

## Thursday, January 2

President Jim Miller called the meeting to order at 3:45 PM EST. Also present were Scott Rabalais, Doug Church, Sally Dillon, Lynn Hazlewood, Nancy Ridout, Patty Powis, and Tracy Grilli.

### Decisions since the last Executive Committee meeting:

- a. Approved the revised History and Archives RFP as recommended by the Data Base Task Force.
- b. Approved proposed language in Aimee Fitzgerald's contract to clarify that there are some items that USMS will not be able to give to Aimee for PR purposes.
- c. Referred the new USA-S rule regarding pool depth back to the USMS Rules Committee for consideration at the next convention as an emergency proposal.
- d. Denied a request to use budgeted funds to pay for convention related expenses.
- e. Approved the minutes of the December 9 conference call.
- f. During the October 28 conference call it was **MSA** to go to the Board of Directors (BOD), as per legal counsel, to obtain approval of the waiving of the PMG with regards to the History and Archives RFP. Although the results of the vote were reported to the BOD, they were not reported in subsequent minutes. Of the 41 members of the BOD, 36 voted yes and 5 did not vote.

Insurance: The EC discussed issues regarding insurance in preparation for a dinner meeting with Sandi Blumit and John Peterson. The group reconvened after dinner and further discussed the Insurance Committee issue that has arisen regarding the commission and broker fee that goes to our insurance broker, Risk Management Services, Inc. The members of the EC are in agreement that it is inappropriate for us to change the fee/commission structure between conventions and that the broker fee and commission should still be handled as two separate amounts for the time being. If the Insurance Committee wants to authorize the broker fee they should get an over-budget item approved. The commission is paid in January when the contract is enacted. The timing of the over-budget request depends on when the broker bonus should be paid and for what period of time it applies. It is conceded that the funds are already allocated in the budget but under a different request, thus will not affect the balance of the Insurance Committee's budget.

SWIM Magazine: In preparation for a morning meeting with Sports Publications, Inc., our contractor for Swim Magazine, the EC discussed the current contract and prepared an agenda.

## Friday, January 3

SWIM Magazine, continued: The EC conducted a business meeting with Brent Rutemiller, CEO of Sports Publications, and Phil Whitten, Swim Editor-in-Chief, to discuss the contract with the company. The current contract expires December 31, 2004.

Review of the past year: Jim asked each member of the EC to share our thoughts about the EC and how we are working together. The possibility of meeting more times during the year was discussed but no decision was made. The results of the exit surveys from convention and the recommendations from the "teaming together" block meetings led us to focus in on core objectives.

Core Objectives: Scott provided some excellent information about selecting core objectives. He noted the qualities that core objectives should have. With few exceptions, the teaming together recommendations from the block meetings would fit into a few core objectives. It was agreed that for objectives to be widely accepted a commitment must be made by the greater BOD. In order to involve them in the process, Scott will prepare a document that outlines core objectives. The BOD will be invited to critique suggested objectives and to offer suggestions. We will use a private discussion forum for this purpose and Scott will monitor the discussion. It is hoped that we can generate discussion and eventually support for the establishment of core objectives that can be embraced by all leaders in USMS.

Zone Chair Election realignment: A suggestion was made that the Zone Chair election be re-aligned with the other offices. The election of the Zone Chair was arranged to be offset from the election of other national offices in order to provide for a carryover. It has been the experience and observation of the national officers in

the last and current executive committees as well as the current Zone Chair, that what was intended has not worked and that the Zone Chair should be elected in accordance with the same schedule as all other national offices. The negative results of having the Zone Chair elected on a different cycle than the other officers are:

- a. The cohesiveness of the EC (which loses one of its members in the last year of its administration) is damaged.
- b. The Zone Chair that has to leave office before their EC's administration ends is unable to complete the job they started.
- c. The Zone Chair who joins an EC in the last year of its administration loses a whole year's productivity off their term of office. The job of an administration in its last year is to wrap up and facilitate a smooth transition to the next administration – not to explore new ideas and implement new projects.
- d. There is a lack of availability of qualified candidates for off-year elections.
- e. We end up having an election every year. Someone still has to organize the Zone Chair election.
- f. There is an implied lack of respect for the position of Zone Chair. No matter how you justify it, the implication is that the Zone Chair can't be elected with the other officers because they need to be available to run the election for the "more important" offices.

