

**3 USMS R&A Committee Meeting Minutes Mar 15, 7:30 PM ET**  
**2026 Recognition & Awards Committee US Masters Swimming**

Committee Name: Recognition & Awards	March 15, 2026 Meeting
Committee Chair: Tara Mack "TMack"	Vice Chair: Caitlin Gagnon
Minutes recorded by: TMack & Zoom AI	Meeting Date/Time: 03/15/26; 7:30pm ET

**Actions Taken:**

- 1 Approve [minutes](#) from 2-15-26
- 2 Caitlin Gagnon provided a R&A Nominations Ad / announcement to Daniel Pauling for the "Streamlines" for the May 2026 edition of STREAMLINES. Thank you, Caitlin.

<b>Number of committee members present:</b> 10	<b>Absent:</b> 4	<b>Guests:</b> 0
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**Committee Members Present:** Tara Mack "TMack" (Chair); Caitlin Gagnon (Vice Chair); Rich Burns; Hill Carrow; Jane Moore; Michael Moore; Beth Nymeyer; Nancy Ridout; Dan Underbrink; Crystie McGrail (VPLO)

**Committee Members Absent:** Sara Dunn; Emily Cook; Hayley Martin; Daniel Paulling (Ex-Officio)

**Guests:** n/a

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm ET. March Meeting agenda [here](#)

1 Welcome: "Roll Call": TMack recorded attendance. Caitlin Gagnon has agreed to serve as Vice Chair. Thank you, Caitlin. Sending our best to Ann Marshfield and her family and grateful for her contributions to this committee and others.

2 VPLO Report, Crystie: Crystie reported there was nothing to report.

3 Motion to Approve [minutes](#) from 2-15-26: Motion made by Nancy Ridout; Seconded by Jane Moore. Approved by unanimous consent.

4 Nomination Forms discussion

TMack discussed that all of the R&A nomination forms will include:

**All nomination forms to include:**

The deadline for award nominations is July 1.

Nominee(s) must be current USMS members.

**USMS Mission, Vision, Values and Strategic Priorities**

**Mission:** Empower adults to improve their lives through swimming.

**Vision:** Foster a nationwide adult swimming community through lifelong fitness, competition, and education.

**Values:** Fitness; Camaraderie; Inclusion; Learning; Excellence; Competition; Fairness **Strategic Priorities:** Details found [here](#)

- Club Development
- Events Development
- Community Development
- Local Focus and Support
- Independent Swimmer Support

**Date and time of submission (can JotForm automatically add the date & time?)**

**Nominee information:**

Name  
Address (Full Mailing Address inc street, town, state zip code)  
Email  
Phone number  
Club or Workout Group  
LMSC

**Nominator information:**

Name  
Address (Full Mailing Address inc street, town, state zip code)  
Email  
Phone number  
Club or Workout Group  
LMSC

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A digital photo of the nominee

\*(National Office- please request specific size and features)

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Michael mentioned that the former nominations included “Goals and Objectives” and the current USMS website identifies: Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Priorities. These were updated by TMack above to reflect current terminology and alignment.

Nomination Form Drafts shared to the committee for the nominations for 2026 will be converted to JotForm and will be uploaded by the National Office. The R&A committee will have 1-2 weeks to view and request any changes before they go live on the USMS Awards page. (These apply to the R&A awards: RJA, JKCA, DDSA, Fitness, Club of the Year.)

Caitlin said YES to requesting a digital photo at the time of nomination submission. (This is for the celebratory video and keeps the extra work of chasing down photos to a minimum- ideally. We ask the national office to provide specific requirements for the photo’s size and format) Committee agreed with the photo request. These photos can also be used for social media.

a JKCA:

Nancy R shared that she didn't feel that question 7 in the JKCA nomination was necessary which asked "*is the nominee compensated?*"

Committee discussion included both sides of the 'argument' and ultimately concluded that it was not necessary to include this question for recipient consideration. Could create a bias so it has been removed.

Additional discussion included for #8, finding a way to request quantitative data. Nancy has read many nominations that say: *some, much*, etc. She is looking for a way for the subcommittee to be able to evaluate how much of an increase in target reach has been achieved by the contributions of the nominee.

