
Action Item:

1. MSA to give the executive director the authority to sign off on budgeted expenses for the National Office up to \$5,000 in any one transaction.
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President Rob Copeland called the meeting to order at 8:04 p.m. EDT. Also present were Vice Presidents Leo Letendre (National Operations), Mark Gill (Member Services) and Mike Heather (Community Services); Secretary Meg Smath; Treasurer Jeff Moxie; Legal Counsel Patty Miller; Executive Director Rob Butcher; At-Large Directors Anna Lea Roof (Breadbasket), Betsy Durrant (Colonies), Jerry Clark (Dixie), Nadine Day (Great Lakes), Jeanne Ensign (Pacific Northwest), Michael Moore (Oceana), Carolyn Boak (South Central), Laura Winslow (Southwest); Past-Presidents June Krauser, Ted Haartz, Tom Boak, Mel Goldstein, Nancy Ridout; National Office Administrator Tracy Grilli.

Officer report

VP Member Services

Mark submitted the following written report:

Since the last meeting of the BOD, Communications, International, Marketing and Publications Management Committees have met. Additionally, the annual planning meeting of *USMS Swimmer* took place.

Communications Committee: One of the most used parts of the USMS website is the Places to Swim section. Unfortunately, it is largely out of date. Currently, we are dependent on individual clubs and swimmers to update this information. The Communications Committee has a series of nine recommendations that they are asking the EC to implement to improve the quality of information available with Places to Swim service.

It is recommended that each committee share its meeting minutes with the chair and vice chair of the other committees as well as the members of the EC. Because we keep committees' meeting minutes private, email is the best way to distribute this information. Hugh Moore is working with Jim Matysek to set up a mailing list that can be used for this purpose.

International Committee: The International Committee has selected two individuals from foreign federations that they recommended to President Rob Copeland to be invited to the USMS convention. We are waiting to hear if the individuals have accepted the invitation.

Marketing Committee: The Marketing Committee met on June 22. Their discussions centered on current marketing materials and how well they meet our diverse demographics. The committee believes a number of our materials need to be redesigned, but is waiting for the outcome of the Branding Task Force before moving forward with any recommendations.

The committee also reviewed their submitted budget.

Publications Management Committee: Jim Matysek updated the committee on items related to information on the USMS website.

LC Nationals online entries are open until Friday, July 11. Psych sheets are expected to be posted the following Sunday night or Monday.

The Meet Results database + Top 10 were recently updated.

Work is continuing on the member ID feature, forum software upgrades and swimming log section.

Work is also continuing on the photo gallery and blog capability.

Jeanne Ensign reported she will send Jim a list of her planned content for posting in the Club Development section for planning purposes.

Since submitting the original budget on June 1, there will be two changes requested for the Publications Management Committee as a result of the annual planning meeting.

We are planning for one additional feature article this year to use as a rolling/backup article. Budget impact is \$750.

The website will have six professionally written articles developed with a budget impact of \$750 each article. The writers for these articles would be paid directly by USMS rather than be contracted by DMC.

The story of Victoria Chidester, the woman on the cover of the July/August issue of *Swimmer*, was picked up in Omaha at the Olympic Trials. She was featured in both the local newspaper and local news channel. (See <http://www.wowt.com/news/headlines/23638269.html>)

Swimmer Annual Planning Meeting: On June 25-26, we held a highly productive meeting with our publisher, Douglas Murphy Communications (DMC). A number of notable discussion items occurred at the meeting, detailed below:

1. We worked out a communication plan that will ensure we are aware of deadlines and take appropriate action to see that they are met.
2. DMC recommended the development of one additional article over what is planned for publication so we always have one in reserve in case a planned feature does not meet our needs. This will be a rolling backup so it is always current (if not used this issue, it will appear in the next and four new features will be developed).
3. We agreed to changes to the advertising manifest so that USMS can better track and understand our advertising and corporate partner programs.
4. DMC asked us to revisit our thoughts on website advertising. There remains great interest from advertisers in that space.
5. We also discussed the current policy of not seeking advertising from auto and alcohol brands. It is recommended that USMS revisit that decision.
6. To better serve our membership, in the next year we will work with event advertisers to provide ad space for their events.
7. The media kit will be sent to Rob Butcher for comments and input. His feedback is due to Bill Edwards by August 1.
8. We discussed the usage of house ads and then sent that topic back to the Publications Management Committee for clearer direction. The

committee will provide a calendar of when the various ads should appear and what audience we are targeting.

