
Minutes of the WFDF Executive Committee meeting Sunday, October 19, 2025

8:00 am PDT / 10:00 am CDT / 5:00 pm CEST / 6:00 pm EAT

Attending:

Robert “Nob” Rauch (President), Brian Gisel, (Vice President/Chair, Ultimate Committee), Kate Bergeron (Treasurer), Catherine Nakasi (Secretary), Karina Woldt (Managing Director Events and Operations), Dillon Richardson (Director of Membership Services and Sport Development), Marco Tomasini (Director of NOC Relations), Pablo Naya (Communications & Social Media Manager), Oleksandra Boliak (Executive Assistant)

Call to order

5:04 pm CEST

Overview by the President

President Rauch opened the meeting and briefly introduced the agenda.

Decisions requiring votes of or specific input from the ExComm

Minutes of the meeting - Board of Directors - 14 September 2025

Rauch referenced the minutes from the Board Meeting, held on September 14th, 2025, that had already been approved by online vote.

WFDF Events Team Report

Woldt reported that the event season is progressing as planned. Since the last meeting, WFDF concluded the WFDF 2025 Asia Oceanic Ultimate Championships and WFDF 2025 World Guts Club Championships in Japan, both of which faced extreme weather conditions. Woldt thanked Gisel and Pardo for their on-site support despite the difficult circumstances.

Woldt noted the need for a review of guts event frequency and format, as the discipline’s current event model appears unsustainable. The recent tournament did not reach expectations of team numbers and back-to-back annual events with low participation levels are not viable.

Gisel added that, based on his on-site observations, there is a need to review the rules and timing in order to modernize the match format of Guts. Rauch noted that sports globally are moving toward shorter, more compact formats and suggested that

WFDF's Sport for All Committee could play a key role in overseeing smaller disciplines. Rauch mentioned progress in this area in the case of the co-branding of the FPA freestyle world championships with WFDF, which could help raise visibility. Frisbee festivals as planned for that event might be a suitable model for showcasing various smaller disc disciplines together.

Woldt reported that the WFDF 2025 All Africa Ultimate Championships were successfully held the previous weekend. As a continental event, it does not pay sanctioning fees to WFDF and the main issue was financial management and late team confirmations. Woldt pointed the need for an event framework that differentiates between World Championships, continental events, and sanctioned events. This would clarify WFDF's financial, organizational, and supervisory roles in each case. Rauch acknowledged the unique nature for the continental events and that the WFDF intends to formalize relationships with continental associations in the coming months, which will include clearer guidelines and expectations.

Woldt mentioned the WFDF 2025 World Wheelchair Ultimate Championships in Lithuania which Richardson attended on behalf of WFDF. The event remained small, with only four teams participating, and no team fees were charged. Funding was secured through external channels. A new potential bid from USA for the next edition was received. Rauch cautioned about the current visa and immigration difficulties that make hosting an event therein the USA challenging.

Woldt also raised ongoing concerns regarding the World Overall Flying Disc Championships in Sweden. WFDF has still not received final reports from the event. It was suggested that planning for the 2027 edition should be paused until outstanding financial and structural issues are resolved.

Upcoming tournaments are the WFDF 2025 World Beach Ultimate Championships (WBUC) – WFDF's primary revenue-generating event for the year -- and the WFDF 2025 World Pan American Ultimate Championships (PAUC), where participation is lower than expected, with nearly 20 fewer teams than the previous edition. In the case of PAUC, Woldt explained that USA Ultimate delayed confirming and paying for its team bids until after its national championships, resulting in many teams withdrawing. Bergeron clarified that Masters Nationals are held earlier in July, while other divisions conclude at the end of October, leaving tight time and no possibility to register for PAUC.

Rauch recommended that future deadlines for deposits and team confirmations be enforced strictly, emphasizing that accountability is necessary to maintain discipline. Bergeron further recommended that WFDF consider pre-selecting or inviting prior-

year teams to ensure smoother participation and avoid dependence on late national outcomes.

