

Committee Name:	Open Water Committee	Vice Chair:	Karen LeFebre
Committee Chair:	Bob Bruce	Date/time:	1/20/2019 - 8:00 PM EST
Minutes recorded by:	Bob Bruce		

Number of committee members present: 14	Absent: 5	Number of other delegates present:
Committee members present (list all, including chair and vice chair): Bob Bruce—Chair, Karen LeFebre—VC, Denise Brown, Becky Cleavinger, Kim Elsbach, Rory Grigull, Eric Hecktner, Jenny Hodges, Mark Johnston, Jim Kennedy, Bob Kolonkowsky, Joe Linford, Helen Naylor, Will Reeves		

Action Items:

1. Bob will contact each OWC subcommittee with tentative action plans and materials within 14 days.
2. OWC members who did not attend the OWC meeting on January 20 will submit preferences for subcommittee assignment promptly.
3. The OWC will review the committee goals statement in the next meeting if desired.

Agenda:

Opening:

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:03 EST
2. Attendance and determination of quorum: quorum was reached with 14 voting members.
3. Approval of previous minutes: none; minutes of all previous OWC meetings have been approved.

Reports:

1. Report from the Chair—Bob Bruce. Bob welcomed the committee and presented the mission of the OWC: **“507.1.9 Open Water Committee**—The Open Water Committee shall promote the development of and participation in open water swimming. The committee shall develop educational resources for open water participants and event directors. The committee, with input from the Long Distance Committee, shall prepare guidelines pertaining to the management of USMS open water swimming for approval by the Board of Directors. The committee shall increase awareness about open water swimming and identify opportunities to promote USMS. The committee shall consist of the committee chair and sufficient members to execute the committee function. The Long Distance Committee chair shall be an ex officio member of the committee.”
2. Special Report from USMS CEO—Dawson Hughes. In Dawson’s absence, Jay Eckert reported on the progress of the Open Water Task Force (authorized by the USMS Board of Directors at the 2018 Convention). Jay’s outline is attached below.
3. Report from USMS Vice President—Donn Livoni. Donn reported that his role is that of a liaison between the OWC and BOD, and reminded us to work through the USMS committee structure.
4. Report from USMS Open Water Compliance Coordinator—David Miner. David was absent, but Bob relayed that there were 54 USMS-sanctioned events held and 2 sanctioned events canceled in 2018.

Proposed OWC Meetings for 2019: I expect 100% attendance because every voice matters on this committee. Recognizing that we are all busy adults with full and sometimes-chaotic lives, I’ll allow one no-fault absence.

- Sun 20 Jan 2019
- Sun 17 Feb
- Sun 17 Mar
- Sun 14 Apr
- Sun 19 May
- Sun 16 Jun
- Sun 21 Jul
- Sun 18 Aug (if necessary)

- Thu 12 Sep at Convention

OWC goals & measurements for 2019: OWC goals should align with the USMS Strategic Plan. See the plan—in full, abbreviated, & infographic forms—at <http://www.usms.org/admin/policies/>. Proposed OWC goal & measurement (developed during 2018): “The OWC goal is to promote the development of and participation in USMS open water swimming, and to support quality open water swimming experiences for adults in line with the Vision, Mission, Values, and Strategy of USMS. The measurement of this goal will be the quantity of events, swims, & splashes, the quality of those experiences, and other metrics that will help us measure our progress to accomplish these goals.”

Subcommittees: OWC voting members volunteered for committees as noted below.

