UNITED STATES JUDO FEDERATION, INC.

Board of Directors

Friday, May 8, 2026

Honolulu, Hawaii

Meeting Minutes

Registration of Delegates

25 YDKs: 17 voting eligible, 16 Yudanshakais represented

16 – voting: 50th State, Central Coast, Daiheigen, Florida State, Hawaii, Hokka, Hudson, Intermountain, Konan, Nanka, Niagara, Northwest, Pacific Southwest, San Joaquin, Shufu

56 max votes:

41 – votes represented, quorum met

15– votes unclaimed

Delegates:

Mitchell Palacio/Chairperson Robert Brink/50th State Edward Hanashiro/50th State
Gene Nakashima/50th State Rolann Regidor/50th State Serena Gutridge/Central Coast
Davin Tillman/Central Coast Ann Berends/Chicago Brent Goodall/Daiheigen
Dr. David Matsumoto/Daiheigen Alexander Campo/Florida State Aaron Castillo/Hawaii
Scott Morifuji/Hawaii Lauren Yoshida/Hawaii Dr. Harvey Takeda/Kokka
Matsuo Takeda/Hokka Robin Rosenthal/Hudson Rome Acopan, Jr./Intermountain
Bret Gertje/Intermountain Noble Morinaka/Intermountain Christopher Reid/Konan
Thomas Sheehan/Konan Hayward Nishioka/Nanka Janet Johnson/Niagara
Rod Conduragis/Northwest Krista Steele/Northwest Calvin Terada/Northwest
William Caldwell/Pacific SW Julia Tsutsui/San Joaquin Dr. Larry Tsutsui/San Joaquin
Kevin Tamai/Shufu

Observers:

Blane Bautista, Degrate, Chad Fujiyoshi, Dr. Steven Isono, Karla Kurokawa, Dr. Diba Mani, Eiko Shepherd, Hannah Tsutsui, Terri Waibel, Robert Fukuda

I. CALL TO ORDER, SEATING OF DELEGATES @ 13:14 pm

A. Welcome by the Chairperson

II. MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED SINCE OUR LAST MEETING

A. Senator Ben Campbell
B. Neil Simon
C. Humberto Becerra

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A. Additions/Corrections to Agenda
B. Invite Dr. Steve Isono, USOPC Chief Medical Officer to address the United States Judo Federation Board of Directors regarding matters related to medical liability, athlete safety,

risk management, and current best practices within amateur and high-performance sport environments.

C. **Motion**: To direct the USJF Medical Committee to review the current COVID-related mandate(s) and provide recommendations to the Executive Committee regarding the potential modification or removal of such mandate(s).

i. **Rationale**: To ensure that all COVID-related mandate(s) are evaluated based on current medical guidance, athlete safety considerations, public health recommendations, and the best interests of the organization. The review by the USJF Medical Committee will provide the Executive committee with informed, professional recommendations.

D. **Motion (2nd Reading):** To purchase banners (or similar product) to reflect the awards given at the USJF Nationals by the junior Youth and Development Committee, through suspension of the bylaws which require awards given by the committee. Current development funds for awards will be used for these banners.

i. **Rationale:** Providing banners for photographic opportunities will allow more of our members to share in the experience of our awards and values of USJF.

E. **Motion:** To change the BoD voting structure to benefit smaller yudanshakais.

F. **Election:** Promotion Chair

i. **Chair**

ii. **Vice Chair**

iii. **Secretary**

G. **Delete Motion:** Allocation of Certification Program Funds

H. **Motion:** Adopt USJF Sr. Rank Matrix

I. **Motion:** To accept Agenda. Motion: Takada, Second: Tamai. Motion Passed

IV. MINUTES FOR REVIEW & APPROVAL

A. Minutes:

i. February 2026

ii. November 2025

B. **Motion:** To approve minutes. Motion: Tamai, Second: Robin. Motion Passed

V. REPORTS

A. President – Mitchell Palacio

i. Big Island Visit

- Clinics in Kona and Hilo
- Entourage: Nishioka, Palacio, Kindelberger, Morinaka, Reid, Acopan Jr. Tamai, Isono, Washburn

ii. 2026 High Performance Workshop

- Identify and develop USJF Coaches
- Next generation of leaders
- High Performance Coach Workshop
  - Identify and develop USJF Coaches
    - 18 Late 30's age group
  - Focus on Our Next Generation of Leaders
    - 40's + age group
- Smoothcomp Event Management Certification – pending
  - 12 individuals
  - Add to list of certifications being offered
  - National Tournament Committee
    - USJF Summer Nationals
    - USJF Regional Kata Championships

iii. USA Judo Collaboration

- Update
- Partnership progressing well. Moving forward with the written agreement
- USA Judo High Performance Director: Ed Liddie
- International Coaching Opportunities
  - USJF Coach Committee Chair: Hanna Tsutsui
- Concern: Leadership instability at USA Judo due to bylaw rewrites and USOPC oversight
- USA Judo Coach Certification: Being created by Neil Adams. Explore the reciprocity upon USA Judo Coach Certification release 2027.
  - We will adapt once this is released
- IJF Rank Standardization Impact
  - USJA rank issues
  - Standardize rank requirements throughout the world.
  - USA Judo impact loss of $75,000 - $50,000 a year.

