
Action Item:

1. MSA to allow the Jim McDonnell 1- and 2-Mile Lake Swims and Open Water Clinic, sanctioned by the Potomac Valley LMSC, to charge \$8 for the USMS portion of the one-event entry fee.
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President Rob Copeland called the meeting to order at 8:04 p.m. EST. Also present were Todd Smith, Leo Letendre, Meg Smath, Tracy Grilli, Patty Miller, Julie Heather, Mike Heather, Mark Gill and Jeff Moxie. Jim Miller joined the meeting at approximately 9:15 p.m.

One-Event Entry Fee

MSA to allow the Jim McDonnell 1- and 2-Mile Lake Swims and Open Water Clinic, sanctioned by the Potomac Valley LMSC, to charge \$8 for the USMS portion of the one-event entry fee. This event was sanctioned before the decision to increase the USMS portion of the one-event registration fee from \$8 to \$10 (see minutes to 11-26-07 EC conference call).

Reports

Executive Director:

Todd Smith submitted the following written report:

Online Registration—update from November 27.

Registration—In the first week of January 2008, testing was done using approximately one dozen individuals from a few LMSCs. They registered successfully using credit cards and the online system. There are no outstanding requests for Club Assistant to complete before online registration begins. The registration system is ready for online member registration pending resolution of a few reporting issues.

Accounting—Additional national reports and LMSC reports have been developed.

- a. Daily cash receipts—for use by National Office and controller.
- b. National registration report—for use by National Office and controller.
- c. Member registration report—for use by LMSC registrars.

Data Transfers—Transactional information is being sent from Club Assistant to USMS website. Workout groups data transfers are built, tested and working. Club data transfers are in final testing. Member data transfers are in testing.

Reports—Adjusted many of the reports including mailing labels and RSIND files. Club Assistant added display fields and search criteria. Created club and workout group files.

Insurance—Working with our broker, Risk Management Services, completed applications, reviewed premium quotes and consulted with the USMS president and treasurer to bind insurance to provide coverage to USMS in the following areas:

- a. Secondary Personal Accident Insurance

- b. Commercial General Liability Insurance (Auto Liability and Property)
- c. Excess Liability
- d. Crime Insurance (separate policy for USMS and LMSCs)
- e. Directors and Officers Liability Insurance
- f. Workers Compensation
- g. Controller Professional Liability

Note: Currently reviewing the Media Professional Liability policy.

Dual Sanctioning— John Peterson at Risk Management Services is finalizing an agreement for USA Swimming and USMS to allow dual sanctioning of events. The agreement between the two organizations will reflect a provision that in the event of a claim, a member of a panel will make a determination of the percentage of responsibility for the claim. The party with the largest degree of responsibility will settle the claim and then request contribution from the other party based on the percentage of responsibility. The two involved insurance companies will be requested to endorse their liability policies to reflect their concurrence. USMS has been requested to recommend 10 individuals for panel consideration. Swimming experience and/or membership is not required. Legal experience would be beneficial.

Employee Handbook—Working on third draft of employee handbook. Will soon be seeking comments from legal counsel and other appropriate USMS personnel. Final draft will be ready for midyear meeting.

ED Office—Before signing a lease for space in a local office building, an opportunity presented itself to share newly constructed office space in a local outdoor aquatic facility. The facility is managed by a nonprofit organization with leadership entrusted to current USMS members. The terms are very favorable and will save the USMS budget a low four-figure amount. The space should be ready for occupancy in February.

New Hire—Due to the change in plans regarding office space, I have not posted an announcement to hire an administrative assistant. In addition, I am considering changes in the position requirements pending the need to service online registration and to provide web content support. With an opportunity to hire just one support personnel, I wish to make sure that this one new hire can have the greatest impact on servicing the organization.

Corporate Partnerships—Member program relationships are the focus right now. This is an effort to provide more value to the USMS members for their membership fees. Mel Goldstein has developed a relationship (pending contract review) with an insurance company, which will provide a discount to members who use their auto insurance and homeowners insurance. I continue to discuss a relationship with a national hotel chain, which would provide discount prices for members and compensation to USMS based upon usage. I have discussed a partnership with three housing service companies, which at the option of the local organizing committee could provide relief from the task of negotiating hotel contracts and rates for the national championships. The LOC and USMS would share in the performance rebates. A potential partner is looking to sponsor

some swim clinics in the fall of 2008 with a look ahead at doing something bigger in 2009.