1. Open Water Development & Promotion Subcommittee. Purpose: To generate real, actionable ways to develop and promote open water swimming. This is the central purpose in the committee definition. Chair & Members: Chair: Will Reeves. Members: Denise Brown, Jim Kennedy, Joe Linford
2. Open Water Guide to Operations (OWGTO) Subcommittee. Purpose: To review, revise, format, and communicate the contents of the OWGTO. Chair: Bob Bruce. Members: Becky Cleavinger, Lynn Hazlewood, Eric Hekner.
3. Rules & Legislation Subcommittee. Purpose: Working as a joint subcommittee with members from both OWC & LDC, examining & vetting rules proposals and bringing these proposals for consideration to the OWC then the LDC (although proposing rules to the USMS HOD is an LDC function, we have chosen in recent years to have this group work across both committees for thoroughness). You have one assignment for the next meeting...to review (and comment on as necessary) part 3 of the 2018 USMS rulebook, which will be available on the OWC Forum shortly. Chair: Bob Bruce. Members: Becky Cleavinger, Will Reeves.
4. Safety Education Subcommittee. Purpose: To review any new or ongoing business to the OWC relating to safety, and to review the documents and process of safety planning with the Open Water Safety Advisor. Chair: Bob Kolonkowski. Members: Kim Elsbach, Rory Grigull, Jim Kennedy.
5. Event Management Subcommittee. Purpose: To prepare material for seamless presentation of events and to develop the training a course on event development & management for Event Hosts/Event Directors (first piloted in presentation in 2015). Chair: Karen LeFebre. Members: Jenny Hodges, Joe Linford, Helen Naylor.
6. Officials Subcommittee. Purpose: To evaluate current practices in officiating USMS open water events and to develop materials to improve this. Chair: TBD. Members: Rory Grigull, Helen Naylor, Will Reeves. Also Jim Davidson from LDC.
7. Awards Subcommittee. Purpose: To manage the process for selecting our annual Open Water Service Award, and perhaps exploring the honoring of USMS open water “pioneers”. Chair: TBD. Members Jenny Hodges, Bob Kolonkowski, Will Reeves.
8. Open Water Swim Training Subcommittee. Purpose: To develop guidelines and materials for coaches to prepare swimmers for open water swims. I hear that the Coaches Committee is considering adding such material to the Coaching Certification program, so we may have an opportunity to work jointly with this committee. Chair: Mark Johnston. Members: Denise Brown, Kim Elsbach, Jim Davidson, Helen Naylor.
9. OWC Scribe: Helen and Becky each volunteered to assist.

New/Other Business: None

Around-the-Table: Although you are serving on a national committee, your greatest task and bully pulpit strength lies in developing and promoting USMS open water swimming at the local and LMSC level. What are you doing NOW at the local or LMSC level to spread the word about USMS open water swimming in general and to encourage USMS open water swimming specifically for 2019?

Close:

1. Next meeting: Sunday, February 17, 2019 - 8:00pm EDT, etc.
2. The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 EST

Full OWC (Voting Members = 18; Quorum is Voting Members= 9; Ex Officio Members = 5)

Present	First Name	Last Name	LMSC	Email
Voting Members				
Y	Bob	Bruce	Oregon	coachbobbruce@gmail.com
N	Karen	LeFebre	Pacific	karen@bigskyendurancesports.com
N	Kate	Andrup Stephensen	Virginia	kands606@gmail.com
Y	Denise	Brown	Michigan	dbrown@fillinghome.org
Y	Becky	Cleavenger	Pacific	beckycleavenger@yahoo.com
Y	Kimberly	Elsbach	Pacific	kdelsbach@ucdavis.edu
Y	Rory	Grigull	Florida Gold Coast	rory@paqswim.com
N	Lynn	Hazlewood	Potomac Valley	lynhzlwd@icloud.com
Y	Eric	Hektner	Pacific	e.hektner@gmail.com
Y	Jenny	Hodges	So. Dakota	nifferannehodges@yahoo.com
Y	Mark	Johnston	Montana	coach@flowswimmers.com
Y	James	Kennedy	Pacific	jbkzoomer@aol.com
Y	Bob	Kolonkowski	Metro	rpk248@netzero.com
N	Peter	Lee	Potomac Valley	peter.lee@treasury.gov
Y	Joe	Linford	Utah	joeblinford@gmail.com
N	Andrew	Magazine	Kentucky	andrewmagazine@yahoo.com
Y	Helen	Naylor	Southeastern	helen.naylor@vanderbilt.edu
Y	Will	Reeves	Utah	swimrwill@gmail.com
Ex-Officio/Associate Members				
N	Bill	Brenner	NO	bbrenner@usmastersswimming.org
Y	Jay	Eckert	NO	jeckert@usmastersswimming.org
N	David	Miner	NO	openwateradvisor@usmastersswimming.org
N	Ali	Hall	LDC Chair	mi.consult.ahall@gmail.com
Y	Donn	Livoni	Board	glenhollyfarm.livoni@gmail.com