WFDF introduced an Event Team Help Desk ticketing system to track inquiries and ensure that federation and event-related requests are handled promptly. Woldt noted that once the two upcoming events are completed, the focus will shift to document updates, including GDPR compliance and cooperation on some new projects with the IT department.

WFDF Personnel Changes

Woldt reported significant personnel changes since the World Games. Pardo has left WFDF entirely after declining an expanded 30-hour communications and social media contract, as she sought a full-time role. As a result, Naya's hours were increased from 20 to 40 per week, consolidating the communications role. Woldt welcomed Pablo Naya to the team and emphasized that WFDF's workload can be unexpected and exceed available capacity. Naya expressed gratitude for the opportunity, calling it a "dream job," and affirmed his motivation to contribute fully, aiming to strengthen community engagement and transparency.

Woldt also mentioned that Andrew Portwine from Canada has joined WFDF in a 20 hours/week position of Event Manager and has already become a valuable asset, taking care of invoicing and financial management. Additionally, Dinko Šimenc from Croatia, President of the Croatian Flying Disc Federation and an experienced disc golfer, was appointed following Ernest's resignation due to family circumstances. Dinko, one of the top-ranked candidates in the earlier hiring process, has quickly adapted and will contribute across all WFDF event management areas.

Richardson asked whether Naya's communications role would focus primarily on events or follow the broader strategic model. Rauch clarified that his role is flexible, aligning with WFDF's current activities. During event-heavy periods, communications will emphasize coverage and promotion. In other times efforts will shift to creating original content and maintaining online engagement. Boliak will take a greater role in press releases and website updates, while Richardson's ongoing work in communications would be related to partners and administrative matters. The aim is to reach critical mass through consistent, data-informed storytelling and inter-federation collaboration.

Finance: YTD 2025 report

Bergeron presented the financial update, noting that WFDF remains in a strong position, performing slightly above budget expectations thanks to robust sponsorship performance. On the expense side, costs for the World Games travel and logistics exceeded expectations, including high cost of equipment and uniforms. These overruns were offset by reduced marketing expenses. Although smaller events did not contribute sanctioning fees, the overall financial situation is positive, with the net results running USD 100,000 ahead of budget for the nine months YTD. Bergeron and Woldt highlighted that strong team participation in Asia and unexpectedly high registration for WBUC 2025 have positively influenced income.

Bergeron, Woldt and Gray will work to close the books for remaining events to facilitate early audit preparation. Bergeron mentioned exploring the use of AI tools to analyze past five-year financial data for improved forecasting accuracy, considering WFDF's historical dataset.

Update on Secretary General Hiring Process

Rauch provided an update on the Secretary General hiring process. The recruitment firm has reviewed approximately 370 candidates, shortlisted and interviewed around 60–70, and narrowed the pool to 10 finalists. A discussion to select 5–6 candidates for the first interview round was scheduled for the following day.

Rauch, Gisel, Woldt, Sheather, and Richardson participated in earlier selection stages, and Rauch is going to attend all interviews with candidates across different time zones. The search prioritizes candidates with commercial sponsorship experience, Olympic movement familiarity, and leadership capacity within realistic budget limits.

Although WFDF initially expected interest from emerging markets, most strong applicants are experienced professionals from established federations or the commercial sector. Rauch expressed satisfaction with the recruiter's work.

Establishment of the Oceania Flying Disc Federation

Rauch reported that the Oceania Flying Disc Federation was formally established on 8 October, after a long coordination process to select a president and Board members. This development will facilitate WFDF's next phase—formalizing all continental associations under standardized governance frameworks and bylaws.

Plans for Incorporating Continental Associations

WFDF aims to implement a consistent constitutional model to clarify the associations' roles as regional bodies. Rauch noted that other International Federations also struggle with over-autonomous continental bodies, emphasizing WFDF's intent to avoid similar governance issues.