Discussion included that some people may not know how to find that data nor may they have access to that component in analytics; sometimes data can be skewed when google changes features. (Michael Moore and Caitlin Gagnon). Nancy mentioned she did not want this to be an obstacle for a nomination. The committee decided to include the question but leave it as optional in JotForm as per the recommendation by Dan Underbrink.

b DDSA discussion included:

TMack discussed the nominations of the past were simply listed as '*write a letter*' so she provided prompts to assist this process. Beth requested that a specific amount of information be shared versus receiving one sentence. This is in reference to including specific examples of how the nominee impacted Masters Swimming by requesting 2-4 paragraphs for number 3. The nomination form relies on the nominator reflecting on the nominee's contributions referred to in the USMS Mission, Vision, Values, and Specific Priorities at local, zone, and/or national levels.

TMack was not sure about the "locations" component. Geographic or otherwise? Beth mentioned it is answered in a varied way by nominators.

The committee approved the draft of DDSA.

c Fitness Award

This has been headed up by Ann Marshfield and Jane Moore has stepped up to assist and provided initial feedback for this nomination form. Thank you, Jane. Emily Cook will also be able to assist on this subcommittee in April when her schedule opens up a little bit.

Nancy R asked to clarify in question 1 that it is specific to Masters fitness swimmers.

Michael asked if we (R&A) are taking over the fitness award?

TMack said yes, we are in charge of this award. Michael mentioned it is not in the R&A policies. TMack said this is true and we need to address and revisit and revise the R&A policies at a later time but that will certainly be new business to address in the near future.

Dan asked if the past recipients will be included in the nomination forms? TMack answered, yes.

All of the content that is on the awards pages now will be included for reference for nominators.

The forms the committee is looking at just has the questions or prompts listed to keep things cleaner for review. Dan mentioned the past recipients and their bios are a great reference for nominators to use in their own nominations. Caitlin mentioned she has to complete the recipients for 2025 in some areas.

#### d RJA Award

Michael shared the doc with TMack who included it in the draft. It doesn't need any tweaks. JotForm will request photos for this nomination as well.

#### e Club of the Year Award

This award typically had the most varied responses. Some nominations have been as large as 23 pages or more and others were 5. TMack mentioned she took the list of prompts and combined some to create a more streamlined approach in data collecting. The content in this nomination is great and extensive, it has at times been difficult to process as a subcommittee member. TMack mentioned she included that club/workout group will be referred to as club throughout the nomination.

Discussion included: Caitlin inquiring about the question (#5) asking if the club hosts events. What kind of events? Decided to clarify this to mean swimming-related events as the social dynamics section asks about social or community events. Keeping into open ended but also guided. A club would not be disqualified if they don't host events in this category.

Additional conversation included: Michael, Beth wondered: Question #3: Do we need to ask the % of types of swimmers? Fitness, competition, triathletes, etc. Rich mentioned it is all about collecting data to get a sense of the organic culture of the club without specifically asking '*what is the club culture*'? He recommended we not overthink this form of inquiry as a whole. It is designed to get a sense of the club and how it operates and serves its members. TMack mentioned she included it as a quick chart to help reduce the bulk of information this nomination requires. Beth asked about switching the order of questions, specifically #3. Nancy mentioned that when filling out a form like this, ultimately the nominator(s) are learning about their club(s) along the way. Rich suggested adding a message that the questions have no hierarchy. Nancy wondered if putting Structure & Coaching sooner, then mentioned the flow looks good. Beth suggested adding that this nomination has X questions and may take more time than other nominations to complete. Beth asked to switch the order of 3&4.

Dan asked about photos for Club of the Year. We will request specific formatting and sizes from the national office, but this award definitely receives multiple photos.

Additional discussion ensued about requirements for Club of the Year, including: if 100% of the club's members are registered with USMS; and if there is/should be a requirement to be a Gold Club certified club. This was tabled for future discussion. (Not currently prerequisites for the nomination process, but it was agreed upon that each are important topics to discuss.)

TMack reiterated that this process is round 1 and a draft. Will send edited nomination forms to the national office and we will have time to preview JotForm versions before they go live on May 1st, 2026. TMack thanked everyone for their contributions.

5 Caitlin Gagnon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Nancy Ridout seconded. All approved. Meeting Adjourned 8:48 pm ET. **Next Meeting is Sunday, April 19th, 7:30 pm ET**