It was **MSA** that we are in favor of having the zone chair position be aligned with the other offices and that the current zone chair serve a 3-year term to bring the position into alignment. Doug will prepare a resolution for the EC to approve.

Special Task Forces: It was agreed that task forces should have a finite project and limit of time for their project and that it was under the purview of the president to assign a task force. Each task force should be given written guidance of its charge.

Budget submissions: The process of budget submission was discussed and it was agreed that we would adjust the timing so that the budgets get to Tom Boak and the Finance Committee in a more timely manner. Although the bulk of the budget is predicated on membership numbers, salaries, and insurance, we need to be more diligent in working with the committees we liaison. All committee chairs will be sent guidelines from the secretary with deadlines and instructions. The liaisons will follow up with their committee chairs. In order to avoid confusion, the budget requests will be sent to Tom and Finance by the liaisons, not the chairs. An organizational schedule was determined as follows:

- a. Sally will send a letter to liaisons so that it can be distributed to the committee chairs by May 1. It will be a uniform letter that each liaison will send out.
- b. Cost center heads will receive budget forms from the Finance chair by May 1.
- c. Budgets will be due from cost center heads to their EC liaisons by June 1.
- d. Budgets will be due from the liaisons to Tom Boak by July 1.

Some incentive ideas were discussed but no decisions were made. Liaisons need to work with their committee chairs to see that budget requests are justifiable.

#### **Saturday, January 4**

Discussion of unfinished business items: Sally pointed out that we have items in our minutes that become unresolved after a period of time. Various items were discussed as follows:

- a. Task Force on finance, budgets and audit: Doug reported that he would resume discussion of this issue with Tom Boak and other members of the task force. The project was put on "hold" while Tom established himself in the Finance Chair position.
- b. Distribution of PMG: It was **MSA** that we establish our three guidelines in one location on the web so they can be accessed directly by the membership. They would be the Professional Management Guidelines (PMG), Financial Operating Guidelines (FOG) and Election Guidelines (EG).
- c. Joint project (legislation, registration, and legal) to determine what policy to follow regarding swimmers who intentionally misrepresent their age. Patty believes this will be covered in the Part IV revisions being done by the Legislation Committee.
- c. National Sponsors: Doug will resume discussion with a task force to evaluate their worth.

It was decided that unresolved items in our minutes would be carried over as old business until they are resolved.

Convention: The last convention was discussed with a focus on keeping the good ideas and eliminating the bad ones. Most people embraced the “teaming together” concept and we will bring the groups together again. The schedule will be arranged so that meetings within a block never coincide; in fact, they will often share the same room with back to back meetings so there will never be overlaps. We looked at the exit surveys and other feedback. Next year Sally will give each evaluation a number that will be included with the responses. She will extract the current survey’s meeting space comments so they can be submitted to Mike Heather.

## **PROPOSED CONVENTION SCHEDULE**

The convention will start off with “Block Parties” on Wednesday evening where the committees meet within their blocks. The respective committee chairs will work before convention to set their agendas.

Four different meetings need to be “unopposed” this coming year: Legislation (2), Championship Bids, and International (FINA/Worlds discussion).

As per the election guidelines, Lynn clarified that if no nominations are made for officers, other than the incumbents, we will not need a candidate’s forum. We will adjust the schedule accordingly when the nominations close in March. *The attached schedule is subject to change.*

Convention related decisions were made as follows:

- a. We will add the Convention Cmte. to Block 2.
- b. We will ask San Diego to give us help with lunch ideas for the zone meetings.
- c. We will ask Peter Crumbine which meeting he’d like for the Long Distance bids.
- d. The theme for the convention will be – A San Diego Block Party.
- e. We will send this schedule out to the BOD as soon as possible so they can let us know of any serious conflicts.
- f. We would like to play music during breaks in the HOD room and will see if it can be arranged through Mike Heather.
- g. We will make an effort to have food available for USMS delegates in the mornings. Suggestions included: on the swim bus and in the hospitality room. We’ll see if Mike has some other suggestions.
- h. The convention packet will include information for delegates as to WHEN to arrive at convention.
- i. Tracy and Sally will work on dividers or tabs that will be distributed to the delegates for organizing convention materials.