iv. Fall Meeting: 2026

- Strategic Planning
  - Thursday, Strategic Planning - Tentative
  - Friday, Committee Meetings - Tentative
  - Saturday, BoE and BoD meetings - Tentative
- General Discussion: Develop consistency of Fall meeting location

v. Committee Appointment

- Kata Committee Chair – Karen Nagai

- Coach Committee
  - Joey Nawa: Nanka
  - Wayne Tsunoda: Shufu
- HoF Committee
  - Karen Nagai: Northwest
  - Pedro Kolychikine: Florida
  - Larry Tsutsui: San Joaquin
  - Dekin Hom – Admin Assistant: HoF/LAA
- Medical Committee: Chair
  - Dr. Steve Isono, MD

vi. Congratulations: Hector Estevez
- USA Judo Referee Commission Chair

vii. USJF Summer National Bids
- Fall meeting: Bid package approval
- Revisiting our USJF Summer National Bid package

B. 1st Vice President: Josh Kindelberger

i. Development
- There have been some developments in Kata and Special Needs.
- Special Needs has been split into two committees under the Teacher Development Committee
- We have already made our Kata Tournaments as points tournaments
- Two task forces were created to re-evaluate judging requirements
- The kata tournaments will also be used to develop kata judges

ii. Internship Program
- Hannah and Julia Tsutsui
- Mission: To encourage and foster youth leadership and development in the judo community.
- Purpose
  - Cultivate relationships
  - Provide opportunities for service projects and judo development through continued education and volunteering
  - Judo teacher/sensei/coach pipeline
  - Formalize contributions of youth leaders to our community
  - High school/Middle school judoka retention
  - Develop future dojo leaders (beyond sensei kids)
- Interns can help
  - Supervision: Interns can help with kids class
  - Increase membership: Interns can help spread the word with social media, taking/posting pics, building flyers, highlight videos, etc.

- Retention; Interns have a greater purpose, they become friends, little ones look forward to becoming interns.

iii. Coach Development – International Coaching Opportunity
- Hannah Tsutsui – Chair
- We have two roster spots and will have the two coaches present in Las Vegas

C. 2nd Vice President: Chase Morinaka

i. Update
- We are all volunteers and we are easy to burn out
  - Burn out has meant that we have little succession planning, limited institutional knowledge
  - We lack communication
- Reviewing by-law updates

ii. Communications and Marketing
- Identify organization needs
  - Membership database
  - Better communication across committees
  - Better succession planning across committees
- Better communication system
- Better Marketing Participation for Sanctioned Events
- Socials
  - Continue to transferring control of old and creating new
- Improve Communication
  - Organizational Tree and Hierarchy
  - Understanding committee communication systems
  - Succession planning for next 2nd VP & Marketing Chair
  - Training
    - Onboarding
    - Tech Support
- Focused Online Training

D. Secretary: Chris Reid

i. Technology & Operations
- The online Tournament Templates are being updated.
- Our Virtual Server is a little outdated and needs to be updated.
  - Dan Isreal is working on this
- The new Sanction@usjf.com is up and working

ii. Scholarships and Grants
- We have identified all of the scholarships and grants
- We are working on a standard application that will go to the different committees for approval
- A web page for the website with links to all of the scholarships and grants is in the works

iii. Online Sanctioning Process
- Ben Yagi has already made an initial version of the system
- We are working with Dan Isreal to get it connected to the data base to help automate some of the checks normally done by the national office
- Next is to have a meeting with Robert and Terri to get input and buy-in on what is being worked on

E. Financial Report
i. Rome Acopan Jr. Treasurer
ii. Update: Fiscal Year 2026
- Our financial health is secure, and our house is in order

iii. Moving toward Calendar year
- 2026 Fiscal Year: September 1, 2025 – December 31, 2026

F. Special Report
i. Dr. Steve Isono, USOPC Chief Medical Officer
- Catastrophic injuries do occur.
- For those putting on tournaments and events, you have to be proactive and protected
- You need an Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

