

USATF/RRTC Meeting Minutes

Orlando, Florida

December 7, 2024

Meeting called to order

David Katz introduced himself as the Chair of the RRTC. Before beginning discussion of RRTC topics David introduced Krystal Abbott from USATF Legal Affairs.

Conflict of interest forms

Krystal Abbott from USATF Legal Affairs reminder the officers of the RRTC that Conflict of Interest forms must be completed by January 1, 2025. The forms this year can be completed online at the USATF website. If you conflict of interest situation changes during the year, you should go back onto the USATF website to make any changes necessary to your Conflict of Interest form.

Around the room introductions

Amy Begley
Andy Carr
Michael Crowley
Ryan Elshernd
Greg Hipp
David Katz
Justin Kuo
Mark Neal
Bill Orr
Jane Parks
Michael Scott
Doug Thurston
Steve Vaitones



Meeting Minutes Approval

The minutes from the 2023 meeting were approved.

Registrar report – Jane Parks/Justin Kuo

1041 new courses were certified in 2024 as of the end of November. 679 of those were in the East Region and 361 were in the West Region. In addition to the new course certifications there were 286 other certifications in 2024 that included mostly adjustment measurements of existing courses, but also some error corrections, etc. All of these numbers are similar to what we saw in 2023.

It should be noted that 36% of all the certifications in 2024 were also World Athletics certified.

The most active certifiers were Justin Kuo, Woody Cornell, Jane Parks, Bob Thurston, Jack Warbler, and Logan Brugess.

The most active measurers were Matt Slocum, Doug Thurston, and Vince Adams.

The details of all the numbers can be found at the following link.

[2024 RRTC Measurement Statistics](#)

West Vice Chair Report – Jane Parks

In 2024, no new State Certifiers were appointed.

In 2024, no new World Athletics (WA) Grade A or B measurers were appointed.

East Vice Chair Report – Justin Kuo

In 2024, 2 new State Certifiers were appointed:

Maine – Justin Kuo

New Hampshire – Justin Kuo

In 2024, James Gusmer was appointed as a World Athletics “B” measurer.

Ranking Points – David Katz

David mentioned that when a World Athletics “A” or “B” measures a course in the US, that certification application will automatically be sent on for review by him so that it can become World Athletics certified as well as USATF certified. This is important because unless the course is World Athletics certified it cannot be used by athletes to score ranking points. In addition to having their course be World Athletics certified, and event must also be on the World Athletics Calendar of Events. When a race director applies for a sanction they must check the box to request there their event be included on the World Athletics Calendar of Events. Ranking points can be scored by an athlete at an event on if the event is on the World Athletics Calendar of Events.

All of this is important because World Athletics is moving towards a situation where 70% of athletes will qualify for championships through the ranking point system.

Steve Vaitones is going to produce a document explaining how to navigate through the online World Athletics sanctioning process. This will be put on the RRTC website.

Mark Neal asked if ranking points are used to select US team members for events other than the Olympics and the World Championships. **Greg Hipp??** answered that most US team positions for the Half Marathon, 5k, and Mile world championships are based on finish position at the US Championships for those events. But if some athletes decline to go to those world championships, ranking points are used to choose their replacements. David also mentioned that some athlete's sponsorships are based on their ranking position. Mark asked if a document could be supplied that details how the rankings system is used to help select US team members. David said Amy Begley should be able to produce that.

Webmaster Report – Mark Neal

A Google Group of USATF/RRTC measurers was created in 2023 to provide a mechanism for RRTC leadership to send out email messages with important and helpful information to all course measurers. This Google Group distribution continued to be used, with 3 email messages sent in 2023 and 1 in 2024. It is understood that many people do not want to be overloaded with communications, so these messages will continue to be sent infrequently.

There was no update to the Procedures Manual in 2024, but there is a small update planned for early in 2025.

There has been very little activity on the Measurement Forum in 2024. Most course measurement discussion by measurers has occurred on the Course Measurement Facebook page, which was started a couple years ago. We should consider ending the Measurement Forum after archiving any important information on that platform.

Validations Report – Andy Carr

The only course we had in 2024 that required a verification measurement was the Jed Smith Ultra 50-mile course in Sacramento, CA, where a Men's 55-59 age group record was set. This course was measured 10 years ago, so it was decided that we need to have a verification measurement.

The question was asked about the status of the course after the verification measurement. Is the course now certified for another 10 years. It was explained that the rule for measurement of an expired course is that a single measurement can be made, and if that measurement gives a course length that is within 0.8% of the advertised distance of the course, then the course can be re-certified for another 10 years. If the measurement is short of the advertised distance (but not more than 0.8% short) the course must be lengthened to be the advertised length. If the single measurement gives a length that is not within 0.8% of the advertised length, then a second measurement must be performed for re-certification.

Race Event Liaison – Amy Begley

Amy explained that one of her jobs is to interface with race events, athletes, and other stakeholders to stress the importance of getting World Athletics certification and getting their

events on the World Athletics event calendar. It is necessary to educate all parties on the importance of not missing opportunities for athletes to score World Athletics ranking points.