Assignment of at large delegates: Sally provided a summary of the at-large delegates from the past three years. This past convention Jim offered liaisons and special assignments an at-large vote. There was no money attached to it. Beyond that we took other individuals with an effort to keep representation from the various zones balanced. Last year some at large delegates were assigned and then their LMSC didn’t fill their allotted spots. It was decided that for the coming year, Jim will send his criteria to each LMSC. We will expect the LMSCs to do their selections *before* someone from their LMSC can apply for an at-large spot. The person applying will need the blessing of their LMSC and timeliness of application will also be important. A deadline will be enforced. Liaisons and special assignments will still be offered an at-large vote.

Future meetings for the EC: The forums that were held this past year at pool nationals were discussed and it was agreed that we will continue to do the open forums during warm-ups on the day before the start of competition. Doug will work with Championship to see that the meeting is on the schedule and Nancy will contact Bill Volckening to see that it is announced in SWIM Magazine. The next in person meeting will be at the open forum at SC Nationals in Tempe. The majority of the EC expects to be present.

The next conference call will be at 8:00 PM EST on Jan 23.

## **Sunday, January 5**

Non-approved minutes on the web site: There was some discussion regarding the practice of posting Zone and HOD minutes on the web when they haven’t actually been approved. Should we provide a disclaimer or should we attempt to get approval before posting? It was **MSA** that we investigate the issue and come up with a process for posting convention minutes. Lynn will spearhead this project.

Part IV of the USMS Rules: Patty reported that the Legislation Cmte., rather than taking pieces of Pt IV and revising, has done a wholesale revision using the USA-S procedures as a model. There are several themes reflected in the proposed amendments to Part IV, including:

- a. The addition of a code of conduct;
- b. An effort to make the grievance procedure more clear.
- c. Changes to ensure that membership in USMS is described as an opportunity or privilege rather than a "right"; and
- d. The creation of a National Board of Review to hear grievances rather than the President or the Executive Committee.

The EC made various suggestions to the Part IV draft. We approve, in general, the concept of moving the power of resolving grievances from the EC to the National Board of Review (NBR). We have asked Patty to convey our sentiments to the Legislation Cmte.

Merchant Account: Doug commented that we seek to protect USMS so that it doesn't hold the bag for anybody else under any circumstances. There is a budgetary consideration because there is a charge associated with the account (set up fee, maintenance fee). Initial use would be for National Championships and the National Office and we need to contact major banks to see if we can do this. Other organizations should be able to develop accounts within the system to operate their programs. Doug will work with Lynn on this project.

Zone Chair Resolution: Whereas, the election of the Zone Chairperson was arranged to be offset from the election of other national offices in order to provide for a carryover; and,

Whereas, it has been the experience and observation of the national officers in the last executive committee and the current executive committee as well as the current Zone Chair, that what was intended has not worked and that the Zone Chair should be elected in accordance with the same schedule as all other national offices.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Executive Committee as follows:

1. The Legislation Committee is hereby requested to consider a rule change that would align the election of the Zone Chair with all other national offices.
2. The rule change should provide that it would become effective in 2004 so as to extend the term of the current Zone Chair through the 2003 election cycle, thus, the next Zone Chair election will occur in 2005 together with all other national offices.
3. A copy of this resolution shall be immediately transmitted to the Legislation Committee for deliberation and action.

So resolved.

Governance Task Force: Taking what was done at convention, we need a set of agreed principles or core objectives to be established before we look further at governance.

Miscellaneous business:

- a. Exit survey for committee meetings: Sally will re-send each liaison the summary that is organized by committee and each liaison will cut/paste the items for their committees and contact their chairs about the comments and suggestions that were made.
- b. FOG and partial reimbursement of liaisons: The Finance Committee is discussing whether additional people should be included with various justifications and they have asked for some direction from us. The EC is in agreement that, at this time, there is no great support for doing this.
- c. An effort will be made to use the private discussion forum for BOD discussions and decisions in the future and the details will be clearly explained to the participants.

The EC retreat adjourned at 11:00 AM

Respectfully submitted by:

Sally Ann Dillon, USMS Secretary