

U.S. Masters Swimming

Committee Name: Recognition & Awards

Committee Chair: Elizabeth Nymeyer

Minutes recorded by: Sally Dillon

Annual Meeting

Date/time of meeting: August 11, 2024, 6 pm CST

Actions taken: MSA to approve the July 21, 2024 meeting minutes

Number of committee members present: 11

Absent: 4

Guests: 15

Present: Rich Burns (PC), Hill Carrow (NC), Sally Dillon (PN), Caitlin Gagnon (OH), Tara Mack (NE), Ann Marshfield (LE), Michael Moore (PC), Nancy Nevid (FL), Sonny Nguyen (NC), Elizabeth Nymeyer (MN), Nancy Ridout (PC), Crystie McGrail (CO/VPLO), Daniel Paulling (FL/National Office)

Absent: Sara Dunn (NC), Jessie Feng (NE), Teresa Frias (OH), Ray Novitske (PV)

Guests: Sue Nutty, Alta Stengel, Jim Izzi, MJ Caswell, Kirk Clear, Marilyn Fink, Barbara Dunbar, Robin Smith, Donita Flecken, Erika Hektner, Cheryl Kupan, Marian Whitley, Kathleen Steffer, Walt Reid, and Flora Duncan.

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm Central time.

Beth Nymeyer welcomed members and guests.

1. **VPLO report:** Crystie noted that the BOD would be meeting on the 12th. She thanked Beth and the committee for their hard work and care getting recognition to USMS members. She encouraged meeting guests to consider serving on the committee next year.
2. **Approval of minutes: MSA to approve the July 21, 2024 meeting minutes**, which were posted on the R&A community page.
3. **Next meeting:** Tentatively set for October 13 at 6 pm Central. Agreement wasn't unanimous and four members were absent. Beth will email the committee to confirm the date.
4. **Subcommittee reports:**
 - a. **Ransom J. Arthur MD award (RJA):** Beth asked that discussion about next year's presentation procedures be deferred to the end of the meeting, when she expects unlimited time will be available. Subcommittee Chair Michael Moore reported that the 2024 honoree is Kris Wingenroth (Gulf LMSC). He noted that in 2025 the nomination deadline would be July 1, which is in line with the other USMS awards. He also pointed out that the change will affect some of the award's usual protocols. Further discussion is needed.
 - b. **Masters International Swimming Hall of Fame (MISHOF):** Sally reported that after a long wait, it has been announced that Nadine Day, the committee's nomination for 2023 Contributor, will be inducted on October 4 at the Hall of Fame facility in Ft. Lauderdale (for 2023). Following that announcement, the MISHOF subcommittee researched and prepared a nomination for Jim Matysek as a MISHOF Contributor for 2024. Jim's nomination cited the "pioneering" accomplishments he had made as a USMS member. There is still discussion as to when/where the class of 2024 will be inducted. We've heard for quite some time that the induction might take place at the World Aquatics championship meet. Walt confirmed that the next championships will be held in Singapore in 2025 and the intention is to induct both 2024 and 2025 classes during that event.
 - c. **Fitness award (FIT):** Ann reported that three nominations were received. She recused herself due to a conflict of interest. She thanked the selection committee members; Teresa Frias, Sonny Nguyen, Sally Dillon, and Coaches committee members Brandi Bashor and Mike Hamm. Note: the acronym for this award was approved right "before the bell" at the end of the meeting.
 - d. **June Krauser Communications award (JKC):** Nancy R explained that the award goes to a person (or group) who best communicates and furthers the goals of USMS. There were some difficulties this year as some nominations lacked appropriate data and she struggled to get volunteers for the selection committee. The committee met via Zoom to discuss the four excellent nominations and select this year's recipient. Sara Dunn, Jessie Feng, Sonny Nguyen, and Nancy made the selection in the absence of two members who unexpectedly couldn't attend. This was approved by Chair Beth Nymeyer. Nancy noted that the subcommittee needs to look at the nomination form to make

sure it allows for the type of information that defines worthy recipients. Beth mentioned that nominators need to provide more information and that accomplishments “in the pool” are not relevant for service awards.

