

South Dakota Cross Country/Track & Field Officials Association (SDCCTFOA)

Wednesday, March 19, 2025 7:00 pm CDT via Zoom

President Tim Casper called the meeting of the SDCCTFOA to order at 7:00 pm CDT. President Casper made some opening comments on the association and its status and indicated that some addition to the minutes were forthcoming.

President Casper called the roll for board members: President-Elect J.D. Evans; Secretary/Treasurer Dana Nelson; Regional Coordinators Randy Thomas, Steve Charron, Tony Waterman, Robert Kwasniewski and Larry Stevens were present. A total of 31 members (registered officials) were present via Zoom. There was no representation from the SDHSAA, and initiating the meeting was delayed slightly.

The members recited the pledge of allegiance.

Dana Nelson moved, JD Evans seconded the approval of the agenda as distributed to the membership, with the subject of U-Tube videos, a woman's jacket and uniforms in general added. Motion was approved.

Items on the Consent Calendar (minutes, financial statement & payment of bills), with Secretary Treasurer Dana Nelson reporting a balance of \$433.30 in the checking account, as follows:

- 7/17/24 Balance Forward from March meeting: \$ 433.30
- 9/25/24 Deposit for fees received from official registrations: \$ 340.00
- 12/2/24: Deposit for contribution for the SD Sports Council: \$1,000.00
- 3/11/25: Expenses paid to Larry Stevens for snacks at SDHSAA Clinic: \$ 33.49
- 3/19/25: Balance \$1,739.81

Nelson noted that additional funds should be coming for additional officials registering, potentially \$90.00.

Tony Waterman moved, Tim Fjelstad seconded approval of the consent items, motion carried.

President Casper reported that mileage for traveling clinicians would be submitted and paid by Terry Duffy with the South Dakota Sports Council, and reimbursement for snacks/water for the clinic would come from SDCCTFOA, and should be sent to Dana Nelson.

OLD BUSINESS

President Casper asked for feedback on whether the association was providing value for members and what we could do to improve or increase value. Tim Fjelstad offered that we survey to determine if there are schools offering some kind of officiating classes, and work with them to increase the involvement of additional potential officials. Perhaps part of that would be

to mentor some of those students to help at meets and perhaps get them into officiating. Dana Nelson reported that at one time Cory Aadland at Mitchell was developing a curriculum for sports officiating, including track and field, and offering it at DWU. Elk Point-Jefferson high school also had a high school officiating class. Kent Hansen offered that Aberdeen Central offers an officiating class, and perhaps Northern State also offers a class. Dana Nelson was assigned to contact Aadland about the curriculum at DWU.

Kevin Nelson offered that the association should be involved in developing skills to treat athletes and coaches with respect, and requested that any thoughts or programs for developing value added ideas be forward to him for further consideration/development.

Discussion was opened as to how the organization proceeds after 2026, which is when all terms of office (President, President-Elect, Secretary/Treasurer and all Regional Representatives) expire. There was general discussion about creating 1, 2 and 3 year terms which would rotate so that there was continuity for the organization. Steve Charron recommended that such be incorporated into the Constitution. It was also suggested that regional representatives should be elected, if there was multiple interest for the position within the regions. These items may be further developed and if a change to the Constitution is required, it could be acted upon at the next meeting, prior to the existing terms expiring.

President Casper then discussed the various track and field links on the SDHSAA website, including the association's Constitution, agendas for meetings, minutes from minutes, current and previous newsletters, Casper clarifications, as well as extensive information for meet directors to organize a meet, and guidelines for field event officials running the various field events. He offered that additional links should be added for U-Tube videos on setting up and running field events, and noted that some of those type of resources already exist, such as a video on the high jump developed by the Iowa Association of Track Officials and narrated by officials who work the Drake Relays.

Further research will be conducted to find additional videos, or develop such videos for improving the management of track and field meets and events, and especially the field events. It was noted that more emphasis has always been placed on starting, but that the role of the referee and field event officials needs to be improved. Anyone finding such videos should share that information with President Casper or Secretary/Treasurer Dana Nelson. President Casper was going to follow up with SDHSAA on this topic.

Official's recognition was next on the agenda. President Casper noted that SDHSAA already recognizes years of service and NFOA Official of the Year, however the concept of a Hall of Fame was opened, and President Casper referred the membership to the HOF document that Jim Aberle developed as a starting point. As President Casper noted, the document outlined a process generally used by other HOFs, and did not need to be radically changed.

Discussion followed on selection criteria and the number of officials who could be admitted annually, and whether four was the appropriate number. Ideas on initially admitted a larger

number of “no brainer” type officials who have historically contributed greatly. It was also suggested that an initial selection nominating committee could be expanded by adding HOF members, who would protect the integrity of the HOF.

Kevin Nelson offered considerable input on the selection process/criteria, and noted he has been involved with other organizations HOF efforts. Terry Sudrla provided selection criteria and other information used by USATF, and offered to serve as a resource to the committee. Harry Weller, Kadoka offered a \$500 donation to facilitate the development of the HOF.

Discussion moved to the selection of a five-member selection committee, and President Casper appointed the following members to that committee:

- Kevin Nelson, Sioux Falls
- Jim Aberle, Lead
- Tina Baum, Huron
- Harry Weller, Kadoka
- Keith Kusler, Sioux Falls (formerly of Aberdeen)

President Casper further requested Kevin Nelson serve as the chairman of the committee.

