

# Leadership

## Board of Directors January Minutes

January 21, 2025

The NSDA Board of Directors held its Winter meeting on January 21, 2025. In attendance were President Byron Arthur, Vice President David Huston, Jamelle Brown, Alan Coverstone, Sara Gibson, Adam Jacobi, Erez Kalir, Anoop Mishra, Renee Motter, Wendy Orthman, Jay Rye, and Holly Williams.

*President Arthur called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.*

### WELCOME/SEGUE

President Arthur led the Board in an icebreaker exercise.

### STANDING COMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS AND DISCUSSION

All three Board standing committees and the Competition and Rules Leadership Committee (CRLC) have had meetings to start the year. Some of the chairs requested Board time for discussion on important items as either information for the Board or needing discussion and/or action.

### GOVERNANCE

#### Youth Representation

Jay Rye, chair of the Governance Committee provided an update to the discussion about the Board request for the Governance Committee to explore youth representation in the NSDA and the Board.

#### Nominations Committee Update

Alan Coverstone and Holly Williams, co-chairs of the Nominations Committee, presented their progress and called for nominations from existing Board members.

#### Internal Affairs

##### Moved by Houston, seconded by Coverstone:

“Accept the FY24 audit report.”

**Passed: 12-0** (Arthur, Brown, Coverstone, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Kalir, Mishra, Motter, Orthman, Rye, Williams)

##### Moved by Houston, seconded by Rye:

“Accept the FY24 990 tax return.”

**Passed: 12-0** (Arthur, Brown, Coverstone, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Kalir, Mishra, Motter, Orthman, Rye, Williams)

##### Moved by Brown, seconded by Coverstone:

“Approve the FY25 Q1 financial report.”

**Passed: 12-0** (Arthur, Brown, Coverstone, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Kalir, Mishra, Motter, Orthman, Rye, Williams)

The Internal Affairs Committee has completed its review of key financial reporting from FY24 and proposed changes to the current budget. The chair of the Internal Affairs Committee and Chief Financial Officer asked the Board to accept the FY24 audit report, FY24 990 tax return, and approve the amended FY25 budget as recommended by the Internal Affairs Committee.

### External Affairs

Adam Jacobi, chair of the External Affairs Committee, provided an update on the committee's recent work on their goals for the year tied to the strategic plan.

### Competition and Rules Leadership Committee (CRLC)

The CRLC has met a couple of times and subcommittee work has begun. A summary of their progress was provided in the Board packet. Time was given for any questions the Board may have about the CRLC's current work.

### DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

The Chief Development Officer updated the Board on a few key items in our fundraising efforts. We have recently hired two new Development positions. The Chief Development Officer updated the Board on those staff members, discussed the initial fundraising campaign and overall strategies that will be developed and executed, and discussed the role we would like Board members to play in this effort.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING AND CURRENT PLAN UPDATE

The Chief Operating Officer/Assistant Executive Director and the Chief Strategic Growth Officer provided an update on the work of the current strategic plan for FY25. They updated the Board on further developing the FY26 through FY30 Strategic Plan. This included a discussion of the current timeline.

### PR/MARKETING

The NSDA will begin an initial six-month engagement with a communications and public affairs consultancy firm. The Executive Director provided a brief overview of the general elements of the scope of work that is being discussed with the consultant.

### ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND STRATEGY

The Board continued its ongoing discussions about building connections, building community, and building a stronger culture in our organization and our activity. The Board committed to this series of ongoing discussions in Spring 2022. These discussions are designed to further the relationship between the organization's strategic priorities and maximization of the mission while better understanding our various needs, priorities, and risks associated with the growth of our work. The Board continues to explore our political landscape and its current and potential impact on our various communities and speech and debate activities as a whole.

### EQUITY PAUSE

In order to be consistent and intentional about incorporating the [NSDA Equity Lens](#), we've added an intentional moment to consider questions from the equity lens that may be relevant to the conversation. Jay Rye led the Board in the equity pause.

### ADJOURNMENT

**Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Brown:**

"Adjourn."

**Passed: 12-0** (Arthur, Brown, Coverstone, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Kalir, Mishra, Motter, Orthman, Rye, Williams)

*The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m. Tuesday.* 

## QUESTIONS? CONCERNS? IDEAS?

We want to hear from you! Send your feedback to [director@speechanddebate.org](mailto:director@speechanddebate.org).