

President Jim Miller called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM on Friday, February 22. Also present were Scott Rabalais, Sally Dillon, Doug Church, Lynn Hazlewood, Nancy Ridout, Jack Geoghegan and Tracy Grilli.

#### SHARED VISION:

The EC spent a good portion of the first morning brainstorming and sharing our individual philosophies about USMS. We would like to identify a commonality among the diverse membership and to define our organization after 30 years of existence and where it is going. One of the EC's goals is to set an agenda for our administration that will move the organization forward in the coming years. It was noted that the way in which issues are approached has evolved to a point that is significantly different than it was only a few years ago. With an almost universal use of E-mail and the Internet among our membership, a high degree of communication takes place and is expected.

Methods for handling issues were discussed. Suggestions included having a member of the EC act as a mediator instead of involving the entire committee in the discussion. Also, we could look at what US Swimming does and develop a process. LMSCs should try to resolve issues before they come for help.

Growth of USMS was discussed. As the organization grows in size, projects that aren't doable by volunteers may be encountered and more professional management may be necessary. Our technical infrastructure is being revised and the EC needs to be careful as we go forward when consultants are hired. As issues come up in the future, a procedure should be in place for processing RFPs, evaluating bids and administering projects. Otherwise money will be spent that two or three years later may have to be spent on the same project again. The EC is interested in reviewing financial procedures to minimize any unwarranted expenses.

The mission of USMS was discussed. Do we need to revisit our mission statement? The EC discussed the general mission of USMS along with the accuracy of its mission statement. Scott proposed changes and numerous other suggestions were brought forth. The EC will continue to review the USMS mission statement and consider a revision to be brought before the HOD at convention.

USMS experiences problems because it is a volunteer organization yet much of its success is due to its volunteers. The organization depends on leadership from the team, LMSC, and administration levels and the leaders should be given the tools necessary for success, awards, or pats on the back so that they are encouraged and recognized.

A letter to Jim (and copied to all) from John Spannuth was discussed briefly. John detailed ideas for the expansion of USMS. The EC will make it a point to discuss John's ideas more completely at next year's retreat and for the time being we will focus on three membership components of USMS: competitors, fitness swimmers and triathletes. However, nothing we do should prevent a local club from choosing how they spend their time and money. At the present time, we will not focus on "learn to swim" programs or provide rehabilitation. It was agreed that more publicity about the Masters swimmer should be displayed at facilities as well as in local newspapers. Interaction and fellowship is something we all prize and social events are important to the success of local programs as well as national events.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

Age issue – It was brought to the attention of the EC that a swimmer changed his age upon moving and registering with a new LMSC. Considerable investigation into the matter occurred before this meeting and the swimmer has submitted a letter of explanation to the president. Discussion took place regarding a previous situation when a swimmer had misrepresented his age. It was agreed that all circumstances of cheating should be dealt with but the circumstances from one situation to another can vary and the remedies might also vary. It was MSA to suspend the swimmer from the ability to register for the organization for two years effective January 1, 2002. He will also forfeit any and all USMS awards received during the year he was incorrectly registered. The swimmer's next eligible year will commence on January 1, 2004. (The EC noted its jurisdiction as per Articles 402.1.2 and 507.1.3.)

It was also brought to the attention of the EC that another swimmer had registered with a different birthday from one year to another. Although considerable investigation had taken place prior to this meeting, the swimmer had not yet been afforded the opportunity to submit a letter of explanation. This issue was tabled until the next EC meeting.

A brief discussion took place regarding suspension and censorship and whether we should propose a policy to be ratified by the HOD. No decision was made.

Open meeting policy: At November's convention the HOD asked the EC to determine the adequacy of the open meeting policy. The following resolution was approved: The EC recognizes that while the governing law of our corporation does not require open meetings at convention, the EC encourages and recommends that all meetings of any USMS committee/body be open to all USMS members except on those occasions when matters are being discussed pertaining to (1) real or potential litigation; (2) USMS personnel matters; (3) contract negotiations for personal services or with outside contractors or providers; (4) any other matter that is entitled to confidentiality under state or federal law. Notwithstanding the right of any USMS committee/body to conduct discussions and gather information in private within the framework set forth above, no official action may take place in executive session and the essential rationale for any official action shall be set forth during the open session of such body and reflected in the minutes of such meeting.

#### NEW TOPICS:

Define criteria for becoming allied and/or affiliated with other organizations: The USOC and FINA have asked us how we will define our relationship to the newly formed ASA. It was MSA that we direct the Legislation Committee to define the criteria for becoming allied and/or affiliated with other organizations such as ASA, Senior Games, YMCA and all other existing relationships. It was noted that our non-profit status with IRS does not allow us to affiliate with "for profit" organizations.