Jared Vasquez moved, JD Evans second the approval of the appointments, the motion passed.

Discussion was opened on fees. President Casper restated much of the document that was adopted by the association and provided to SDHSAA. SDHSAA further provided this document to Athletic Directors in the information packet that they send out annually. Dana Nelson noted that the adoption of the document and sharing it with ADs is one of the already major accomplishments of the association, and is providing benefit to the membership. Many ADs are using that document, and appreciate the information.

President Casper noted that our membership should try to abide by the document, and not undercut each other. He did note that no school is bound by the document, nor are we as officials bound by the document. Officials are independent contractors. However, the document has provided far more consistency to track and field fees.

President Casper referred to the state track and field officials selection process web site, which provides for SDHSAA to select officials with no specific criteria. No discussion followed.

Uniform discussion followed with information provided on the approval of a woman’s jacket, which Tina Baum found. It has now been approved by the SDHSAA. There was additional discussion on securing SDHSAA approved uniforms, as now it only seems to be available from Dakota Sports in Sioux Falls and Harve’s Sports in Mitchell. Discussion continued on how we could expand the availability. Kevin Nelson shared that many organizations purchase their logo identified clothing from an on-line store which has the logo and stitches or embosses the logo on clothing and then mails it to purchasers. This would expand availability. The items considered were the jacket, white shirt and orange hat.

Discussion on the idea of bulk purchase of orange stocking caps, which would be a one size fits all purchase, and not as risky as doing shirts jackets, etc. Dana Nelson noted that Iowa has done that with hats, and he agreed to follow up with that association to learn how/where they secured those caps.

We also discussed the length of the current coat, and that it was an issue for different sized officials. The idea of the on-line store may be the solution, as that store could have tall sizes.

There was no discussion or questions on the 2025 track and field rules, other than marking the 50 meters for recall in races. With staggers, 50 meters occurs at different locations, rather than a single break line for 100 meters. Dana Nelson again advocated for the waterfall start, which had some level of support and would allow for a single line to determine the 50 meters.

Further discussion occurred on decisions by a meet referee to not hold an event, noting if the venue was not safe, the event should be cancelled. However, shortcomings of the facility, such as sand in the LJ/TJ pit should be reported to SDHSAA which would follow up with the schools.

Dana Nelson noted and President Casper agreed perhaps marks attained in pits without sufficient sand should not be allowed.

The use of flags for field events, for fair/foul and for notifying athletes of time limits should be encouraged, but that verbal warnings were probably more the norm.

Availability of ammunition was discussed, noting that 32 caliber shells were running at least \$60/box, and as high as \$80/box for 50 shells. Al Koppinger reported that he has used 22 caliber shells, which is sufficient to trigger the sensor. He also noted that he and Randy Thomas are using 209 primers, which are also sufficiently loud and trigger the sensor—and they are also much cheaper. A number of officials reported they have gone to 9mm pistols. President Casper noted that black smoke is no longer required/needed for FAT timing, however for middle school meets, black smoke may still be needed.

President Casper asked if a specific meet director document was needed for ADs to set up and manage a meet. He asked if there was a volunteer to create such a document. Hearing no volunteers, it was determined that at this time the document was not needed.

Short reports were offered on the 2025 track and field clinics. All of the reports indicated that the clinics were good, with good interaction and involvement of the officials in attendance. It was noted that we would like to see more ADs/coaches at the clinics, and it was noted that some years back when rules meetings were conducted live, it was a positive to have coaches and officials at the same meetings. The following officials reported on the 2025 clinics:

- Yankton: 13 officials, 1 coach (2 of the officials are also ADs) JD Evans, Tony Waterman and Dana Nelson
- Aberdeen: 7 officials, 6 coaches, Tim Casper and Robert Kwasniewski
- Rapid City: 16 officials, 8 coaches, 1 meet worker, Larry Stevens

- Murdo: 6 officials, 3 coaches, 1 AD, Dana Nelson
- Huron: 16 officials, 2 coaches, Steve Charron and Tim Casper

Larry Stevens asked if it was possible for regional representatives to have a list of ADs and coaches in their area to make an effort to encourage those individuals to attend clinics. Dana said it was possible and he would work on it, but also noted that ADs and coaches were invited.

NEW BUSINESS

2026 clinics are tentatively set for Mitchell, Watertown, Rapid City and Pierre.

There are now 21 officials who require a clinic next season. Dana Nelson said he would provide regional representatives with a list of officials in their area.

Discussion was held on equipment needed and equipment available, noting that retiring officials may want to sell pistols, and new officials are looking for such. Equipment availability and needed should be sent to Dana Nelson who will then forward the request to all officials and also put it in the newsletter.

As far as a clearing house for schedules, President Casper referred the membership to the SDHSAA sanctioned meet list.

Members were encouraged to recruit potential officials and take them to meets, and use the mentor form to get them paid. It may be possible to alert the school you are bringing a new official along, and perhaps that school will pay them a modest amount to match the mentor fee of \$50. To secure the mentor fee, fill out the form and send it to Steve Charron.

Under public comments, hurdle spacing was discussed, and President Casper is encouraging schools who repaint their tracks to include both hurdle marks for girls—the NFHS and SDHSAA exception distance. President Casper has proposed to the track and field advisory committee to return to the NFHS distance between hurdles, but to date no change has been forwarded. Casper estimated that it would take 2 to 4 years for it to happen.

There being no further business, Harry Weller moved and Tom Parquet seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Nelson

Secretary/Treasurer