USMS Swimmer—The last few issues of the magazine have not been published and mailed on time. This has been due to various reasons, but Bill Volckening and I have been working with the publisher to remedy the situation. By now the January/February issue should have arrived in everyone's mailbox (7–10 days late) and the March/April edition is in production and scheduled to be mailed February 19.

Miscellaneous—Progress is being made in multiple task forces in which I am a participant. These include Online Registration, the LMSC Task Force, the Branding Task Force and the Club Development Task Force. A vendor problem has been resolved in favor of USMS and various situations dealt with which come at random. Each morning a review of incoming emails brings surprises and new opportunities.

VP of Member Services:

Mark Gill submitted the following written report:

The committees in this division are all busy and focused on their goals and objectives. Below is an update of the current projects they are working on.

Communications

The communications section of the LMSC Handbook has been updated.

Current Top Times/Individual Results: Our prior service provider has terminated his services. This has led to a hasty development effort by Jim Matysek. Jeanne Seidler has been supporting Jim and reloading meet results into the database.

USMS Calendar of Events: Jeanne Seidler will be taking over as calendar “editor” from Lynn Hazlewood and will be developing a new sanctions database for use with the calendar.

LMSC and Club Websites: Ray Novitske, Kim Crouch, Dan Cox and Jeanne Seidler have reviewed LMSC websites and identified LMSCs that don't have sites. They will be contacting those LMSCs that don't have sites to see why and to offer their assistance to help them establish a site. They will also be working with all LMSC webmasters to help improve our websites.

Places to Swim: This is the most popular area of the USMS website, but it contains a high percentage of out-of-date information. Ray Novitske is leading this effort and is assisted by Tracy Grilli and Dan Cox. They are working on revising the database fields as well as plans for updating data that is currently in the database. They are also exploring methods to create an online club registration database that is coordinated with the club and LMSC registration process.

The committee is planning on having monthly conference calls, typically on the third Sunday of each month. The next conference call is scheduled for 1/20 at 8:00 p.m. EST.

International

Initial committee conference call is going to be early February.

The committee has fielded questions about international meets. This has led to a discussion about our policy and procedures for posting international meets on the USMS website. The issue is identifying the events that are sanctioned by their NGB.

The committee has been supporting participants with information toward the FINA World Meet–Perth (April 2008).

We are also working to advertise an international invitation in Puerto Rico in July 2008.

Marketing

The committee had its first meeting last week. They are focusing on collecting ideas for how to address each segment of our membership as identified in the recent survey:

- Segment 1: Serious, competitive swimmers
- Segment 2: Serious, non- or less-competitive swimmers
- Segment 3: Non-serious, competitive swimmers
- Segment 4: All-event participants/open water swimmers
- Segment 5: Triathletes

Publications Management

The committee is working on finalizing its MOG, including options for addressing timeliness and content for the magazine.

We have assigned committee members to manage magazine goals (identified in the MOG).

Next step is to assign committee members to manage web goals.

Mark noted in regard to the International Committee's report that we can help by letting our athletes know which international events are sanctioned. Also in regard to the International Committee, Rob said that Jessica Seaton had asked him if we have any new information about sanctioning of IGLA championship meets. Rob passed Jessica's question on to FINA Representative Nancy Ridout to find out if FINA has yet made a definitive statement. Rob will keep Jessica posted.

VP of Local Operations:

Julie Heather submitted the following written report:

Club Development Task Force: Carolyn Boak declined my offer to take over the Club Development Task Force, due to work-related issues. I'm looking for suggestions for someone to take over leading this task force. Frankly, I've been good for it so far, because I'm less passionate about clubs than most people on the task force so I could keep them on track. But now that the strategic plan is in place this task force needs someone with more time and passion to keep pushing the objectives to completion.

LMSM Task Force: The LMSM Task Force has mapped out objectives and is currently working on strategies. The next call is January 27, so I hope we'll have a preliminary draft for comment at the midyear meeting.

Club Development Task Force: The Club Development Task Force has submitted a budget to Finance for 2008 expenses. If the budget is approved, the first training for club mentors will be held January 25–27 in Dallas.

Local Operations Division: The Local Operations Division held a very productive conference call on December 9. All chairs and vice chairs have received their committee chair handbooks. We decided that Records and Tabulation should be responsible for maintaining the ISHOF database and History and Archives will work on correcting historical data. All committees have been asked to schedule conference calls before the

end of January. History and Archives has already done so. We will be having our next call on February 3.

