

## United States Masters Swimming Board of Directors Conference Call

April 19, 2006

FINAL

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### Action Items:

1. MSA to approve the proposed bonus plan design for the Executive Director.
  2. MSA to include committee chairs and coordinators in the first mailing of future rule books.
  3. MSA to release sponsorship income in advance of rather than after the Short Course National Championships.
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President Rob Copeland called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. EDT. Also present were Julie Heather, Michael Heather, Leo Letendre, Mark Gill, Tom Boak, Meg Smath, Patty Miller, Anna Lea Roof, Betsy Durrant, Nadine Day, Jeanne Ensign, Michael Moore, Carolyn Boak, Laura Winslow and Ted Haartz. Jim Miller joined the call at 8:21 p.m.

## Officer reports

### ***Vice President of National Operations:***

Leo reported that the *Long Distance Committee* is very active. *Registration* is working on online registration. The *Rules* and *Legislation Committees* are doing what they should be doing. *Finance* has dealt with a few overbudget expenditures. They are also looking at FOG in light of last year's restructuring, and in anticipation of our hiring an executive director and any anticipated legislation changes.

### ***Vice President of Local Operations:***

Julie said that everything is going well with *Records and Tabulation*. They have several projects going, including putting together an FAQ for our website to answer common questions about the Top 10. The *Zone Committee* is revising the election operating guidelines, but there will be no radical changes. One change will be that if there are no candidates for an office, nominations will reopen for an additional two weeks. They have also changed the format for the material candidates will submit. They are still working on model grievances and bylaws for LMSCs, and are waiting for the legal counsel's input; Patty said she had just started marking up the material.

### ***Vice President of Community Services:***

Michael Heather said that *Planning* and *Fitness* are sailing along fine. *Sports Medicine, Health and Safety* has been concentrating on the sports medicine conference scheduled for the World Championships. *Marketing* is having difficulties with internal communications and agreement on the scope of the committee's work.

### ***Vice President of Member Services:***

Mark said that the next issue of *USMS Swimmer* will be about a week late because the check for postage was late in arriving. Tom explained that the check had been written and was ready to mail, but there was a delay receiving approval this time. The question was raised: Why do we have to have approval each time? Tom and Rob explained that the

approval was part of our procedure, and felt it is a sound precaution. Michael Moore suggested that we prepay an amount approximately equal to the postage for one issue to minimize delays. Tom said we pay as soon as we get an invoice, but the publisher can't invoice us until we provide them with the mailing labels so they know what the final count is. Julie suggested that we were overreacting to a one-time problem, and that we should wait and see if it happens again. Mark will ask the *Editorial Committee* to look at the process to see where bottlenecks might be. One possible delay could be if an LMSC newsletter that is bundled with the magazine is late. So far that has not happened. Julie asked that she be kept in the loop if any changes for LMSC newsletters are made, because her LMSC is one that takes advantage of this option. This option is cost-effective for LMSCs with at least 500 members. Betsy said she is not sure if we can add more newsletters for LMSCs until the current contract is up.

After the deadline for entering short course nationals was extended, 1,275 wound up entering the meet, a reasonable turnout.

The *Communications Committee* has a first draft of its communication plan finished, and is now working on details. Their goal is to present their plan for a vote at convention.

## **World Championships update**

Michael Moore was pleased to report that the online entry system is now live. In the 48 hours it has been operational, there have been 179 online registrations, generating \$25,000 in fees. Over 500 have actually tried to enter, but not everyone has gotten to the payment step. We will need to develop a tool to remind people they have to pay. At first the system was generating more than one confirmation (one for entering and one for processing payment), but that has been corrected. As the web team notices flaws, they are correcting them. Out of all registrations, more than \$8000 in sponsorships has been generated. A total of 304 paper registrations have been received so far. More than 20 countries are represented for both paper and online entries. More than 20 letters of invitation have been sent. They have a good system for answering foreign-language email questions. Hotel bookings have been robust. The IMSHOF induction ceremony is planned to be at Tod Spieker's house, subject to change. Registration for this function must be made separately through ISHOF. There will be three sessions of sports medicine lectures; the location is still up in air. There is no additional charge for athletes to attend the sports medicine conference.

Michael recently returned from meeting with FINA in Shanghai, where he made a report to the FINA Bureau. He was able to meet with FINA officers to discuss the World Masters Championships at Stanford.

