

USMS CONVENTION – Orlando, FL 2004

Block #2

Cmte. report #: 7

Minutes recorded by: Patty Powis

Wednesday, September 15, 8:45 pm

ACTION ITEMS

1. Recommend that the Planning Committee establish a new task force consisting approximately 5-6 people, including at least one representative each from Planning, Finance, and the Executive Committee, to analyze USMS's need for paid positions and recommend a USMS compensation policy.
2. Recommend that the Finance Committee examine the need for licensed professional assistance (e.g. accounting, legal services, medical services) and when such services should be obtained for hire from outside of the organization.
3. Recommend that an LMSC workshop on dispute resolution be conducted at next year's convention.

Committee Chairs: Rob Copeland (Legislation), Doug Church (Finance), Mike Heather (Convention), Betsy Durrant (Planning), Patty Powis (Ad Hoc Legal Counselors)

Number of other delegates at this meeting: 31

MINUTES

I. Governance and its affect on Block 2 committees

Betsy Durrant reported that proposed governance changes, if approved, might impact Finance through the reorganization of the Board of Directors (BOD) and the creation of an Executive Director position. With regard to Legislation involvement, she reported that changes to the composition of the Executive Committee have been proposed as emergency legislation this year and that changes to the BOD will be taken up next year.

Tom Boak, who congratulated Betsy and her committee on the proposal they have created, saw no budget impact from governance changes in 2004 but expressed concern about the feasibility of the Executive Director position in future years given the need for Finance to present a balanced budget to the HOD.

Others commented on the need to involve Ad Hoc Legal Counselors as corporate policies ancillary to the governance changes are created, the need for governance changes based on areas of USMS that need to be fixed, and the reasons behind the BOD changes. The plan is for the Planning Committee to stay involved, along with more members from Legislation, as the governance changes move into the codification stage.

II. Use of paid services by USMS

Jeanne Ensign began the comments by noting that USMS has added employees and contractors over time and determined their pay on an ad hoc basis. She stated that this may result in inequitable pay. She suggested an overview of our paid positions and tasks and an analysis of compensation. Tom Boak added that this is a key issue when we are trying so hard to report out a balanced budget.

It was then suggested that USMS develop a compensation policy, in which USMS's philosophy for how it determines compensation would be set forth. Others commented on the idea of a compensation policy, stating that any such policy should be comprehensive and should examine which tasks should be done for pay rather than by volunteers and how much time is spent by those performing each task to determine an equitable compensation amount, and that the overview on professional staff should be future-looking to determine more than just USMS's current needs. Therefore, it was the sense of the group to **recommend that the Planning Committee establish a new task force consisting approximately 5-6 people, including at least one representative each from Planning, Finance, and the Executive Committee, to analyze USMS's need for paid positions and recommend a USMS compensation policy.**

During the discussion, others commented on the need to focus not just on pay but also on revenue generation. It was added that an Executive Director could focus on and be partially responsible for revenue generation.

Jon Steiner, following up on a comment by Doug Church, suggested that USMS create a policy regarding the use of professional services. Therefore, it was the sense of the group **to recommend that the Finance committee examine the need for licensed professional assistance (e.g. accounting, legal services, medical services) and when such services should be obtained for hire from outside of the organization.**

Finally, Jeanne Ensign suggested a different form of budgeting that would be accomplished in a more centralized manner rather than by committees that have small subject matter focus and sometimes overlapping programs. For example, such an approach could examine, from a centralized view, what percentage of our budget should be devoted to local operations across all committees.

III. Reducing conflict, disputes and grievances

The block discussed methods for preventing or reducing disputes that, apparently increasingly, arise based on the manner in which members communicate with one another, especially by e-mail. Suggestions included:

- Creation of a USMS e-mail/discussion forum code of ethics;
- Reduction in “fiefdoms” and silo structures that lead some members to protect turf;
- Teaching leaders of local entities, such as LMSCs and clubs, how to resolve disputes and prevent them from escalating. Based on this suggestion, made by Nan Stager, who is a professional mediator, it was the sense of the group to **recommend that an LMSC workshop on dispute resolution be conducted at next year’s convention.**

IV. Sources of revenue for USMS

The attendees brainstormed on additional sources of revenue for USMS, generating the following ideas:

- Have the national organization run its own National Championships and retain the net revenue;
- Communicate with members about opportunities for bequests to USMS;
- Generate new clubs to increase membership from the local level;
- Focus on membership retention, including tailoring the strategy to the size and type of the LMSC;
- Establish opportunities for endowments from members;
- Request donations from members, just as universities do with alumni – those who feel that they get more value than what they pay in dues may want to make donations;
- Assist LMSCs and clubs with ideas and strategies for stopping declines in membership;
- Focus on recruiting triathletes;
- Make quality on-deck coaching available to attract and retain members;
- Give more value to sponsors – reconsider offering mailing lists more than once per year; provide access to our membership as a benefit of sponsorship;
- Check box on registration forms for donations;
- Have national magazine publisher that could bring in more advertising revenue and link to our website;
- Raffles, including raffles of big-ticket items, such as a house.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 p.m.