End-to-End Event Management: Anna Lea Roof has agreed to act as chair of the End-to-End Event Management Task Force, and Ed Tsuzuki as vice chair. Anna Lea is working on formulating the makeup of the task force.

Zone Committee: The Zone Committee is getting ready for the 2008 elections. Lynn Hazlewood will update the website the first of the year when I get her the information. We have been working on a policy to bring to the BOD concerning procedures to follow when there are proposed LMSC or zone boundary changes. Alaska and Allegheny may still be having problems splitting the registrar and treasurer positions, according to their zone representatives. Our next call is January 13.

The Zone Committee and LMSC Task Force set a record for back-to-back calls of the shortest duration; both were about 30 minutes long (and not a lot of people were missing from either call).

Elections: Based on my poll of the current at-large delegates, it does look like there will be vacancies.

Julie said she has been trying to get the Records and Tabulation Committee and the Registration Committee to schedule conference calls in order to address some policy issues.

VP of Community Services:

Mike Heather submitted the following written report:

The Community Services Division had a conference call attended by the committee chairs and vice chairs of Fitness and Coaches. The Sports Medicine chair and vice chair were both indisposed and unable to make the call.

The call provided updates on committee activities and set goals for the year for the committees. Prospective new programs were also discussed.

Fitness: Go the Distance and Check-Off Challenge are relaunched for 2008, some changes have been made to the webpage for Fitness, articles are being sought and written for the website and magazine, ideas are being considered for a group fitness event to get larger numbers of participants (and the hope that some competitive types will bring in noncompetitors for the fun and experience).

Coaches: Have selected online coaches for workout postings, have set up World Championships training camps in four locations across the country on various weekends, have selected speakers for the ASCA clinic, are arranging a mentor clinic in Texas.

I will be in contact with Jody Welborn to get her report as soon as possible.

All committees were entreated to have regular monthly conference calls with their committee members.

VP of National Operations:

Leo Letendre submitted the following written report:

Online Registration Task Force

All or part of the Online Registration Task Force has been meeting at least twice a week to finalize both the registrar and member interface. Since the last EC meeting, the registrar's interface for entering data has been essentially finalized. While some report

options still need to be completed, the basic system is functioning. The USMS forum devoted to the transition to the online system is dominated by registrar-to-registrar help and suggestions for improvement. Financial reports have been worked out and Tracy Grilli has been able to invoice the LMSCs for their membership activities.

In addition to the registrar's interface, the member self-registration system has been developed. After the first of the year, approximately a dozen members were allowed to renew using the system. The finances were followed through the credit card system and into our bank account. Financial reports have been refined using this data and have recently met the requirements put forth by USMS.

In order to gradually begin to accept memberships online, the current plan for turning the system on is to post a link to it on the website without significant advertisement. Then, over the course of several weeks and on an LMSC-by-LMSC basis, we will send out email reminders to those who have not yet registered inviting them to do so with an individualized link to the registration system. The link will permit them to go directly to their own biographical data and register.

Work on several items remains. These include one-event registrations, automating entry into Quickbooks and ACH transfers to and from the LMSCs.

Rules Committee

Having gotten through the proofing of the rule book, they are now scheduled to get on with this year's business with a meeting next Sunday.

Legislation Committee

The Legislation Committee has met to begin their normal business. They reviewed the issue surrounding the BOD action with respect to one-event fees and have tasked themselves to work with Finance to clarify roles and responsibilities in setting fees.

Officials Committee

The Officials Committee has met twice and is addressing a number of issues. Preparations for Short Course Nationals were addressed, including interactions with USA Swimming, pool measurements and relay splits. Also discussed was the preparation of minimum standards for officiating meets, which would be the responsibility of the LMSC Officials Chair. The standards include training, tracking of available officials and insurance coverage.

Open Water and Long Distance Committee

The Open Water and Long Distance Committee has met once, although they are very active between meetings. The committee has been working on their national championships. Good progress has been made to ensure that they will be quality events. Progress has been slower in coming on addressing means of expanding open water swimming.

Postal Championship Task Force

The president has recently charged me with creating a task force (as promised at convention) to make a recommendation as to the preferred organizational structure to support the administration of our postal championships. Invitations to appoint a member from each of the Open Water and Long Distance, Fitness and Championship Committees as well as staff have been sent out. Responses have been received from Open Water and

Long Distance and Fitness. The goal is to have a recommendation by the midyear meeting.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee has addressed several overbudget items as well as advising on the budget issue surrounding one-event fees.