Open Water Strategy Task Force

Notes for Open Water Committee call (Jan. 20, 2019)

The Open Water Task force was created by the BOD at the 2019 Annual Meeting in Jacksonville. OWTF consists of BOD (Donn Livoni), OWC (Bob Bruce and Karen LeFebre), LDC (Ali Hall and Phyllis Quinn), and NO (Dawson Hughes and Jay Eckert).

So far, we've had several calls as a group and individually and contacted many stakeholders such as Event Directors to gather feedback.

Here are notes from a recent OWTF call for additional information:

1. Goal: Strategy to grow number of sanctioned open water swims and participation by 2024:
 - a. 100 sanctioned events
 - b. 25k splashes (estimated 13k now)
 - c. Key component of USMS membership growth strategy

2. Surveys and Initial Findings
 - a. Event Directors
 - i. Streamlined sanction (including with USA-S) and financial process, reduced costs or cost savings (registration, caps/buoys, etc.)
 - ii. 75% of event directors that do not currently sanctioned with USMS would sanction again if process simplified
 - iii. 42% not satisfied with NO support
 - iv. Top priorities to provide more flexibility and improve event:
 1. More streamlined dual sanctioning process with USA Swimming
 2. Streamline reporting/financial processes (one-events, sanction fees with LMSCs, etc.)
 3. OW events results database
 - b. OW/LDC/BOD
 - i. Promote only sanctioned events via email and calendar of events
 - ii. Streamlined sanctioning and financial process
 - iii. Results database
 - iv. Open Water / Triathlon Membership (not a specific question but mentioned in conversations and recommended by 2014 Task Force)
 - c. LMSCs
 - i. Streamlined sanction (including with USA-S) and financial process, reduced costs or cost savings (registration, caps/buoys, etc.)
 - ii. Results database
 - iii. Anecdotal topics
 1. Mighty Mac Swim
 2. North Texas (Richard Garza)
 - iv. Open Water / Triathlon Membership (not a specific question but mentioned in conversations and recommended by 2014 Task Force)
 - d. Event Participant
 - i. NO doesn't have this information
 - ii. Working with Club Assistant to get survey out to participants
 - iii. This is a significant problem for supporting the marketing open water events.
 1. OW results database would be one way to gather data on USMS members that are competing in sanctioned events

3. USA Swimming and USA Triathlon Collaborations
 - a. Dawson and Jay met with USA-S and USAT last week in Co. Springs. Topics discussed:
 - i. Streamline dual sanction process
 - ii. Partner on events
 - iii. Event Director support from partner NGBs

4. Further evaluation of survey results
 - a. Participant Survey Data
 - b. 2019 Goals – Need buy in from committees, not necessarily a topic for HOD
 - i. Improved marketing of events through web articles and targeted digital marketing
 - ii. Build a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) Results Database
 - iii. Work to establish policy of promoting only USMS events through USMS channels
 - iv. Build USMS Sanction value and benefits document comparing our value with competitors
 - c. 2020 Goals – may need HOD discussion - budgets, legislation, rules, etc.
 - i. Streamlined sanction process that aligns (and possibly integrates) with information needed for event registration
 - ii. Rules philosophy discussion for LDC and OWC
 1. Needs more detail from data and specific areas for review
 - iii. Added Value for Event Director
 1. Possibility of offering reduced cost or free registration software
 - a. Simplified process
 - b. Provide integrated data points with registration, participation and results
 - c. Reduce event director expenses – add value
 - iv. Consideration of OW Membership
 1. 2014 recommendation
 2. Standardized fee discussion
 3. Need more data (CA support)
5. Planned meetings:
 - a. OW Committee 1/20
 - b. LDC Committee 1/27
 - c. BOD Update 2/8OWTF: 2/26