9. Adjustments were made to the 2009 production schedule so that three business days are allowed for proofreading.
10. As part of our effort to meet mailing dates, the magazine will be mailed at a consistent time each issue. This has caused us to be creative with some of our coverage. Notable for this year will be the coverage of Long Course Nationals. Because the meet takes place after the deadline for the September/October issue and the content would be very stale by the November/December issue, we are going to cover the meet on the website. We have submitted adjustments to our budget to account for a professional writer to create the feature. It will go on the USMS website for maximum impact and will have a short piece in the September/October issue that points readers to the site and gives a specific URL. Jim Matysek is providing us with the URL for this feature. We believe that by doing this, we will be able to give more timely coverage to our Long Course Nationals and also expand our publication to more than just print media.
11. We discussed the problem of new members not getting their magazine until potentially three months after they join USMS. We estimate that 12,000 of our members would be considered new each year. The committee recommends that the EC look at options for sending the magazine to our new members who miss the mailing deadline.
12. We discussed the work being done by the Branding Task Force and its impact on the magazine. DMC asked Lynn Hazelwood to relay to the task force the importance of the color and size of any new logo and how it would appear on our cover and in the magazine.
13. We looked at ways to expand the training and technique features as these tend to be very popular with our members. Some ideas include posting more than one workout as part of the web extra and linking video of the technique feature along with the print coverage. Both ideas are going to be pilot tested this year.
14. The On Deck section of the magazine is going to change from events that are submitted to us (which has not been consistent) to ones that are being highlighted by USMS.
15. In the development of the editorial calendar, we tried to balance the need for club development elements along with providing more training information (something requested by members in the last survey).

USAT Triathlon Liaison: I met with USA Triathlon Liaison Jerry Clark by phone and worked out the following plan of action for his position.

1. Contact USMS coaches to gather information and success stories. The goal is to conduct an electronic brainstorming session. Have the coaches tell you things that help them work successfully with triathletes. The deliverable from this effort will be a list of ideas, attributed to the programs that use them, so others can copy the

ideas and also find success in attracting triathletes. We will send this document by email to all USMS coaches and also share it with the Club Development Task Force.

2. Contact the Coaches Committee and ask them to increase the number of online workouts to include one or two that are written specifically for triathletes. This relates to objective 2, goal 3.
3. Create a document that explains the steps for hosting a USMS open water swim as part of a triathlon event. Solicit help and information from the Open Water and Long Distance Committee and give them an opportunity for feedback. When completed, this will be shared with LMSC chairs and the Open Water and Long Distance chair. This relates to objective 3, goal 2.
4. Help LMSCs understand what information is available for usage in packets at triathlons. Make a list of materials that can be ordered from the National Office and how far in advance they need to be ordered. This might include bonus distributions of our magazine, various fliers, the planner, etc. Also, if you come across any good ideas that could be copied by another LMSC, include that as well. An example of this is a map of the LMSC showing the location of each coached workout. This relates to objective 3, goal 5.