Championship Committee

The Championship Committee has its first teleconference planned for next week.

In regard to encouraging open water swimming, Mark noted that the Blue Seventy swimsuit has been recognized by FINA as legal for open water competitions. Because this suit is extremely popular among triathletes, if we adopt this position as well, this may increase the appeal of our open water events to triathletes. The suits provide neutral buoyancy and Mark referred anyone with more questions to the article posted on the Inside Triathlon website.

Treasurer:

Jeff Moxie said that check-writing and payroll have been transferred to him. He will need to get the USMS credit card reissued in his name.

Secretary:

Meg Smath has been updating the 2008 Working Calendar, working on the 2008 convention schedule and participating in the Branding Task Force and the Policy Task Force. She also made a correction to last month's minutes: the person referenced in the Recognition and Awards discussion should be Gordon Ruby, not Gordon Gillin.

Legal Counsel:

Patty Miller submitted the following written report:

Several USMS trademarks for several different classifications have been published for opposition on the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's website. The opposition period for them should expire within the next month. We received a request from an organization to use one of our marks in Spanish. We are currently negotiating an agreement with them for this purpose.

I have reviewed the liability release that will be used for online registration, including trying it out in a "live" version. Other than a couple of comments that I relayed to Todd Smith, I think we are in good shape.

I am working with Mel Goldstein, Todd Smith and Rob Copeland on the agreement for a new corporate partner that involves a new type of benefit for USMS and our members.

Committee Chairs

Our continuing committee chairs are continuing swimmingly, and our new chairs are getting up to speed. Mark noted that there is often a gap between when we end convention and when the committees get busy. He asked that we consider setting the date for when new committee chairs take over as the first of the year. We will discuss this possibility at the midyear meeting.

Liability Release

Julie had raised the issue of nonsanctioned events using our liability release. Patty said the main concern is that participants not be given the erroneous impression that the event is sanctioned by USMS. Patty noted that we could use the situation as an opportunity to make groups that are holding nonsanctioned events aware of USMS and the benefits of aligning with USMS.

Another issue, raised by our insurance broker, was whether USA Swimming coaches working out in USMS workouts supervised by a USMS member are covered. Patty felt they would be covered, but Leo pointed out that the LMSC Handbook says they would not be. Patty clarified that the USA Swimming member would not have excess liability coverage, but USMS would be covered for liability, assuming the workout is supervised on-deck by a USMS member. The EC will look further into this situation, and we may need to update the LMSC Handbook.

Crime Insurance

Todd said this needs to be addressed right away. He and Patty will work on the language for a communication to LMSC chairs.

Dual Sanctioning

Todd is trying to complete a draft on dual sanctioning of events with USA Swimming. As noted in his report, we will need a panel to determine responsibility for claims. Suggestions included Patty Miller, Jim Miller, Tom Boak and Doug Church.

SWIMMER Magazine

Todd clarified that both USMS and the publisher had some responsibility for the late delivery of the last few issues. He has worked with the publisher and Bill Volckening to get the next issue on schedule. Increased Christmas mailing was partly responsible for the delay in the last issue. The current issue is on schedule, and due to be mailed February 19. The delivery delays appear to be worse for the West Coast, and Todd suggested we consider changing to a printer in the middle of the country to alleviate this. Julie reported there had been no mistakes in LMSC inserts in the magazine. She reiterated that the LMSCs with inserts need to know in advance if there will be delays, and Todd assured her that Bill Volckening will alert the LMSCs if the magazine is behind schedule. Leo suggested drop-shipping the West Coast magazines and then mailing them from the West Coast, but that would be prohibitively expensive. Todd noted that the target is for members to receive their magazine within two weeks of the mailing date. Leo asked if the inserts had any part in the delays, but Todd said they did not. He also clarified that Bill Volckening is empowered to make decisions about graphic design.