- e. Dorothy Donnelly Service award (DDSA): Beth noted that the award is presented to USMS registered individuals whose volunteer service contributed to the growth improvement, or success of USMS locally, regionally, or nationally. A rubric was developed by Beth and simplified by Ray. Nine members were selected to receive the award. The subcommittee agreed that some of the nominations were not very informative. Hill volunteered to write the DDSA poems again this year.
 - f. Club of the Year (COYA): In Sara’s absence, Tara reviewed the selection process. Five nominations were received, and they varied significantly in content. The selection committee consisted of Sara, Rich, Teresa, Sally, Tara, Crystie, and Kenny Brisbin (Coaches committee). Tara suggested we revisit the nomination materials to make them clearer and to be sure we are collecting the information we need to make appropriate decisions. Sally noted that at least two of the nominations were incomplete and suggested that nominations for all R&A awards be reviewed as soon as they are submitted. Nominators should be informed if their paperwork is “lacking” and be given a short deadline to re-submit.
 - g. Award stories: Ray provided a written report that Beth read. Good progress has been made writing the stories for over a dozen recipients whose committees have not contributed. All but one of the Fitness Award stories is completed. All OW Service and DEI awards are updated and completed. All but the 2023 Officials Award story is completed. Still to do are the Staff, Coaches, Long Distance, and Championship awards. Help from those committees is needed. He thanked Nancy K for writing most of the stories this year. Nancy said that “doing the research for the award stories had been inspirational.”
 - h. Social media and direct outreach: Caitlin made “tiles” about the various awards and some story graphics. She reported Ohio LMSC had 1000 “impressions” on Facebook and Instagram. The tiles can be used again if the information is still correct. Tara mentioned that emails for LMSC contacts that are listed on the USMS website were not always functioning. She found personal emails and sent about 20 messages promoting nominations and heard back from only one. Nancy R referred to previous years when we used Google Docs to populate the information and the ease it was to see who was doing outreach. She suggested one person take on the task to reach out to all the contacts within USMS instead of relying on various committee members. Michael mentioned that there is a standard code for all LMSC leaders (PCchair@usms.org is an example). Beth noted that they are not always up to date. Nancy R suggested that USMS must have the info and should share it with the committee. Tara added to clarify that she started with the shared doc, realized they weren’t all correct or weren’t getting delivered, so she went to the LMSC websites for each group she was responsible for contacting. She then added that the broader issue seems to be the website (cyber) problems with the USMS website and email addresses and acknowledged that this is something that USMS is aware of and is working on. She reiterated that we do indeed have a shared document, and we were all given access to it to contact our assigned LMSCs. Beth will add this topic as a new agenda item.
 - i. Award video for Annual Meeting: Beth shared Ray’s report. Notices were sent to all committees and people who select recipients, with an August 10 deadline to provide names. Five have been reported, six are needed from the following awards: JKC, National Championship, OW Service, Officials Excellence, Kerry “O’Brien Coaches, and Long Distance National Championship. The National Office has set a deadline of September 1 for the awards video. This leaves Ray with 3 weeks to record the presentations, do the graphics, select backgrounds, and assemble the video while recipients are still to be selected. Ray has been keeping subcommittee members informed and copied on emails to mentor them for future award presentations. Subcommittee members are Beth, Jessie, Caitlin, and Nancy K.
5. **Finishing 2024 projects**: Online Forms & Best Practices documents. Beth said we covered most of this during the meeting.
 6. **Historical Document filing**: Sally reported that, as requested, she forwarded the historical documents in her care to Beth, Tara, and Crystie. An online location is needed. All will need annual updating.
 7. **RJA Presentation Guidelines, 2025**: Michael noted that the historical deadline to nominate for the RJA award has been March 15. Once nominations close, time is needed for reviewing the paperwork, asking for more information when needed, and organizing the materials. He thanked Sally for her

efforts this year to streamline that process (Google Docs yielded some unorganized applications). The distribution and voting for a recipient take a couple weeks. In recent years, the recipient hasn't been at Spring Nationals for the traditional award announcement. A presentation in the recipient's LMSC has been organized, with the help from the LMSC and/or nominator. As noted in 4.a above, the R&A committee voted to move the deadline to July 1. Michael explained the "new timeline" and how the process might work and posed several questions. How do we fit in the aforementioned tasks (vetting, voting, planning)? Do we announce right away or wait until an in-person event takes place? If it is a surprise, what opportunity does the recipient have to prepare the traditional acceptance speech? Michael went on to say we will know more about future meetings after the upcoming Annual Meeting. Crystie said it would be expected that the recipient be informed so they could prepare a speech, but it would be a surprise to most others. Nancy R asked: "is it worth our time to go through all this work if the control comes from outside our committee?" Sally explained that the R&A committee was initially formed because of the RJA award. While we govern numerous other awards now, we need to continue doing our best to maintain the RJA award and to provide an experience that honors the recipient of USMS's highest honor. Michael agreed and wanted to do what's best for the recipient. Sally noted that she had forwarded an email from Kris Wingenroth to the committee prior to the meeting. Kris expressed her thanks and commented on the timing of the award presentation. Sally suggested the subcommittee communicate via email and Zoom to create a plan and she encouraged other committee members to join the conversation. Beth asked those interested to contact Michael directly.

MSA to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 pm Central time.