G. Executive Director
i. Membership as of the 31st of March 8707 this year, down about 55 members since last year
ii. USA Judo Update & Summer Nationals
- Summer Nationals will be a USA Judo points event

iii. Photos & recording at events
- There was a concern of someone recording minors at tournaments using Meta Rayban glasses as the recordings are fed into the Meta AI system.
- There were no complaints about regular photo and video

iv. Transgender Policy
- We are looking at adopting the USA Judo policy which had come from the USOPC policy
- The medical committee has recommended that we adopt the USA Judo Transgender policy word for word.
- USA Judo has agreed to share language
- Robin has request that Biological Males do not compete against biological females
- Per the USA Judo, “Participants over the age of 10 must enter the gender category which reflects the sex assigned to that individual at birth.”

v. Fiscal to Calendar Year Change
vi. NO update
- We continue to have turnovers in staff

- We have two new staff members that we are hopeful will stay

H. Broad of Examiners
   i. Promotion Committee – Kevin Tamai, Chair
      - We promoted 12 people going through
      - Motion for Yodan and higher have a teacher certification. This was tabled.
      - Talked about IJF Rank Requirement
   ii. Takeda – Chair
      - Special Needs committee has been split into two committees
      - Proposal for small YDK is being put forward as a motion for the BoD with an amendment of it being for 4 years to see its impact
   iii. **Motion to approve report.** Motion: Brink, Second: Johnson, Motion Passed

I. Hall of Fame and Lifetime Achievement
   i. Robert Brink, acting chairperson
      - Kevin Tamai - new member
      - Pedro Kolychikine – new member
      - Dr. Larry Tsutsui – new member
      - Karen Nagie – new member
      - Dekin Hom – Administrator
   ii. Three new inductees for LAA
   iii. Six new inductees for HoF

VI. BOARD RATIFICATION OF ACTIONS OF THE CORPORATION SINCE PREVIOUS MEETING

A. Accept all reports, actions and appointments.
   i. Motion: Robin, Second: Davin, Motion Passed

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. **2nd Reading Motion:** Create a USJF Education Membership at a discounted rate of 50% off the cost of an annual membership that shall apply only to youth participating in an accredited school program, such as school class, school sport or school club.
   i. The range of educational programs may range from elementary, middle school, high school, college and university. The person applying for the USJF Educational Membership must attend the school as a student and be a member of a recognized USJF charter club connected to the school for the membership discount to be available.
   ii. A student is defined as a person who is actively enrolled in classes at the participating school.
      - (Josh Kindelberger, 1st Vice President)
   iii. Motion: Brink, Second: Robin, Motion Passed

B. **2nd Reading Motion:** To purchase banners (or similar product) to reflect the awards given at the USJF Nationals by the Junior Youth and Development Committee, through suspension of the bylaws which require awards given by the committee. Current development funds for awards will be used for these banners.
   i. **Rationale:** Providing banners for photographic opportunities will allow more of our members to share in the experience of our awards and values of USJF.

ii. Motion: Brink, Second: Robin, Motion Passed

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. **General Discussion:** Review the potential benefits and concerns associated with allowing Bantam Division 1–2–3 athletes (ages 5–7) to compete in USJF Summer Nationals, for the purpose of evaluating future policy direction.
   i. Chuck Medani: American Academy of Pediatrics says that children this age cant understand the difference between win/lossing vs their own worth.
   ii. USA Judo does have rosters for this age group in their divisions

B. **General Discussion:** Align our Bi-annual corporate meetings with USA Judo meeting schedule
   i. Fall Meeting: Presidents Cup Tournament
   ii. Spring Meeting: USA Sr. Nationals
   iii. What kind of accommodations will be made for those that cant take weekdays off since the tournament will be on Saturday.
   iv. Zoom does help, but if you are working or traveling, this can be an issue on the weekday.

C. **Motion**: In USJF By-Laws Article VI. Committees. Section 1. E. 4 Composition.: Add the immediate past President as a voting member on the Executive Committee.
   i. **Rationale:** Adding the immediate past president to the executive committee will provide continuity and experience from one administration to the next with on-going issues with Judo in the United States. (Miki Takemori, Shufu - President)

   ii. Motion: Brink, Second: Matsumoto, Motion Passed

D. **Motion**: To direct the USJF Medical Committee to review the current COVID-related mandate(s) and provide recommendations to the Executive Committee regarding the potential modification or removal of such mandate(s).
   i. **Rationale**: To ensure that all COVID-related mandate(s) are evaluated based on current medical guidance, athlete safety considerations, public health recommendations, and the best interests of the organization. The review by the USJF Medical Committee will provide the Executive committee with informed, professional recommendations. (Exco)

   ii. Motion: Brink, Second: Matsumoto, Motion Passed

E. **1st Reading:** Motion to change the BoD voting structure to benefit smaller Yudanshakais.

   The USJF Board of Directors voting structure shall be amended to provide greater representation and voting equity for smaller Yudanshakais, with the purpose of ensuring broader participation and a more balanced voice in the governance and decision-making processes of the United States Judo Federation.

