

NCNCA Board Mini-Retreat

Saturday, December 16th

9:15am-12:00pm

Mother Tongue Cafe

308 41st St, Oakland, CA 94609

Pre-Work:

- Reading
- SWOT
- Goals on the board

Reading:

Two main themes: institutional understanding of NCNCA and what board leadership means and our notes and history with USAC. I want everyone to understand that our issues with USAC are not new and there has been turnover there in the last few years. Our conversations now may be more productive!

- Root around in the [NCNCA drive](#) and make sure you're familiar with what is there, use the search bar to look for key words. We have a lot of stuff, not very well organized, but it's there!
- If you haven't read it yet - our [constitution](#)
- For reference, our [NCNCA code of conduct](#)
- Read over [other](#) Local Association Takes
- Previous contract [responses](#) (Chuck Hodge is no longer with USAC, but we have been advocating for all these things since funding began to recede)
- Previous [discussion](#) about leaving USAC
- Research another US sport governing body. What can we learn from other sports?
 - USTA (tennis), USAS (swimming), USGA (golf), what else?
- Interested in diving into board governance best practices? Here are some of my favorite resources:
 - <https://idealsboard.com/board-member-responsibilities/>
 - <https://www.boardeffect.com/blog/basics-and-best-practices-for-nonprofit-board-governance/>

- And my favorite: Nonprofit [boards are weird.](#)

Strategy and Visioning (SWOT):

Strengths:

Why did you become a board member?
 What do you love about the NCNCA?
 What do you love about bike racing?
 What makes our community unique?
 What are a few things that our district does really well?
 What are our assets?

Weaknesses:

What have you consistently seen the NCNCA fail at?
 What do non-NCNCA races or districts do better than us?
 What do other adjacent sports (running, triathlon, etc.) do better?
 What is holding us back from doing more?
 Is our value proposition unclear?
 Unclear relationship between the all clubs in our area, what does the NCNCA provide to the clubs?

Opportunities:

What is our niche?
 What untapped markets could we partner with?
 If we had more time/money/resources, what could be?
 How can we recruit more volunteers to help see our vision out?
 Gravel gravel gravel
 Strong social media presence/ vlogger influencers in NorCal could help showcase the district.
 Partner with CA universities to host and perhaps run NCNCA races along with collegiate.
 Cross promotion with national series, Masters Cup, Valley of the Sun, Baker City, etc.
 Cross promote with Performance Bike (out of Chico), definitely Chico Stage Race and potentially other specific races in the district.
 Cross promote at USAC fun rides? Have a booth or some information on racing?

Threats:

Gravel gravel gravel
 Safety on the road from motor vehicles

Decreasing ridership - but why?

Decreasing lifespan of bike racer participation. Elites have always had a limited “up or out” lifespan. However, Lance bubble (48-54 y/o men) racers have begun to race less or not at all. (bringing racers back into the fold could also be an opportunity)

Finances and relatively fixed operational costs (can’t really spend any less right now)

Increasing costs for leisure activities in general

Increasing permitting / city costs to put on races

USAC/UCI current controversies and historical actions/inactions regarding inclusion

What else?

Decreasing club/team presence. Riders used to discover racing through a club, now there are more new racers without a team, team support, guidance, etc.

Goals on the Board:

What 2-3 discreet things would you like to accomplish or plans you would like to put in motion as a board member?

AGENDA

Time	Topic
9:15-10:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome• Ice breaker• Group share 1-3 goals as a BOD member• SWOT
10:15-11:00am	<p>Board Roles and Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Officers• Committee Membership and Ownership
11:00-11:30am	<p>Future planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What will the NCNCA look like in 5 years?• Strategic plan groundwork• Delegate roles for writing plan

Meeting notes:

Board Members Present:

Haley Nielsen, Jason Grefrath, Gabby Zacks, Lloyd Davies, Melissa Avery, Robert Leibold, Eran Gilat, John Marengo, Barry Padilla

Board Members Absent:

None

Official Start:

- 9:30 am
- Begin with ice breaker - first time this board has met in person

Board member goals:

