



Maryland NAWGJ General Meeting Minutes

Date: 09/25/2025

Format: First All-Zoom General Meeting

Time: Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Attendance: 41 of 53 judges attended

1. Meeting Called to Order

- The meeting was officially called to order
- Announcement made that the meeting was being recorded.

2. Welcome & Opening Remarks: Jane Flynn (SJD)

- Warm welcome extended to all members.
- The reflection on last season's success and optimism for the upcoming judging season.
- Recognition and gratitude expressed to Linda Johnson and Myra Elfenbein for years of dedication and service.
 - Acknowledgment of the significant time commitment required for volunteer roles.

- Reminder to members that all positions are volunteer, so responses may not always be immediate due to outside work responsibilities

3. Handbook Update

- The Assigning Handbook is a “live” document requiring annual review and approval.
- The 2025 review and updates have been completed.

4. NAWGJ National Updates

a. Rules & Procedures

- Key Change: NAWGJ no longer uses “canons”. These have been replaced by Rules and Operating Procedures.
- Updated documents include:
 - Code of Conduct
 - Grievance Procedures
 - Social Media Policies
- All documents are available on:
 - The Maryland NAWGJ website
 - The National NAWGJ website (linked from the state site)
- Members are responsible for reviewing all materials independently
- Key updates include:
 - Defined procedures for reporting and handling infractions
 - Clear documentation of possible outcomes
 - Revisions reviewed by an attorney (effective August)

- Leadership will highlight one policy or rule at a time in membership communications to keep professional standards in constant focus throughout the season.

b. Finances

- National Transition: NAWGJ finances are being shifted to a third-party accounting system (same system used by USA Gymnastics).
- Implementation phases:
 1. Regional Judging Directors
 2. State Directors
 3. Full rollout expected over several years
- Members encouraged to review new financial reporting policies, timelines, and related penalties.

5. Treasurer's Report – Jennifer Mann

- Financial reports have been submitted and are available on both the State and National websites.
- Report was displayed during the meeting but not discussed in detail, as it is publicly available.
- Quarterly Balances (as of end of July):
 - Checking: ≈ \$38,000
 - Savings: ≈ \$50,000
 - Total: ≈ \$89,000
- Current Balance (meeting date): \$109,748
 - Note: This number reflects incoming deposits from the past week and is not the true adjusted balance since upcoming expenses have not yet been deducted.

- Upcoming Expenses:
 - Significant costs are expected for the Judges's Cup event.
 - Current reported balance will decrease once those expenses are paid.
- Full financial reports are accessible online.

6. Education Expenses

- Expense policy is located under Judges → Education on the website.
- Reimbursement valid through October 31st (end of fiscal year).
- Judges' Cup 2024 Recap:
 - Judges earned \$441 reimbursement.
 - Additional benefits: USAG/NAWGJ membership paid
 - Total potential reimbursement value $\approx$ \$600.
- Expense forms (fillable PDF) available online; submit documentation to the Treasurer.
- Allowable expenses:
 - Clinics and Congresses
 - Travel (with mileage proof)
 - Testing fees
- Deadline: October 31, 2025.
- Reason: Aligns with NAWGJ fiscal year.
- Budget Planning:
 - Finalized after Judges's Cup board meeting.
 - Most expenses (e.g., leotards, awards) will already be paid.

- Only pending expenses may include travel costs for the National Judges' Cup.
- Based on net profit, board will vote on education reimbursement for next year at the end of Judges Cup
- Considerations:
 - Current savings are very healthy thanks to prior leadership (noted Linda Ostrove).
 - NAWGJ requires states to spend funds to maintain only one year's worth of expenses in reserve.
 - Estimated 3.5–5% increase in expenses.
- The new cycle begins on November 1st.
- Transparency: Full budget will be posted by the end of November on both the MD State and National websites.