Michael asked that we encourage everyone to enter online. Michael and Julie Heather experienced a glitch in which the link to the online system kept disappearing, but this phenomenon appears to have happened only to them. Julie suggested that when Michael sends out notices about the World Championships he should include the direct URL to online entries, in case anyone else has trouble with a link. She also asked if there was going to be a link on USMS's home page. The web managers have been waiting for press release language in order to put the link up. Michael will get that language to Lynn Hazlewood. As for the issue with touchpads for Baker Pool, Michael said they still need to survey the pool, and have been waiting for good weather to do that. He is also

negotiating with Stanford about pads for Belardi Pool. If we have to buy the pads, we will be able to resell them and recoup some of the expense. The organizing committee has been trying to figure out how many buses to use for the shuttle system. They lost their original contractor and will have to start the process over.

Michael has been working with the other NGBs, but there are still a few issues to be worked out. He will contact Rob if he needs assistance.

Michael thanked Mark Gill for all his hard work getting the online entry system up and running. If anyone has any further questions, please ask Michael.

Jim reported on the Impact Task Force, which he chairs, and noted that the next step will be to meet with other NGBs. So far they have secured a documentary recorder, who will produce the promotional DVD as a class project. They do not yet know the exact structure of the DVD, but will prepare it as the event unfolds. As entries come in, they can begin identifying competitors of interest. A press release has been prepared to announce the DVD.

## **Convention update**

Meg said she has sent the LMSCs their delegate entitlements, and a few have already named their delegates. She sent the schedule that was agreed upon at the midyear meeting to Convention Coordinator Victor Buehler, who sent it to Penny Taylor from U.S. Aquatic Sports. Penny made room assignments and returned the schedule to Victor and Meg for review. Meg noted one meeting that was omitted, and Victor has asked Penny to add it.

Nadine said that Illinois was omitted from the LMSC listing in the front of the USMS Directory that was recently mailed out. This may have happened because they changed their name from "Central" last year. Meg will contact Tracy about issuing a replacement page.

## **Policy manual**

Meg and Julie continue to compile material. Meg has been scanning archival material, and Julie recently received an electronic version of USA Swimming's policy manual. If anyone has any policy documents, please send them to Meg or Julie.

## **Executive Director search**

Laura had earlier distributed handouts related to the proposed bonus plan and the timeline. The bonus plan will include payments for certain preset goals such as membership growth and retention, management capabilities, sponsorships and financial development. Laura clarified that goals for performance are distinct from those for attaining the bonus. Goals for the bonus must be achievable and measurable. Betsy asked what is a realistic timeline to get an office up and running, and Laura felt the ED should be operating at 80 percent within a month, 90 percent within two months and 95 percent within three months. Jim noted that what we decide to focus on will determine who we hire; we can't have shifting philosophies. Laura reminded everyone that the percentages for performance goals and weightings aren't set in stone; the Board will annually reevaluate bonuses. Tom noted that what we're doing with the bonus plan is giving the search committee the tools it needs to do its job when it interviews candidates at SC Nationals in Coral Springs. It was suggested that since the percentages are not final, that

we eliminate them from the document. But Patty said the percentages are needed, because this document quantifies what is important to us. Some things are more important than others, so we need the percentages. But we could add “proposed” to the weighting. This was accepted as a friendly amendment. **MSA to approve the bonus plan presented by Laura.** Laura thanked the search committee and especially Patty for all their hard work.

According to the timeline (attached) we have completed the first three tasks and the fourth task is in progress. If we don't like any of the candidates we interview, we will start over. To maintain confidentiality for the candidates, the Board will only find out the names of the candidate or candidates the search committee recommends for the job, after interviewing the top candidates in Coral Springs. Jim, Patty, Rob, Laura and Tom will do the interviews. Jeanne noted that we are placing lots of confidence in the search committee and asked that they do a good job. Tom said that he has drawn up a budget and that it is based on a July 1 hire. If that happens, we will be \$36,000 over the budget of \$95,000 allocated at convention. Patty asked if the amount of the bonus will be based on salary only or salary plus other things (e.g., vacation). Laura said it will be based on eligible earnings and salary, because we have no vacation, sick, jury duty, etc., policy at this time. Michael Moore asked if the ED will develop a vacation policy. Jeanne said a Finance subcommittee will be working on that, but is not planning to do it until convention. Laura tried to make it clear to the subcommittee that we can't wait that long, but has not yet heard back from the subcommittee. Michael Moore felt we should have a policy so that we are fair to all employees. Rob will get in touch with the Finance subcommittee on employee compensation and try to expedite the process. Tom noted that we have not yet defined benefits. Laura will look into this, but said it will be difficult to give hard numbers until we know who is hired, as cost of benefits varies from state to state. The BOD already approved a percentage of salary to be allocated for benefits (see minutes to midyear meeting). Laura can come up with a benefit statement by June 15 if we know before then who we're going to hire.