Other Notable Information: I received a message from Tom Taylor of Hy-Tek that they are being bought by Active.com. Here is the press release that came out today, July 8, 2008: <http://hy-tek.com/Active-HY-TEK.html>

Executive director's report

Rob B delivered the following report:

In my interview, I submitted a plan that indicated my first 90 days would be relationship development and information gathering. I'm pleased to share that we've just turned past the 30-day mark, and in my first 30 days I've been able to make contact with, I believe, all the BOD members, Executive Committee members and staff. In addition, I've had introductory communication with USMS sponsors, USMS vendors, USMS coaches and organizations we should desire to have partnerships with, such as USA Swimming, the USA Swimming Foundation, USA Triathlon, Sports Publications Inc., ASCA and the YMCA. These introductory communications have been informative, and I was often probed in a positive way on the future and opportunity of United States Masters Swimming. I will address how we move forward in a minute, but allow me a few minutes to update you on some other relevant topics.

Coaches are our best ambassadors. As we've seen with programs, coaches often hold the key to their swimmers becoming members, or not becoming members. Coach and club development is going to be a meaningful pillar to our future growth. To that end, I made a trip to see Mel Goldstein. Mel's Indy SwimFit is a model program of adult aquatic fitness, while also requiring that all his members have a USMS membership. Mel has a real passion for coach and club development, and has the desire to want to help grow future

programs. Mel additionally has the energy and most importantly demonstrated he will travel to help programs. While Mel is currently operating the USMS club development pilot program for us, I have full intention of continuing and expanding the resources USMS provides to coach and club development. I have every confidence that if we put focus and resources behind coach and club development, the dividends will pay for all of us. In my previous career with NASCAR, we sold sponsorships on three-year commitments. If a sponsor was new and only wanted to do a one-year commitment, we would pass because of their impatience in not seeing instant return the first year. The first year of any new program is getting the building blocks in place; year two you make the necessary improvements and begin to see return; and by year three—you have a successful program that meets and, hopefully, exceeds expectations. I therefore am preparing the Board today for our long-term commitment to coach and club development. You will see in the 2009 budget new resources dedicated to coach and club development, and we in turn will provide success measuring sticks we expect to reach.

On the membership front, I did meet with Club Assistant while at the Olympic Trials. We have a program in place that allows for individual online registration, and in 2009 we will be introducing an option that allows for entire team registration. Team registration will provide flexibility and allow all of us to participate in membership growth. The bigger question regarding membership, though, is the value a USMS membership provides. As it currently stands, one would be hard pressed to find reasons outside the typical answers of insurance, the bimonthly *USMS Swimmer* magazine, the opportunity to compete in events and ranking of national times. Certainly, each LMSC brings its own additional value such as newsletters and socials, but the challenge in front of us is to make our membership better so we can grow. We can do this by adding benefits such as member-only sponsor discounts, or possibly partnering with someone such as Dara Torres to provide member-only benefits or possibly looking at creating a tiered membership program that offers a competitive and noncompetitive membership. All are concepts currently being fleshed out.

On the sponsorship front, the USMS office in Charlotte will be assuming the sales and service responsibility so Mel can best focus his energy on the coach and club development initiative. Our current sponsorship program is serviceable to endemic companies inside swimming who instinctively will spend on the sport, but it will require more creativity, flexibility and education to attract new sponsors outside the immediate swimming influence. While our demographics are enviable, our current base of 45,000 isn't critical mass enough for a new sponsor to pay a rights fee and then spend on activation. It will take us some time to flush through our sponsorship model, and develop a game plan we can have confidence will succeed in driving new revenue.

On the staff front, I have had communication with all our employees and we will be instituting a weekly staff-only call. I remain in awe of where USMS is today, and, candidly, that it hasn't gone backwards. To think that all our employees live in different parts of the country and yet this organization

can operate, while also seeing modest membership gains, is really something. It also tells us that we are highly inefficient and while there is a vast array of growth initiatives in front of us, we are not in a position to absorb them and take full advantage. In the 2008 budget, there was room for one hire and we made it by hiring Ashley Gangloff. Several of you had an opportunity to meet and interact with Ashley at the Olympic Trials. While Ashley was there supporting her husband Mark make the Olympic Team, she also participated in several valuable meetings, gaining and acquiring information. With this hire, and Monday was her first day, it was imperative we open a temporary office in Charlotte where both Ashley and I can begin to operate and communicate effectively. The office space we've moved into is roughly 700 square feet. It came with four walls and carpet, nothing else. We are soliciting and receiving welcome community contributions of furniture, equipment, office supplies and other needs while also working with the phone company to open as soon as possible. We owe a big thank you to Jerry Clark and several other Charlotte influences who have been helpful. Jerry himself has dedicated many hours of his time looking at space, and negotiating a month-to-month lease with expenses expected to average round \$1,000 a month. And for everyone's knowledge, Jerry, while a licensed commercial real estate broker, passed through any commission he would have earned to USMS savings.