7. Assigning: Erin Ostrove

Assigning Team:

- Judges' Assigner – Erin Ostrove
- Assistant Assigner – Carol Boyer
- In house/High school – Betsy Johnston
- Hotel Liaison – Tina Kratzmeier

Roles & Responsibilities:

Slide show introduced assigners and their roles

- **Erin:** Coordinates with Meet Directors on dates, times and levels.
- Reviews of judge availability, preferences, and distance.
- Considers Meet Directors' requests and ensures panel continuity (goal: at least 4–6 judges remain on the same meet for an entire weekend).
- Creates panels of judges and submits to Jane Flynn (SJD) for approval.
- Weekend in-house meets (Friday–Sunday)

Carol: Tracks legality and compliance (number of gymnasts, rules, policies).

- Assigns judges to events.
- Handles of replacements when judges need to be substituted at the last minute.
- Provides daytime support by contacting Meet Directors (especially valuable as Erin is a teacher and not always available during the day).

Betsy: Manages in-house meet assignments (Monday–Thursday).

- Weekday in-house meets: Betsy assigns and communicates report times and event details.
- Coordinates high school judging in spring (availability requests and assignments).

Tina: Manages hotel requests, coordinates with Meet Directors, and communicates confirmations.

8. Communication Protocols

- Preferred contact: Email (text acceptable; include name).
- For availability/assignments: Email Erin, Carol, and Jane
- Response time: Follow up after 48 hours if there is no reply.
- Quick acknowledgments are appreciated.

9. Important Notes

- Assigner email addresses in GymJas may display prior names (Cynthia Dunn, Linda Harrell).
- Always verify the signature line for the current sender.

10. How Judges Can Help

1. Keep availability updated. Notify Erin if availability changes.
2. Complete contracts promptly. Sooner completion allows faster panel finalization.
3. Be patient and flexible.

11. Assignment Adjustments

- Judges will be notified directly of any level or session changes, with explanations.

12. Affiliation Policy

- Judges affiliated with a gym kindly asked to send meet participation lists to Erin or note them in GymJas.
- Affiliation applies to the entire level if a team competes in any team-award session. (See Rules & Policies, p. 26)

13. Head Judges

- Selection considers multiple factors, not only ranking.
- Judges may contact leadership with concerns. (See p.27 in Rules & Policies.)

14. Out-of-State Assignments

- Judges must mark “available” in GymJas to be considered.

- Notify Erin, Carol, and Jane when judging out-of-state.
- States verify availability to avoid double-booking.

15. GymJas Draft Mode

- If unable to change availability due to “draft mode,” contact the assignor to be manually removed.

16. Friday Assignments

- Availability does not guarantee full-weekend assignments.
- Judges may specify if they only want full three-day meets.
- Communicate Friday flexibility in GymJas comments.

17. Upcoming Busy Weekends

- Dec 12–14: Christmas on the Chesapeake – need 4 more judges (Fri).
- Jan 10: 3 meets – high demand.
- Jan 16 & 19: Hills Maryland Classic, need Friday & Monday judges
- Jan 23–25: 3 meets – heavy coverage needed.
- Feb 28–Mar 1: 4 meets Saturday, 3 meets Sunday – full coverage required.

18. New Programs

a. Head Judge in Training

- Assistant judge acts as head judge under mentorship.
- Build confidence in leadership and ranking skills.
- Implemented selectively to avoid delays.

b. Shadowing Meet Referee

- New referees observe experienced ones.

- Focus on communication, professionalism, and situational management.

c. Judge Development Focus

- Emphasis on leadership, meet flow, and conflict resolution.
- Programs aim to support positive mentoring and judge readiness.

19. Hotel Request Process - Tina Kratzmeier

- Hotel Form link sent after assignments confirmed.
- Submit within 48 hours.
- Eligibility:
 - Departure before 7 a.m. or return after 10 p.m.
 - Weather/mileage considered.
- Verification emails sent; confirm accuracy promptly.
- Urgent issues: text or call Tina.
- Judges must follow procedures — independent bookings not reimbursed.
- Safety is a top priority; communication with leadership is required for changes.

20. State & Regional Assigning: Beth Renwick (Regional) and Nica Sutch (State)

State Selection Subcommittee:

Stephanie Baldwin, Amy Martelli, Nica Sutch, Patty Delaney, Lorraine Morales, Jessica Ryan, Mikayla Vernon

Criteria:

- Professionalism, efficiency, attitude, experience, teamwork, and representation of Maryland.
- Selection: transparency is in gymnasts' best interest.