Budget – David Katz

David said that the RRTC yearly budget is quite small. It includes \$4000 for travel reimbursement for the annual meeting, \$2000 for online portal maintenance, \$3000 for upgrades to the online portal, and a few thousand dollars for verifications. But we used very little of that verification budget because we are not requiring verification measurements in most cases.

David also mentioned that all expense reports should be sent to him with a cc to Amy Begley.

USATF Mentoring Program – Amy Begley & David Katz

Amy said there is a need to get new measurers, and especially new World Athletics “A” and “B” measurers. She suggested that one possible source of new young measurers might be NCAA Division 2 and Division 3 athletes. They are often quite passionate about the sport and many would like to stay involved after their college careers are over.

David suggested that a very good source of new measurers would be timing companies. There are a lot more people involved with timing races than there are in measuring them. If timing companies could offer USATF certification as part of their race timing and/or race directing package, it might be attractive to them. David said he mentioned this on a race timers Facebook group and he got 25 emails asking for more information.

Another thing David suggested is that all of us, especially “A” and “B” measurers, should bring along a new measurer the next time we measure a course.

Unpaved Courses – David Katz

David said that many ultra races are run on courses that are partially or completely unpaved. Mark mentioned that the current rule for unpaved courses is that any surface that comprises more than 10% of the course must be measured using a calibration done on a similar surface. David suggested that we take another look at this requirement. We should all layout and measure a calibration course on an unpaved surface, and then do calibration rides on that course and also on a paved calibration course. Then we can see how much difference we see between those two calibrations.

Jane mentioned that one thing she has seen with unpaved road courses is that they are sometimes a one-time use, because of the way they are set up with temporary barriers defining turns. Unfortunately, there is nowhere on the certificate where it can be noted that the course is one-time use, so the registrar must label the course as “unusable” after the event takes place.

Verification of records set outside an athlete’s home country – David Katz

David said this can be a problem because different countries have different course requirements for their national records. For example, an American Open record requires that the course be pre-verified by two World Athletics measurers, with at least one being an “A,” or post-verified

by a World Athletics measurer. World Athletics events require only that the course is measured by a World Athletics measurer. So if an American sets an Open record in an event outside the US, the course may not be verified to US standards. This issue could have come up in Valencia, where American records were set. But fortunately the course had been pre-verified to US standards.

Online portal issues – David Katz

Since there is much to discuss on this topic, David suggested a small sub-group meet after the formal meeting so it can be discussed in detail.

Officer term limits and elections – David Katz

All USATF committees are required to hold elections periodically and term limits apply for all officers. However, RRTC is a Council, and its Chair is appointed by the President of USATF. In addition, the Chair of RRTC has the authority to appoint the RRTC executive committee. There is a lot of discussion currently about elections and term limits, but the current situation of RRTC being an appointed board will remain unchanged through 2028.

Road Mile – David Katz

A situation arose in Europe where they measured a Mile course and used 1609 meters (rather than 1609.344 meters) as the distance of a Mile. A European record was set on the course, and fortunately, because of the short course prevention factor, the record was still ratified.

David said this happened because European measurers, and actually most of the world, is not familiar with Imperial units. For this reason, if you are measuring a course for international competition, you should do all the measurements in metric to avoid confusion. This is true even for Mile events.

Map Making – David Katz

David would like to hold instructional zoom sessions on map making.

Amy interjected that USATF Marketing would like us to start using the new USATF logo. David said if they will send us the new logo we can work with the online portal developers to incorporate it on future maps.

Pegasus Measuring System – David Katz

We may be pressured in the future to accept measurements made by new technologies like the Pegasus system. The Pegasus system uses a combination of different technologies including GPS and Lidar to measure road running courses. It was used to measure the course for the Ineos 1:59 Challenge, and it was within 3 meters of Hugh Jones calibrated bicycle measurement. However it is a very expensive system and apparently does not work in tunnels.

World Road Championships in San Diego – David Katz

The World Road Championships will be held in San Diego on September 26-28, 2025. There will be Half Marathon, 5k, and Mile road races. This will be a good opportunity for USATF, including the RRTC, to be on the world stage.

Amy said that it might be possible for the USATF to shift money used for travel to the Annual meeting to fund travel for the RRTC executive committee to go to San Diego and have their executive meeting there, while also helping to set up and marshal the courses.

Los Angeles Olympics 2028 – David Katz

David said that right now very little is known about the Marathon at the 2028 games. They are just now in the process of hiring top level coordinators for all the sports.

Doug asked what is known about the Marathon Trials. Amy said that her RFK needs to go out in February. It's possible that the Marathon Trials will be on the Olympic Marathon course if LA can and is willing to do that. If that's the case it's likely the athletes would prefer that, so that's what would happen. But if not, an RFK needs to go out soon so other sites can bid.

David also mentioned that because Olympic qualifying standards for the Marathon have become so much faster that an Olympic Trials Marathon may not be relevant in determining what athletes will qualify and represent the US.

At this time a lot is still up in the air.

Los Angeles Olympics 1984 – David Katz

At the close of the meeting David showed a picture of the team that helped measure the 1984 Olympic Marathon in Los Angeles. The picture is shown below and includes many of the Founding Fathers of course measurement in the US.