## **Midyear reports**

Rob reminded liaisons that they should turn their division reports in to Tracy by the end of the week for inclusion in *Streamlines*.

## **Rule books for committee chairs**

Meg read an email from Tracy Grilli, who was unable to participate in this meeting, explaining that when committee chairs were members of the Board of Directors, they received a complimentary rule book. Now that they are not on the Board they do not receive them, but obviously they still need them. **MSA to include committee chairs and coordinators in the first mailing of rule books after they are printed each year.**

## **National Office staffing issues**

Meg read another email from Tracy explaining that the person who has been reconciling the VeriSign statements for online entries has a serious illness and will no longer be able to do the job. She is in the process of speaking with another professional bookkeeper to see if she will take on this task. In the meantime, there will be a delay processing VeriSign payments. Tracy would also like to add a person to do the hard copy entries for

international swimmers for the World Championships. Gisela Henshaw is originally from Germany and would be of great assistance with the German and European entries, whose handwriting Tracy finds very difficult to read. This would not cost any extra and it will be the same amount of entries, just two people doing them instead of one. The Board had no objection to Tracy's plans. Mark noted that as a result of the VeriSign disruption there will be a delay in payment of online entry fees to the SC Nationals meet host. Therefore, **MSA to release sponsorship income in advance of rather than after the meet.**

## **Changes to membership dues**

Rob suggested that because of potentially increasing expenses related to expanded services and support we should appoint a task force to explore increasing membership dues. Nadine asked if we have looked at the various LMSC dues to come up with a uniform fee. Leo said he has that data and will send it to the Board. Betsy said that a uniform fee might need to be large enough to subsidize some LMSCs. Laura will chair the task force consisting of her, Ted, Leo, Carolyn, Mike Heather and Anna Lea. Ted has information from USA Swimming about the justification for their \$1/year increase that he will make available. Carolyn asked that we consider other membership categories, including a trial membership. Rob said that was fine, but the primary task is to look at fees and make sure we have a balanced budget and are financially sound.

## **Online registration**

Leo reported that the task force has talked to two merchant account vendors about the proposal made at the midyear meeting to subdivide accounts and deposit money directly into LMSC accounts. This does not appear to be feasible, partly because of restrictions imposed by the Patriot Act, and partly because of cost. Electronic fund transactions would cost \$2.50 per batch, which would be prohibitive. Leo and his task force estimate the transaction fee will be \$35,000 to \$40,000/year. Currently they are working on how the online interface will get a new member into the proper LMSC. The program will accept LMSC, USMS, donation and club membership fees. A local workout group field can also be included. Programming for this application is moving along now that Worlds programming is almost finished. An external vendor will probably be hired for the actual programming, but the vendor hasn't been chosen yet. There is no cost estimate yet because they are still defining requirements. Leo reminded everyone that we have a mandate to make online registration happen as soon as possible. The concept is simple: develop an interface for swimmers to use the system we have now.

## **Adjournment, next meetings**

Rob thanked everyone for participating. **The next BOD conference call will be Thursday, June 22, at 7:30 p.m. EDT. The next EC conference call will be Wednesday, May 17, at 7:30 p.m. EDT.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m. EDT.

Meg Smath,  
Secretary

## Search timeline

<i>Task</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Assigned Deadline</i>	<i>Status</i>
1. Select search firm	USMS BOD	1/29/09	Completed
2. Initiate search	Anderson & Assocs.	Mid-February	Completed
3. Narrow list of applicants	Anderson & Assocs. & Search Committee	Mid-April	Completed
4. Perform behavioral assessments	Anderson & Assocs.	April 27	In progress
5. Present results of behavioral assessments	Anderson & Assocs.	May 1	
6. Select candidates to interview at Coral Springs	Search Committee		
7. Interview top candidates	Search Committee		
8. Select candidate(s) to present to Board	Search Committee		