- Judges will be grouped based on compatibility and ability to work effectively together

Judges may contact Nica Sutch with assignment questions.

Regional Assignments:

- Process begins with the Regional Technical Chair (Jane Caruso), who provides the initial eligibility list.
- Eligibility: Judges must meet certain regional qualifications to be considered.
- This year:
 - 20 names were submitted.
 - 2 judges were not rated at Level 10 → names did not advance for regional assignments, however, these judges may still serve as replacement at Regionals, if needed
 - 18 judges were eligible for assignments.
- Judges must judge State Meet to accept Regional assignments.
- **Notable Assignments:**
 - Luanne McKenna – Easterns
 - Linda Johnson – Alternate Vault Judge, Nationals

21. Mentorship Program Update – Sarah McShane

- Established 2 years ago; 43+ participants.
- Goals: To build confidence, connection, retention, excellence for athlete benefit.
- CPE credit discussions are ongoing.
- Mentor/mentee matching by mid-October; Zoom orientation planned.

- Feedback surveys will be distributed at the end of the season.
- Virginia has adopted portions of Maryland's program.
- Mentor gifts distributed at Judges's Cup.

22. Education Committee – Myra Elfenbein

- Practice Judging: Oct. 27
- Quizzes: Online for Developmental & Xcel. Strong suggestion to review quizzes
- Emphasis on education, accuracy and athlete-centered judging
- Boot Camps/Clinics:
 - Begin January; focus on Level 10 prep.
 - Board approved weekend mock-test sessions.
 - Planned summer boot camp before testing season.

23. Judges' Cup Committee – Tony Eusisni

Leads of Committee:

- Meet Director: Tony Eusini
- Meet Referee: Jane Flynn
- Scoring: Alicia Zois
- Hospitality: Jeanna Hughes
- Admissions: Alex Halperin (via Thrive)
- Awards: Betsy Johnston
- Leotards: Luanne McKenna

Event Details:

- Theme: "Dreaming of a Perfect 10"
- 462 gymnasts registered.
- Setup: Friday, Nov. 7 at 3 p.m.

- Saturday: Lower levels
- Sunday: Levels 6 and up, Platinum, Diamond
- Top 12 Level 7 gymnasts qualify for Nationals.

National Judges' Cup:

- Location: Anaheim, California
- Maryland sending two full squads
- Board voted for \$750 expense support for two individuals (selection via drawing).

Operations:

- Snacks and volunteer sign-ups coordinated by Jeanna Hughes.
- Awards prepared by Betsy Johnston.
- Financials submitted to Jane and Jennifer

Judging Assignments for MD Judges Cup

- Assignments will be balanced so that each judge rotates between different roles (e.g., judging, clinician, volunteer/timer).

24. Judges' Support & Evaluation

- New self-reflection survey launching this year.

Purpose:

- To gather information to build additional learning opportunities and better support judges.
- Encourage reflection on professionalism, courtesy, and strategic judging
- Format: Google Form.
- The survey will be distributed later this year.
- Trends from surveys to be shared with Linda Johnson, Jane Caruso, and Jennifer Bortz. This information will be helpful for Regional Congress topics

25. Closing Reflections – Jane Flynn

- Emphasis was placed on the human side of judging.
- A video of meet-related example was shared
- It was highlighted that judges conduct at the meets helps create meaningful and memorable experience for gymnasts, coaches, gym owners, and broader gymnastics community
- Aliya Mosby Carillo shared a personal experience emphasizing the importance of empathy and recognizing the human side of gymnastics

26. USAG Updates – Linda Johnson

Acknowledgements

- Thanks were extended to all who volunteered at camps, regional meets, and other events.
- Special thanks to Jane Caruso for managing camp volunteer sign-ups, which eases workload for leadership.

Surveys

- Participation in recent National surveys (compulsory and optional) was appreciated.
- Survey results have provided essential input for committee work on the Code of Points.

USAG Updates

Meeting Adjourned: 9:00 p.m.

Motion: Approval of General Meeting Minutes (09/12/2025)

Motion: Betsy Johnston

2nd: Tony Eusini

Vote: Yes, Approved