Personnel evaluations/contracts: It was noted that the evaluations take place during convention each year (in closed session as indicated above). As per the Professional Management Guidelines, the Corporate Secretary should maintain personnel evaluations and Nancy will send them to Sally for the corporate files. According to the Financial Operating Guidelines, copies of contracts should go to the EC, Finance Committee chair, and the Sponsor Liaison. Copies would also go to a committee chair if they were involved in forming the agreement.

Masters Magazine: Jim reported that he was contacted by the publisher of a multi-sport magazine who wishes to distribute free copies of the magazine to our members who are age 40 years and older. The bi-monthly magazine deals with various Masters sports and Masters swimming would be featured in two issues each year. Expected circulation will be 300,000-400,000. The EC agrees that this might be appealing to our members. Initially, only one issue would be sent per swimmer but an enclosed card could be returned to accept a free year's subscription. Nancy asked that USMS be given overruns of the two issues that will feature Masters swimming. The EC concurred that it is in favor of pursuing the magazine, and if the agreement is successful Jim will mention it in an article pointing out that it is a new benefit of membership. It was MSA that the EC move forward with the "Greater than 40" magazine proposal. Jim will contact Phil Whitten about the magazine, which would promote both USMS and SWIM Magazine. The EC will ask the Marketing Committee to work out the details. The agreement should allow only one mailing from our database and language in the proposed contract about "sharing of the lists" would need to be clarified by our legal counsel and the Marketing chair.

Recognition rings: Jim presented information about recognition rings designed by Ed Nessel. The rings could indicate various award categories or positions in the organization. Ed proposed that patches could also be ordered. A \$250 set up charge would apply unless there is an order of five or more rings. Ed would work with Hasty Awards to make the rings available to USMS members. The EC MSA to authorize the execution of a license agreement with Hasty Awards for the purpose of producing rings to be sold recognizing various achievements or membership levels. There was no action by the EC regarding the patches.

LMSC and club growth: A few ideas were shared about promoting clubs and LMSCs. New England Masters produced a brochure that is revised every year and distributed at pools, workout groups, and meets. They also conducted a survey of members and found that "those who participate in a competitive event were more likely to renew their membership" and "those swimmers who had coached workouts also renewed at much higher

rates". Based on that data, NEM has created marketing programs that actively promoted coached workouts and they have devoted LMSC funds to help coaches fill up their programs. Not surprising, the "end result, NEM has a 80% success rate in renewing members". (That compares with about 60% nationwide.) Pacific Master also puts out a brochure that is revised annually.

Zone Chair – move to elect with other offices: As suggested by a couple of EC members, discussion took place regarding the election of the Zone Chair in "off years." Currently, the Zone Chair joins the Executive "team" during the last year of a term. It may prove more cohesive to the EC if all officers were elected at the same time. To avoid a conflict, the Vice Chair of the Zone Committee would conduct the elections. Recognizing that some valid points were made, the EC will let the Legislation Committee know of our opinions and ask them to consider legislation to put the Zone Chair back into the same rotation as the other elected offices.

Editorial Review Board/Publishing House: Considerable discussion took place regarding the possibility of having an Editorial Review Board/Publishing House. One idea offered was to have a sub-committee that would consist of chairs from various committees, the SWIM Magazine editor, webmaster and members of the Publications and Marketing Committees to set the agenda for all of our publications (magazine, web site, brochures). Another idea was for the group to set the agenda for SWIM Magazine only and not have any role elsewhere. It was discussed that in accordance with our contract, USMS has complete control of the information that goes into SWIM Magazine. Bill Volckening, our editor, should be responsible for content and he should be working with SWIM Magazine on the editorial calendar. Bill provides our portion but SWIM Magazine has not provided theirs. Hugh Moore joined the discussion by telephone. He thinks that members of the Communications Committee should work with Bill to develop the calendar and other committees should be involved when they are contributing to an article. It is intended that other members of the Communications Committee would work in a similar capacity with the USMS web site.

It was also discussed that the Communications Committee would be involved in the production and/or distribution of materials to raise awareness about Masters swimming (e.g. posters, brochures). They would link with other committees such as Publications and Marketing. The goal would be to identify a project and then develop an interactive committee agreement. Distribution would rely on the LMSCs and clubs. Hugh will make some phone calls to get his committee members more involved.

Volunteer Base: Jim asked if there is a volunteer base of non-convention goers that we might consider for our committees. A question posed was as to whether our committees should be composed of people who attend convention or should we get recommendations from LMSCs and other people who are active. Since the EC wishes to encourage the business of USMS to take place between conventions, there seems to be no reason why committees can't have working members who do not attend convention. Some committees already do.