Online Registration

Leo said that by and large the system is working, although Julie, wearing her registrar's hat, had some concerns. Leo reported that Controller Margaret Bayless has signed off on the report content, which he characterized as a major accomplishment. He will be working with Jim Matysek on real-time updating of the USMS database; lag time will be

on the order of only a few seconds. Julie asked if members would be able to change their birth date when they renew, and was told that anyone trying to do this would receive a message telling them to contact their registrar. Work remains on converting one-event registrations to full registrations, automatic entry of data into Quickbooks and electronic funds transfer (ACH) to LMSCs. Tracy has gathered all the information from the LMSCs to enable ACH transfer and will hold onto it until needed. Until we are ready to implement ACH transfer, Jeff will write checks to the LMSCs.

FINA Worlds

The local organizing committee has closed its books and sent final payment to USMS. The BOD will need to pass a resolution forgiving the balance and any accrued interest (a previous resolution stated that we would not charge interest). This will be added to the agenda for the midyear meeting. Patty will write the resolution.

Privacy Policy

Meg reported for the Policy Task Force that an issue recently arose that indicates we may have conflicting privacy policies. The BOD passed a policy at convention that appears to conflict with a policy on our website. Meg was of the opinion that the policy passed at the last convention supersedes the old policy, but acknowledged that was just her opinion. The Policy Task Force will attempt to clean up the language, and the BOD will address it at the midyear meeting. One thing to be added is a requirement that those given access to member information must sign a confidentiality agreement. Jim Matysek will need clear direction on giving access to the online database. The problem is not so much policy as procedure.

Jim noted that the policy during his administration was for a tiered administration. Few had access to all data.

Strategic Planning

The VPs should work with their committee chairs and put together reports at midyear on how their committees are implementing the strategic plan, by comparing the committees' activities with the plan. We can then evaluate and determine what adjustments are needed. Todd will work with Tom Boyd on language for the vice presidents to use in their communications with their committee chairs. The chairs will be encouraged to overcome a "business as usual" attitude. A separate conference call may be needed to address the strategic plan.

Endowment Fund Guidelines

Meg reminded everyone that at convention the Endowment Fund Board of Governors resolved to reevaluate the criteria for awarding grants. Meg will email the current criteria to the Board of Governors, and we may need to schedule a conference call for discussion. Meg will work with the Board chair, Doug Church. Jim said that the biggest thing we need to do is increase awareness of the fund, and suggested an item in *SWIMMER* and that we have information about the fund more readily available on our website.

ED Performance Review

The EC will discuss preparations for this at the midyear meeting. Rob asked that EC email him their input. He will distribute a copy of Todd's job description to the BOD, and let the at-large directors know that we are also interested in their feedback. Julie mentioned that she has been asked what the executive director has been doing. Meg felt that Todd's activities have been adequately reported in the Executive Committee minutes, but others felt we should be more proactive in disseminating Todd's reports.

Midyear Meeting Preparations

Rob said that the agenda for the BOD portion has been prepared, but he has not yet prepared one for the EC portion. Patty agreed with comments from some of the directors that the BOD agenda is heavy on reports, and suggested that we choose issues and topics to discuss rather than listen to reports. The plan will be to email written reports before the meeting so that we can proceed as Patty suggested. Some key issues to discuss will be growth of open water events (including possible partnering with USA Triathlon), club development, LMSC development and end-to-end event management. Todd said there will also be a report from the Branding Task Force before the meeting. Jim asked if we wanted to put information technology management on the agenda. Todd said he is still trying to line up a consultant for this issue, and has been talking to knowledgeable people. He has been advised that we may want to put together an RFP, in order to avoid hiring a consultant who will simply recommend what they have to sell. Mark and Todd will discuss this issue.

Governance

We will need to discuss the roles of the Board of Directors, executive director and the impact on the Professional Management Guidelines. For example, there are instances where the BOD delegates to the executive director through written policies, which are not in place. Jeff volunteered to lead this discussion, but said he would need help with preparation materials. He has a colleague he can ask, and Julie also has material. Hill Carrow was also suggested as a resource.

Information Technology Conference Calls

Mark and Lynn Hazlewood have been meeting weekly with the webmaster to manage his activities. Now that we have an executive director, this responsibility has been turned over to Todd.

Employee Compensation

Todd asked if he has the authority to grant raises to employees. Rob said he did, as long as it has been budgeted. As a courtesy, he should notify Finance and the EC.

Reminders

Rob reminded officers to have their reports in writing in advance so we don't have to discuss them at the midyear meeting. To prevent them from being the focus of the meeting, we may schedule discussion of the reports for the end of the day.

Next EC meeting and adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:53 p.m. EST. Our next meeting will be at the midyear meeting.

Meg Smath
Secretary