While I recognize establishing a headquarters may be somewhat of an issue to some, we are necessarily moving in that direction. None of our employees, including myself, pass the "bus" test. Our introductory meetings with the aforementioned organizations, as well our desire to grow, require that we put in place the necessary infrastructure and thus all come to consensus that establishing a headquarters is a priority. In my interview process, when the offer was extended, I had three issues that I wanted to address, including my hesitation to relocate. All three were addressed to my satisfaction. And let me be clear, as I have been in several of my one-on-one conversations with Board members regarding this topic: I was not guaranteed or promised that either Charlotte or Daytona, both of which are places I own homes, would be the headquarters. Rather, it was acknowledged that the executive director would play a significant role in the headquarters selection process and that both Charlotte and Daytona would appear to be ideal locations for a headquarters, and that barring undeniable evidence, it was likely USMS would headquarter in either location. I am, though, committed to the process of selecting a headquarters. I am also confident that if relocation does occur to a city other than Charlotte or Daytona, that as part of the relocation we will address the necessary outstanding issues. Therefore, while I am away these next few weeks I will draft a working document of priorities that the executive director and the administration will need in a headquarters. Once we are comfortable with this document, we will make it available to those cities interested in becoming the home of USMS. It is my timeline goal, and I also ask for your support, that during this fall and winter we will be listening to what potential host cities have to say, and that in 2009 we will open the USMS headquarters. Delay in this process is unfortunately not a luxury we

have. I expect a 2009 budget to be passed at the convention and when it is, it will allow for an expansion of our resources, including personnel. To add those resources and personnel, we must know where we will call home.

As I was preparing for this evening, I went back to the original six questions from the search process. In question #3, I outlined the expectations I have for myself and that of the Board. I hold myself accountable to these expectations, and in turn the Board as well. The top expectation is to understand and embrace the organization's mission, and the second expectation is to set aside special interests and focus on overall direction, goals and policies. It seemed that tonight was an appropriate time to remind myself, as well as each of us, of the expectations.

I trust this update is beneficial. I am truly excited to be on board. It's only been 30 days for me and the opportunity ahead for us is real. As stated, I do leave tomorrow and will be out of the country the next 18 days. During this time, I will be drafting a macro-level, long-term vision document which will be circulated when I return. I will be periodically checking email while away and responding to time-sensitive issues. In the meantime, Ashley will be in Charlotte continuing to settle the office while also making her introductions to the rest of the team and other key people.

USMS at Olympic Trials

Rob B called the Trials a great experience. He noted that he competed in the 2000 Trials, which were wonderful, but could not compare with the 2008 Trials and the attendance of more than 160,000. USMS sponsored Rowdy Gaines's appearance on Thursday, and also the men's 100 backstroke (along with Adolph Kiefer). Mel Stewart came to one of the morning Masters workouts. Rob B found many potential opportunities for USMS to participate and have exposure, and met with many of his counterparts in other organizations. He also felt it was a very successful meet from the standpoint of media exposure. Anna Lea announced that she has a copy of the Meet Manager backup file, for purposes of extracting times of Masters members for Top 10 compilation and records.

Proposed BOD training session

Rob C reported that Jim Miller, who was unable to attend this meeting, is looking into arrangements for training for the Board. Chuck Wielgus of USA Swimming has offered to speak to the BOD at convention about the similar USAS-S experience of transitioning from an all-volunteer organization to one driven by staff. We could also have a longer, dedicated training session later, probably in October (proposed dates are October 24–25).