National Aquatics Summit: David Diehl has been the representative for USMS in past years but may not be able to attend due to health problems. Jim asked for a volunteer if needed and Scott volunteered.

History and Archives: A brief discussion was held regarding the RFP that is being prepared by Carl House and his committee. The intention is to have all of the databases in USMS control. The EC appreciates Carl's value to the organization with his vision and the way he has involved others in the committee process. The sub-committee next conference with Carl and Barbara Dunbar is scheduled for March 8. (See further discussion of data base infrastructure in the Registration item on page 5.)

Determine a plan of action for documents: Recognizing the importance of retaining historical documents, Sally and Lynn will work together to develop a list of documents that committee chairs should maintain and pass along to their successors. In the future, tapes from the convention meetings will only be kept for two years. Sally reported that the Secretary's files include documents from conventions and minutes from meetings. The other EC members should determine what should be retained and eventually passed along as well.

Professional Management Guidelines: Sally provided a copy of the guidelines labeled "draft" and dated 10/11/00. Comparisons to other copies confirmed that this version is the final version; therefore it was MSA to remove the word "draft" from the document.

Convention: Considerable discussion about convention focused on the hectic pace that has been experienced in recent years. It was suggested that direction needed to be provided to convention delegates regarding their purpose and activity at convention. Although efforts have been made to encourage the committees to get their work done during the year, many are still coming to convention with a “full plate.” The EC would like to take advantage of the unique opportunity convention brings by having delegates and committees interact with each other. The opportunities for learning need to be increased so the delegates can return to their LMSCs and share new ideas. Inspiring the delegates should be a priority. A concern was expressed that the valuable interaction with others has been lost by creating so many committees.

It was decided to combine committees into groups that have a similar focus. For example, the Championship, Officials, Rules, International and Coaches committees all focus to a great degree on the competition aspects of swimming.

The committee groupings selected by the EC are:

- 1 - Championship, Coaches, International, Officials, Rules
- 2 - Planning, Legislation, Finance, Legal
- 3 - Marketing, Publications, Communications, Registration
- 4 - Safety Education, Sports Medicine, Insurance, Fitness, Long Distance
- 5 – History & Archives, Records & Tabulations, Recognition & Awards, ISHOF Nominating

The two-hour blocks of time will be divided as follows:

- 20 minutes – The group of committees meet together and discuss a particular theme/issue as it applies to the committees (a member of the EC will lead the discussion).
- 1 hour, 10 minutes – Each committee in the group meets separately to conduct their business and discuss their role in the development of the theme.
- 30 minutes - The group will reconvene to come to a conclusion and wrap-up of their involvement both as a collective group and as an individual committee.

Some committees will need to have an extra meeting (Championship and Long Distance for bid selections, Rules and Finance) but the remaining committees will meet only once. The committee chairs will be given some new guidelines regarding the completion of their committee business. (More about this later in these minutes.)

A recent survey indicated that less than 40 percent of the HOD go to the pool National Championships. That information and comments made on the exit surveys about the value and length of the bid presentations were discussed. The EC decided to give the Championship Committee a “stand alone” meeting where they would interview the bidders and allow the delegates to participate in the selection debate. This arrangement would (1) condense the time frame and avoid multiple presentations by the bidders; (2) alleviate the concern that a disproportionate percentage of time is spent on elite competitive swimming; and (3) allow the Championship Committee, with its expertise, to have a larger role in the selection process. It was noted that the Long Distance Committee has always selected championship bids in this manner. The EC recommends that the Championship Committee conduct the bidder presentations during its meetings and not during the HOD meetings. The Championship Committee meeting at which the bids are presented should be given adequate notice and made available to all interested members to attend. The recommendation of the Championship Committee should then be made and placed in their report to present to the HOD. If the recommendation is “pulled” at the HOD, then discussion on the recommendation can occur at the HOD. If not and the report is approved, then, by operation of the rules of the HOD, the recommendation will be approved by the HOD and no further voting or other action will be required. It is the intent of the EC that this procedure NOT require a change in the current rules.

Other Ideas for the convention were discussed:

- Scott will look for the Robert’s Rules of Order booklets that were used in conventions years ago and the EC will provide them this year.
- Information about the new delegates should be obtained and shared with all delegates at check-in.
- The EC desires more social opportunities and plans to have a “joke off” in the hospitality suite on Wednesday evening as well as other events.

- Time will be allotted for presentations by the Coaches (2), Sports Medicine, and Marketing Committees.
- A brief workshop on “finance” for committee chairs will be held during the BOD meeting on Wednesday.