- Haley: Get house in order. Coming into a board with reduced financial backing, burnout among members, no clear vision. Wants to be in a place where we're moving forward institutionally rather than individuals contributing ad-hoc. Enjoys facilitating and wants to grow in that area (and wants feedback). Create a culture where the board is a working board that is very productive.
- Eran: Ideas on how to grow - through juniors. Use NICA momentum to grow our org. How to get CX and mtb events to become USAC. Could try reduced fees for CX and xc mtb for 2024 to entice them. Maybe a 3-4 USAC race series in the area. Board needs to keep on what we're doing, but with 1-2 focused goals to grow.
- Jason: Previous boards were really good at stabilization - solving crises with embezzlement, etc. This burned out members. Excited that we have a passionate board to do things. Wants to make bike racing enticing to new people, keep the existing people interesting, and make sure the product (the races) are good. The product isn't good if the field is so small that everyone is a winner. He makes and socializes the calendar of events.
- Barry: Mostly a gravel/mtb person. Eyes open - no real pre-conception. Excited to give back, especially to kids. Happy to help with others' initiatives.
- John: Interested to learn why participation has decreased. Primary goal - keep organization solvent. But then we need to thrive, get more riders out. Are we fighting a downward trend, or do we need to adapt in a way to take advantage (and be a benefit to) gravel/mtb. Wants to learn what makes races viable. Hopeful about working with USAC CEO. Considers self an ambassador of the sport - eager to get new people involved.

- Gabby: Burned out by doing too much the last few years. Trying to find someone to run the women's series, continue supporting bringing underrepresented groups into cycling and advocating for equality in bike racing.
- Lloyd: Happy to support Eran with goals of bringing more events into USAC, but main goal will be treasurer role. Quickly realized that financial situation is dire, and this has been a long-standing issue. Right now the org is road focused, provides officials and equipment. Needs riders to fund this. With our contract with USAC, we committed in 2020 to only work with USAC. We need to sign an agreement with them that we're charging \$3 per rider/race fee, which will get us to a break-even point. Would like for *us* to create the LA agreement that we want them to sign off on, rather than the other way around.
- Melissa: Main focus: social media and juniors. If someone doesn't get in the habit of something (ie. bike racing) before they're 15, it's a lot harder for them to do it later in life. So she tries to get families and younger people into cycling. Wants to grow social media to attract the younger generation. Trying to cross-promote juniors racing with NICA, been fairly successful at getting NICA riders into track and road. Future long-term goal: create a bike-pool for youth and adults to reduce up-front costs.
- Robert: Been on the board for a while and gone through some *interesting* times. In the mid-90s there were district reps paid for by USCF that did permits, upgrades, etc. Then they fired all the district reps and centralized everything. California and other big districts left the federation for 2 years and did their own thing. Since then, everyone has gone back to USCF/USAC except Oregon, which is OBRA. Later we had a problem with the NCNCA treasurer stealing \$18k - huge legal ordeal, lasting several years. Eventually the board just gave up on getting the money back. Robert was constantly voting in the minority, thinking we should go after that. History seems to be repeating itself! Cycling in the US ebbs and flows - kinda goes along with Lemond/Lance timelines. Also noticed that recessions (with the exception of the pandemic) lead to more bike racing. There were a ton of juniors in the 90s - there was a whole juniors stage race! Juniors fed collegiate, etc. Issue on the board is having to recuse self from many votes because of having a promoter interest in the sport. Probably will do this for a few more years, then retire. No plans for anyone to take on Velo Promo once he retires. Doesn't enjoy putting on industrial park criteriums. Goal for this year: survive another year and hopefully grow the numbers.

Roles and Responsibilities, Committees, Point Contacts:

- Would like to focus on fewer things to be more effective - 3-4 committees
- Committees should be primarily non-board members
- Most people are not aware of what the committees are and how to get involved

- Anyone who is on a committee that may include contact w juniors needs SafeSport
- 2023 committees:
 - Officials
 - Scheduling promotion
 - Comp championships
 - Fundraising/membership
 - Rider support, safety mentoring
 - Women, EDI
 - District events and community outreach (awards and stuff)
 - Juniors
 - Marketing and communications
- Haley proposes for 2024:
 - Competition: Can likely combine all of the committees about events
 - Outreach: Combine fundraising/marketing/comms/membership - storytelling
 - Inclusion: Rider support/safety/mentoring/DEI
 - Juniors
 - Officials
 - Community events could be a group effort rather than a committee
- How to staff the committees:
 - 2 people from the board on each committee - an admin and a content driver. Work with melissa to create job description that goes out in newsletter/social media with signup link
 - Welcome meeting - committee comes up with its structure, meeting cadence, etc.
- Assigned committees:
 - Committees reach out to Melissa with social media stuff
 - She just needs the info, can create the content
 - Outreach: Haley and John
 - Juniors: Eran and Melissa
 - Competition: Jason and Robert
 - Inclusion: Barry and Gabby (get him up to speed), Robert happy to participate
 - Includes incident report system - those go to Helen Gilbert-Snyder
 - Officials: Ryan is stepping down, they'll name someone (Matt?)