Rauch outlined regional progress and plans in Asia, Africa, Europe, Oceania and Pan America. Regional development updates noted ongoing incorporation and cooperation efforts across all continents. In Asia, options are being explored with possible support from Chengdu. EFDF continues discussions to renew collaboration through an MOU with EUF and EDGF, while Oceania and Pan America progress toward formal structures, with the latter close to completing bylaws under USA jurisdiction. Africa requires further consultation to establish sustainable operations next year.

Rauch requested a budget of about USD 2,000 for related legal and incorporation expenses, which Bergeron confirmed could be covered under the existing Development-Special Projects budget, with any excess above USD 5,000 to be reviewed later. Bergeron also mentioned ongoing development projects run by Richardson.

Rauch concluded that finalizing these governance structures would strengthen WFDF's continental representation framework, with no major gaps anticipated once these steps are complete. It has been agreed to send minor comments on the draft bylaws template offline. Rauch added created draft should allow flexibility for regional adaptation over time.

Tomasini updated the Executive Committee on progress regarding the registration of PAFDF, noting that WFDF is also applying for membership in ACODEPA, or the Association of Pan American Sport Confederations. He explained that ACODEPA functions similarly to OSFO in Oceania and that obtaining this recognition is a key step toward WFDF's eventual inclusion in the Pan American Games.

Brisbane 2032 update

Rauch provided an update on the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games inclusion process. He shared that WFDF recently met with the Brisbane Organizing Committee, which outlined seven evaluation criteria for sport selection. Among the most challenging criteria are commercial impact, universality, social media engagement, and broadcast

potential. Richardson supported with preparation of a data package for WFDF's submission—focusing on global reach, audience engagement, and digital statistics. Rauch will present this information to the IOC Sports Department in the coming week as part of WFDF's annual review. He noted that the decision-making process will likely involve both the local organizing committee and the IOC, emphasizing the importance of maintaining engagement with both entities.

A shortlist of candidate sports will be prepared for deeper evaluation by the end of fourth quarter. Rauch expressed the goal of getting Flying Disc included on that shortlist to allow further refinement of presentation materials.

Election Update

Richardson provided an update on the regional and WFDF elections. Elections are in progress across Asia, Pan America, and WFDF itself, each with different timelines. Richardson thanked the Nominating Committee, Board and staff members for their roles in outreach and candidate recruitment. The Asian elections have seven interested candidates, with some contested positions including the presidency. Richardson confirmed active follow-up with national federations to ensure all roles are filled. For WFDF's positions elections, the deadline for nominations is November 5, with voting set to begin around November 15. The Asian election voting period is scheduled for October 30–November 14, and Pan America from October 31–November 15.

Membership and Development Report

Richardson reported on key updates. Firstly, he mentioned four new national federations, including a replacement for the Democratic Republic of Congo, have been approved by Congress and are being on-boarded. Secondly, the WFDF Academy has launched its pilot phase with a Disc Golf educational course being finalized in collaboration with Sheather for public launch. WFDF has completed the final steps for WADA compliance, with only minor administrative details remaining. WFDF's agreement with the International Testing Agency (ITA) remains annual, and discussions continue with chair of the Medical and Anti-Doping Committee on future collaboration. Richardson also noted ongoing membership development efforts, particularly with recently not active members.

Rauch asked about the situation with Pakistan. Richardson reported uncertainty around the process, as two competing groups claim legitimacy, with one of them

having stronger ties with the National Olympic Committee. WFDF is maintaining dialogue with both groups to identify whether either could represent a legitimate national body.

Alternative Sponsors for Development Discs

Gisel raised the topic of development disc sponsorships, that requires expanding WFDF's partnerships beyond Discraft to include additional disc manufacturers, particularly those operating regionally. This could enhance availability of discs for development programs and potentially create new revenue channels. Gisel clarified that the current Discraft partnership agreement focuses on championship and event visibility rather than explicitly on development discs. He suggested exploring sponsorship opportunities linked to the WFDF Academy, where various modules or courses could be co-branded by coaching or equipment partners.