Changes in committee procedures: Regarding committees’ efforts to accomplish their business during the year rather than at convention, the EC outlined specific procedures to follow.

1. The annual report will need to be more complete and include activities and decisions during the year that would normally be reported on at convention. Action items should be noted. This report needs to be in the hands of the EC liaisons by July 1.
2. Sally and Tracy will design the format for the annual report and have it in the hands of the committee chairs by June 1.
3. The budget process will be streamlined. Doug will see that the chairs get information, explanations and comments about the previous budgets by June 1. The budget forms have already been sent to the chairs in the Committee Chair Handbook.
4. The committee budget proposals for the coming year need to be in the hands of the EC liaisons by July 1 and in the hands of the Finance Chair by July 15.
5. The EC Liaisons will work closely with the committee chairs to provide assistance with the annual report and budget process.

Contracts: There was further discussion regarding the distribution of contracts to the EC. In the future, Jim will send an electronic copy of the contracts for immediate approval. As the liaison to Mel Goldstein, the National Sponsor liaison, Nancy should be seeing the contracts at an early stage. The actual ideas and terms should be discussed before contracts are drawn up.

Registration discussion: Currently, the registration database is being updated to allow the registrars to submit directly to the National Office. One benefit is that the update will allow immediate access to the registration of new members. The EC discussed at length various advantages and disadvantages of a centralized registration procedure. The EC decided that, before expending time and money, we should undertake a study of our entire data base infrastructure and what options we have for moving forward into the future. This study will take place immediately so we can bring budgeting proposals to the HOD at the next convention. A centralized process that may include Hy-Tek is being considered.

Agenda items for Hawaii meeting: The EC will direct the first 30 minutes and conduct a wrap-up during the last 15 minutes. Audience generated discussion will fill the rest of the meeting time. The following items will be submitted to SWIM Magazine for publication in the May/June issue.

- The new and improved convention formats.
- USMS – its Mission and identity.
- Registration issues.
- Championship site selection process update and input from the Championship Committee on projects they are working on.

The next conference call will take place: April 2 at 7 PM EST.

Finance Chair report: Since the meeting was held in Houston, Tom Boak was able to speak before the EC regarding Finance Committee issues. He reported that he surveyed his committee and copies of the action plan were given to the EC. Tom also reviewed the contracts that Jack provided and said they are all consistent with agreements negotiated in the past. It was discussed that USMS needs to have criteria to evaluate the value of the various sponsorship agreements with the organization. The purpose is to cultivate revenue and to market our programs. Nancy’s theory was that we didn’t need to take in thousands of dollars but we would want projects or services that would appeal to the specific needs of the organization. Services, projects and products are emphasized more than dollars. At the same time, it would be good to determine how the benefits relate to cost.

With respect to the budget process, the EC shared with Tom the plans mentioned earlier for assisting the committee chairs in timely submission of budgets. The timeline will greatly improve the Finance Committee’s

ability to function at convention by allowing them plenty of advance time to look at the individual budgets. The EC needs to move into a position where we support (or not) the proposals on committees' budgets.

Miscellaneous ideas that resulted from the various discussions:

- The EC could ask the committee chairs for quarterly reports to attach to the minutes of EC meetings.
- The LMSCs need to be given the tools of success. We consider our organization similar to a federal system of government. USMS starts with the clubs and filters up through the LMSCs to the national organization.
- Some consistency needs to be developed so that new members are immediately put in the loop to receive SWIM Magazine and their LMSC newsletter.
- If high turnover rates in the LMSCs are apparent, then the tools of success may not adequately get to that level.
- Articles in SWIM Magazine should include some instructional aspect that can provide an opportunity to all.
- Eliminate the misnomer that this organization is the best-kept secret around. Make it possible for anyone in the US who would like to participate in USMS to have that opportunity.
- Develop an organizational chart. Health would be at the top with the chairs, LMSCs and committees all leading to the final goal. If there were an issue to be resolved, the chart would show the path to follow to get resolution.
- Provide a portion of *Streamlines* that would be appropriate at the LMSC level to be integrated into an LMSC newsletter and send it to the newsletter editors for their use.
- SWIM Magazine ideas – “feature a coach”, a column for “rookies” in the sport of swimming, “what’s new on the USMS web site”, and a “help wanted” column for volunteer needs.

Miscellaneous Announcements:

Nike is planning to give a team \$1500 a year. The team will get caps and other goodies and the philosophy is to help a floundering team or start a new team.

Meeting adjourned Sunday, February 24, at 11:25 AM.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Sally Ann Dillon, USMS Secretary