The session at convention could be at either the Wednesday or Sunday BOD meeting, depending, among other things, on Chuck's availability. If it is held on Wednesday, the EC recommends that we also invite all candidates for at-large director. Betsy felt the Sunday session was preferable. Jerry reminded us that some time back Ted sent the BOD a document on how boards should operate. Michael thought that if the session were held on Wednesday, we would all be thinking about convention and not concentrating on the subject at hand. Ted noted that the USA Swimming Board meets Tuesday and on Wednesday morning, which might have an impact on Chuck's availability.

We will need to be thinking about putting together an overbudget request for the training. Jeanne suggested that we present such a request to the Finance Committee before convention.

Frequency of BOD face-to-face meetings

Michael requested that the BOD meet quarterly rather than just twice a year. Rob C told the Board that the EC, in its meeting the previous evening, discussed having BOD members be more active on the BOD and less active on committees in the future. If BOD members were not on committees, they would be free to meet more with the BOD during convention. All agreed there are obvious advantages to meeting in person, compared to phone calls. Meg pointed out that because we're all busy people, we may not all be able to make all the meetings.

Proposed budget process changes

Rob C said the ED and BOD will be more engaged in the budgeting process. Jeff explained the procedure the Finance Committee followed for the 2009 budget, in which a committee member was assigned to various line items, and worked with the cost-center heads to put the budget submissions together. Controller Margaret Bayless has now put together a draft budget based on all the submissions. Rob C, Rob B, Jeff, Finance Committee Chair Ralph Davis and Margaret will go over the draft budget together before convention, then present it to the BOD before convention so that the BOD can determine if the budget is in line with the direction we want USMS to go. Michael felt the draft should go to the BOD first in order to plan strategy. Jeanne said it was her opinion that the Finance Committee should not be deciding what is an appropriate project, but rather if the amount requested is appropriate. Jeff noted that change is sometimes difficult, and that we will also need to amend FOG and PMG.

Convention planning/progress

Meg reported that delegate declarations are trickling in. Rob C reminded all BOD members to register for the convention before the early-bird deadline. Also, BOD members need to make their own room reservations. Jeanne suggested that those needing to come in early room together. Rob C reported that members of the host Georgia LMSC met with Convention Coordinator Victor Buehler, and he believes we are in good shape.

Policy Task Force report

Betsy reported that the initial draft of the Policy Manual is finished. It has been sent to Jim Matysek for posting on the USMS website, but probably has not yet been posted. Rob C suggested that we need to institute a policy to give the executive director the authority to enter into contracts and sign off on expenses for his staff. Betsy and Patty said this should eventually be part of FOG, and Jeff said the Finance Committee is already looking into the matter. **MSA to give the executive director the authority to sign off on budgeted expenses for the National Office up to \$5,000 in any one transaction.** We should also define who has the authority to enter into a contract. Patty will look into this.

Coaching at Worlds

The Board of Directors would like to thank the Coaches Committee and the on-deck coaches at the World Championships for their participation in Perth.

Distinguishing between two Robs

June said it was confusing having two Robs on the Board, and suggested we add their last initials to distinguish between them.

Club Development Task Force

Nancy asked whether the Club Development Task Force would be holding a mentoring clinic during convention, as suggested during the midyear meeting. Jeanne said the task force decided not to have a clinic at convention because so much else will be going on then. The task force's pilot plan was recently approved by the EC, and the task force will be meeting by conference call on July 10. The task force will proceed for now with the mentors they already have, and also work on developing more materials. They are also waiting for input from Rob B.

Discussion of ED search process

Tracy left the call at 9:25 p.m. The BOD went into executive session to discuss the procedure used during the executive director search.

Next BOD meeting and adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:14 p.m. EDT. Our next meeting will be August 27, 2008, at 8:00 p.m. EDT.

Meg Smath
Secretary