agreed on a 10x10 setup with side panels featuring a QR code linking to the Niagara website, race information, and logos. Don emphasized the importance of promoting Junior Olympics and increasing membership, aiming for 2,000 members before leaving his position. They also briefly touched on youth committee activities and accreditation numbers.

Track Meet Volunteer Recruitment Challenges

Don and Matt discussed challenges with organizing a track meet, focusing on volunteer recruitment and scheduling conflicts. Matt expressed concerns about balancing his time with his children and the demands of the meet, emphasizing the need for parent volunteers rather than student athletes. Don suggested exploring options like hiring crew members or working with the youth chair to address the volunteer shortage. They also discussed the importance of requiring clubs to provide volunteers and the potential for offering clubs incentives for meeting volunteer requirements.

Event Giveaway Options Discussion

They explored options for promotional materials to give away at an upcoming event, considering items like bib holders, stickers, and information cards. Matt shared his experience with creating custom stickers in the past, while Don researched the cost of bib holders, noting they were expensive for a giveaway. They debated the merits of different giveaway options, including tattoos, bracelets, candy, and raffles, without reaching a final decision.

USATF Membership Promotion Strategies

Matt and Don discussed ideas for promoting USATF membership and events, including giving away small items, highlighting member benefits, and organizing a raffle. They considered involving notable runners like Angelina and Joey Whalen for guest appearances at events. The conversation also touched on the logistics of creating Velcro panels for event materials and the potential distractions of celebrity appearances.

Youth Championship Scheduling and Funding

Don and Matt discussed the scheduling of youth championships, agreeing that the first weekend of June is the only viable option due to team readiness and existing commitments. They expressed concerns about the financial implications of hosting the event, noting the need to balance expenses with available funds. Matt also mentioned issues with USATF's approach to information sharing and sponsorship efforts, questioning the organization's financial strategy given upcoming events like the Olympics.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 pm EST.

Copy of the 2026 budget proposal:

2026 Income Proposal	Income		2026 Expense Proposal	Expense	
Grants	0		Storage	2160	
Interest	1800		Treasurer Supplies	250	
Sanction Fees	13000		Committees Expense	500	add line for athlete travel
LDR	4350		Clinics	600	
Cross Country	500		Officials	3100	
Track & Field			Committees Supplies	2000	
Indoor	3000		Annual Meeting		
Outdoor	3500		National	7000	
Youth			Association	150	
Cross Country	1250	need to add region 2 budget	Membership Processing	1500	
Indoor	0		Professional Services		
Outdoor	6500		Financial Statements/Tax Return	3500	
Membership Dues			Marketing/Website	7500	
Club	3500		Sanctions Processing	1500	
Individual	20500		Treasurers Processing	1500	
Non-Athlete	1100		Event Expense		
Total	**59000**		LDR	17000	
			Track & Field		
			Indoor	6700	
			Outdoor	4200	
			Youth		
			Indoor	0	
			Outdoor	5100	
			JO Cross Country	800	
			Race Walk	300	
			Officials Supplies	250	
			Total	**65610**	

Membership report:

Niagara Membership 13 FEB 26

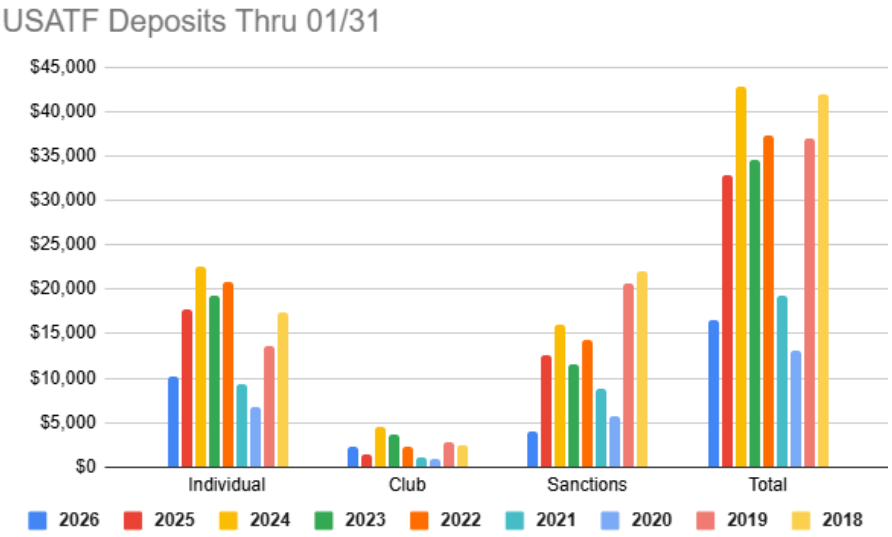
	Male	Female	Total	%	
Youth	81	66	147	21%	
Open	114	56	170	25%	
Masters		255	119	374	54%
Total	450	241	691		

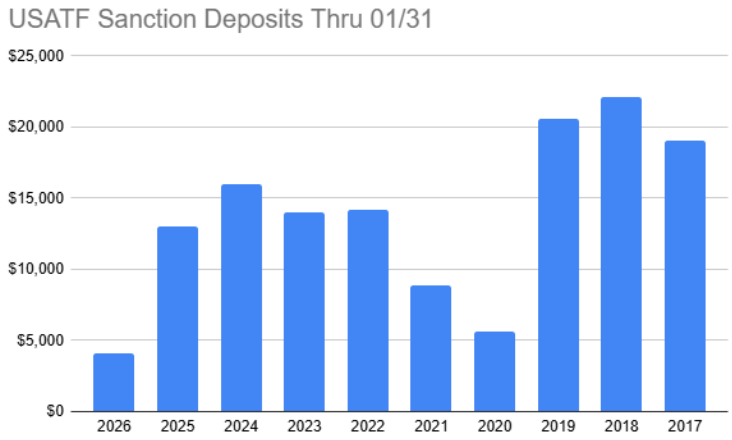
Clubs 34

We increased by 33 individual members since last report

Treasurer's report:

Checking:	6,070.88			
Savings:	20,331.61			
CD:	51,172.24			
Total:	77,574.73			
5. Summary of all deposits				
	Individual	Club	Sanctions	Total
2026	$10,193	$2,210	$4,059	$16,462
2025	$17,755	$1,366	$13,014	$32,770
2024	$22,499	$4,475	$15,986	$42,760
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





LDR report:

LDR report

Gearing up for the 2026 USATF Niagara runner of the year series and Grand Prix series!

First race 3/14/26 Runnin' of the green 5mile (Rochester, NY)

Eric