   Currently the BOD structure states that a yudanshakai with 50-99 members have 0 votes. This proposal would give them 1 vote and increase all other yudanshakai votes by 1 to compensate. So yudanshakais with 100-199 members would go up to 2 votes (currently at 1 vote), 200-349 members get 3 votes (currently at 2), etc. (see pages 12-13 in the bylaws). The number of delegates and alternates would not change.

Essentially these long standing Yudanshakai who have had votes in the past but do not anymore would regain some influence and be encouraged to participate at the national level. There are 3 Yudanshakai with 50-99 members that would benefit from this motion:
Chicago (97)
Chuka (57)
Niagara (63)

If approved, this would take effect at the Spring 2027 USJF meetings; provided however this amendment will expire 4 years from the starting date in order to review if there has been increased representation by the smaller Yudanshakai at the national meetings.

i. Motion: Brink, Second: Matsumoto, Motion Passed

F. **Motion:** Adopt USJF Sr. Rank Matrix.
   i. Motion: Davon, Second: Alex, Motion Passed

G. **Motion:** To suspend the bylaw provisions governing the election process for this cycle and proceed with the election of the current slate of officers, specifically the positions of President Palacio, 1st Vice President Kindelberger, 2nd Vice President Morinaka, Secretary Reid, and Treasurer Acopan Jr. (Palacio, President)
   i. **Rationale:** *Organizational Stability and Continuity*
      - Retaining the current slate of officers will preserve momentum on several important ongoing initiatives, including collaboration with USA Judo, the transition of our National Office, the continued development of our Strategic Plan, and the successful integration of our emerging leadership group.

   ii. Motion: Brink, Second: Tsutsui, Motion Passed

H. Election of Board of Director Officers
   - President
      - Nomiation Palacio – Brink
      - Motion Passed
   - 1st Vice President
      - Nomination Kindelberger – Alex
      - Motion Passed
   - 2nd Vice President
      - Nomination Morinaka – Brink
      - Motion Passed
   - Secretary
      - Nomination Reid – Bret
      - Motion Passed
   - Treasurer
      - Nomination Acopan – Robin
      - Motion Passed

I. Election of Board of Examiners – Chairperson, Vice Chair and Secretary per the BoE members
   - Election of Chair
      - ~~Nomination Janet Johnson – Sheehan~~
      - Nomination Mac Takeda – Robin
      - Motion: Matsumoto, Second: Brink, Motion Passed
   - Election of Vice Chair
      - Nomination Janet Johnson – Tamai
      - Motion: Matsumoto, Second: Brink, Motion Passed
   - Election of Secretary
      - Nomination Nakatsu – Mac
      - Nomination Tsutsui – Tamai

- Tsutsui won vote

J. Election of Endowment Trustees

i. <u>2026 Endowment Fund Trustee Elections – 2 year term</u>

- 2024-2026 up for election, 2-year term, Spring 2026-2028
- Vacant (was Salvador Cruz) – Gaiv Tata
- Edward Hanashiro
- Bryan Matsuoka

- Motion: Brink, Second: Matsumoto, Motion Passed

ii. FYI: 2024-2028 4-year term, continuing thru Spring 2028

- Thomas Sheehan
- D. Eric Spears

K. Promotion Committee

i. 50th
ii. Daiheigan
iii. Hawaii
iv. Nanka
v. Northwest
vi. Shufu
vii. Cenco
viii. San Joaquin
ix. Tom Sheehan
x. Josh Kindelberger
xi. Janet Johnson
xii. Eiko Shephard
xiii. Anthony Cantanese – not voted in
xiv. Mac Takeda

L. Future Spring & Fall Meeting Location

i. Yudanshakais interested in having the Spring or Fall meetings

- Fall 2026 - Las Vegas, Nevada
- Spring 2027 – Boise, Idaho

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. USJF Summer Nationals

i. City College of San Francisco, Ca. – July 11-12, 2026
ii. USA Judo Point Event
iii. Smoothcomp

B. Saturday, Oahu Interscholastic State Championship

X. ADJOURNMENT – Motion: Robin, Second: Rod – Motion Passed @ 6:19 pm

XI. REMINDERS

A. All committee members and other interested USJF members are welcome to attend USJF committee and board meetings. USJF meetings are open. Committee Chairpersons and Yudanshakai Presidents should, as a matter of course, routinely communicate all USJF meeting schedules and related National Office information/notices to all dojos.

B. In accordance with the USJF by-laws, the deadline for member agenda item requests is 45 days prior to the meeting.