Rauch noted that while WFDF's Discraft contract provides 3500 discs in 2025, increasing to 5000 by 2028, shipping logistics remain a major challenge. He emphasized the need to coordinate with Discraft and get their sign-off before soliciting new sponsorships.

Richardson reported that 1200 discs have already been distributed this year across more than 30 countries. WFDF could distribute up to 5000 discs annually if more stock and logistical support were available.

Rauch advised that Gisel, Woldt, and Richardson meet separately to discuss shipping capacity, sponsorship compatibility, and potential regional partnerships. He also encouraged the group to explore the possibility of securing a Disc Golf-specific sponsor, as this would not conflict with existing agreements. Bergeron supported expanding the review to include other disciplines beyond Ultimate to create broader development impact.

Tomasini proposed exploring a Memorandum of Understanding with the Africa Olympic Foundation, coordinated through ANOCA. He explained that the Foundation has established logistics and credibility in distributing sports equipment across the continent. The partnership could ensure that donated discs reach athletes directly and the Foundation typically covers transport costs and manages regional delivery through its network of Olympic Centres of Excellence in Africa. Rauch welcomed the proposal, noting that with 25 WFDF member countries in Africa, even providing each with 100 discs would have a strong development impact. It has been agreed that Tomasini will follow up with them through in-person meetings at international events.

Tomasini also introduced a potential future initiative with the Olympic Refugee Foundation, which supports the Olympic Refugee Team and refugee sports projects worldwide. Membership in the initiative is free and would enhance WFDF's visibility within the Olympic Movement. The program often requests sports materials for refugee camps in Africa and Asia, offering opportunities for WFDF to contribute discs and gain significant exposure in IOC communications.

Woldt added that while disc donations are valuable for development, WFDF also generates income from disc sales at events. She emphasized that distribution of discs toward development projects would reduce this revenue stream. Rauch asked about current disc sales, and Woldt confirmed that nearly all have been sold except those reserved for development. Gisela noted that demand is expected to rise by 2026 with upcoming major events, and Bergeron added that participants consistently buy discs.

Rauch requested a proposal for discussion with Discraft to ensure transparency regarding any use of other manufacturers. Gisela clarified that additional brands would only be used for free distribution in development programs, not for sale, and agreed with Rauch's reminder to have open communication with Discraft to respect the spirit of that partnership.

MOU with ICOACHKIDS

Richardson presented the MOU with ICOACHKIDS, a project originally funded by Erasmus that has since evolved into an NGO offering free open online learning courses for youth sport coaches. The partnership would provide WFDF access to educational materials at no cost, saving development time and resources. As a requirement WFDF would only need to submit annual usage statistics without personal data. Their learning management system aligns technically with WFDF's Academy platform.

Tomasini noted that the ICOACHKIDS program is closely linked to the International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE). ICCE works with ARISF, WOF, and several Olympic federations, and maintains MOUs with the IOC and UNESCO. He suggested that WFDF consider joining ICCE as well, as it provides internationally recognized educational standards and access to expert instructors. The ICCE membership fee is approximately 300 euros per year.

Richardson supported the idea in principle but raised concerns about benefits compared to costs. Tomasini clarified that ICCE offers structured education

frameworks already used by multiple National Olympic Committees and that joining would align WFDF's educational strategy with established global standards. Rauch acknowledged both perspectives, noting the need to more closely review both opportunities.

A motion was made by Rauch to approve the signing of the MOU with ICOACHKIDS, seconded by Bergeron. The motion was approved unanimously.

ARISF Governance Review

Rauch informed that ARISF has initiated a governance review of its member federations, with WFDF's submission provided in May. The results will be presented at the upcoming IF Forum and, given WFDF's strong performance in the previous review conducted by GAISF in 2018–2019, he expressed confidence in an equally strong outcome.

Closing Remarks

Rauch thanked for the participation and concluded the meeting.

Next meetings/wrap-up

Board: 29/30 NOV; ExComm: 20/21 DEC

Closing: 6:32 pm CEST

Submitted by Catherine Nakasi
WFDF Secretary