ACTION:

- Each set of committee leads needs to decide on their plan and volunteer needs
 - Outreach: Haley and John

- Juniors: Eran and Melissa
- Competition: Jason and Robert
- Inclusion: Barry and Gabby
- Communicate volunteer needs to Melissa, to put in newsletter and on social media

General notes:

- Email best practices:
 - CC the board
 - Keep the subject line updated with the actual topic
 - Or start a new thread when appropriate
- If you're sick and can't make the meeting, send someone in your stead

NCNCA Strategic Plan:

What *could* be for the NCNCA? 3-5 years from now.

- Haley: would love the NCNCA to be in every bike shop, for every bike coalition to know that bike racing is a thing (bridging safe streets with our training grounds). People need to know about racing.
 - Robert has been doing this with his races to bike shops, could do for NCNCA calendar
 - Melissa is working on a generic posters for bike shops - Trek has said they will post them. Working on one for early birds and one for general bike racing in the district. Trek has offered to bring mechanical support to early birds and other races that don't already have that.
- Gabby: wants to improve inclusion in bike racing to the point where you don't have to get involved to exist, you chose to get involved because you love it
- Melissa: wants *us* to be a destination for people to come bike race
- Eran: envision we can have a national championship here. Connect pros from California to participate in our community (local races).
- Lloyd: beat Colorado (have huge participation)
 - CO state's bike racing org is the same org as the state bike coalition
 - There are many local grassroots orgs - how would you join just one?
 - Could we become a part of Cal Bike? (the umbrella group for all of these)
 - If we develop relationships with planning depts, can make permitting processes easier
 - We could meet with our state representative, or invite them to one of our races

What problems do we want to solve in 3-5 years:

- Increase ridership (number of licenses) by X%
 - Improve diversity - juniors, new riders, masters, genders, income
- Increase race participation by X%
- Increase number of USAC-sanctioned races

Bank access:

- Need to remove previous treasurer, who has not been cooperating with our repeated and extensive efforts to sign over access
- We signed this document today
- Consider finding a different bookkeeper - Gabby will ask Larry who he recommends, someone who is not financially connected to the NCNCA. Someone who just has visibility into the account.
- Previous treasurer still has the physical checks, records, etc.

ACTION:

Haley and Lloyd will take this signed account transfer document to the bank on Tuesday to authorize the transfer.

Brandon Agenda (postponed to Q1 2024 due to USAC cancelling)

Time	Topic
9:30-10:00am	Welcome Ice breaker Intention setting
10:00-10:45am	Alignment for USAC Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Context:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ NCNCA as one of, if not the, most robust racing districts in the country.○ Long season, influential people on bikes, opportunities for engagement and strong community culture○ History of producing world class riders○ Main role of NCNCA: officials, calendar, marketing, series (BAR BAT), promoter support, racer support● Financial Outlook

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Since USAC cuts 4 years ago, the NCNCA's expenses have not changed and we are burning through our runway. ○ Our strategies have been hampered by caps on LA fees, reduced income from USAC, and lack of diverse income streams which take time to build ○ Volunteer organization with varying degrees of time and expertise available ● Vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Investing in the NCNCA (and local associations in general) is a win-win. ○ Relatively small financial contribution to rebuild trust across racers and allow the NCNCA board to focus on programs, marketing, and making bike racing better, rather than ensuring we just continue to exist. ○ We are perceived as the on the ground representatives for USAC. ● Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decreasing ridership ○ Not successfully bringing new riders into the pipeline ○ Finances ○ Misunderstanding of the roles of USAC, the NCNCA, race promoters ○ USAC clubs are no longer required to put on events - big ask of one main promoter
10:45-11:00am	Break
11:00am-12:00pm	<p>Meeting with Brandon Quirk (CEO), Erika Lehman (Chief Marketing Officer), and Trish Black (LA contact and Events Director)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal: Brandon leaves with an understanding of the unique value add of the NCNCA, our challenges, and why investing in us helps USAC.
12:15-1:00pm	Board Roles and Responsibilities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Officers• Committee Membership and Ownership
1:00-2:00pm	<p>Future planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What does the NCNCA look like in 5 years?• Go over SWOT• Strategic plan groundwork