
Action Items:

1. MSA to grant Vice President of Local Operations Julie Heather a leave of absence until March 15, 2008.
2. MSA to have a formal exit interview with Todd Smith, conducted by one or two people, in addition to any conducted by the president.
3. MSA the final paycheck for Todd Smith.
4. MSA the following new language for FOG IV.C.2: “The Convention registration fee for all members of the Board of Directors, the Executive Director, the National Office Administrator, Chairs of Standing and Ad Hoc Committees, Controller, National Corporate Partner Liaison, Internal Auditor, Webmaster Magazine Editor, Liaisons, Appointments and Special Assignments, Zone Representatives and Coordinators shall be reimbursed by USMS conditioned on compliance with Article 507.4.5 and 507.4.6 and included in the Convention Budget.”
5. MSA the following new language for the USMS privacy policy in relation to registration information:
“To protect the confidentiality of members’ USMS registration information, this information may only be disclosed for official USMS and LMSC business to authorized persons or agencies for use specifically relating to the conduct of Masters swimming. Examples of legitimate reasons for disclosure include:
 - A director of a sanctioned event wishing to compile a list of athletes in the meet database may receive a report of an LMSC’s members including member names, birth dates, ages, clubs, ID numbers and genders.
 - A certified representative of a member club wishing to verify and communicate with club members may receive a report of club members including member names, ID numbers, mailing address and email address.Those given access to member information must sign a statement that they will use the information only for the specific purpose for which the information was requested.”
6. MSA that national championship meet hosts be allowed access to USMS member registration information.
7. MSA to direct the Branding Task Force to investigate using outside resources to develop a new brand image.
8. MSA that the Executive Committee find someone to do a reasonable job of providing current content for the home page of our website so it can be posted on a more routine basis to change what’s on the home page.
9. MSA the following resolution:
“WHEREAS, under the terms of an agreement dated September 15, 2004 (the ‘Agreement’), United States Masters Swimming (‘USMS’) agreed to advance operating funds to the XI FINA Masters World Championships Local Organizing Committee (‘LOC’) for management of the XI FINA Masters World Championships; and
WHEREAS, USMS advanced a total of \$265, 324.43 to the LOC; and
WHEREAS, the LOC repaid to USMS \$125,828.09 in principal out of net revenue remaining after payment of all reasonable and necessary expenses from the XI FINA

World Masters Championships; and
WHEREAS, on March 6, 2007, the USMS Executive Committee approved a motion to forgive accrual or collection of any interest owed under the Agreement; and
WHEREAS, there remains \$139,496.34 in principal that was advanced to the LOC by USMS and that has not been repaid; and
WHEREAS, the LOC has no remaining net revenue and has ceased operation,
NOW, THEREFORE, the USMS Board of Directors hereby forgives repayment of the remaining amount of \$139,496.34 by the LOC and agrees to forego any other sums, including interest, owed by the LOC to USMS.”

10. MSA the following resolution:
“WHEREAS, the USMS Board of Directors has discussed the use of results from USMS-sanctioned meets,
RESOLVED that times achieved at sanctioned events be considered for USMS national records, USMS Top 10 times and FINA world records.”
 11. MSA to appoint Jerry Clark as USA Triathlon liaison, under the Member Services Division.
 12. MSA that a group of interested persons led by the at-large directors and the past-presidents form a task force to develop a policy and strategy for our interactions with related organizations.
 13. MSA to reappoint the Benefits and Compensation Committee as composed at the 2007 midyear meeting.
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President Rob Copeland called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. CST, February 8, 2008, in the SpringHill Suites in Grapevine, Texas. Also present were Vice Presidents Leo Letendre (National Operations), Mike Heather (Community Services), Mark Gill (Member Services); Secretary Meg Smath; Treasurer Jeff Moxie; Immediate Past-President Jim Miller; Legal Counsel Patty Miller; At-Large Directors Anna Lea Roof (Breadbasket), Betsy Durrant (Colonies), Jerry Clark (Dixie), Nadine Day (Great Lakes), Michael Moore (Oceana), Jeanne Ensign (Pacific Northwest), Carolyn Boak (South Central), Laura Winslow (Southwestern); Past-Presidents Ted Haartz, Tom Boak, Mel Goldstein and Nancy Ridout; National Office Administrator Tracy Grilli.

Leave of absence

VP of Local Operations Julie Heather has asked for a leave of absence until March 15, 2008. **MSA to grant this leave.** The vote was 13-0 in favor, with Mike abstaining. Julie would like to continue to chair the LMSC Task Force when she returns, but has asked to be replaced as chair of the Club Development Task Force and removed from the Policy Task Force.

Resignation of executive director

Todd Smith has resigned as executive director, effective February 18, 2008. Rob has spoken to Todd, and reported that Todd indicated he was not dissatisfied with the job, but simply received an offer he couldn't refuse. Jim added that Todd wants to assist us in the transition. Todd has suggested that we establish clear lines of communication, power and direction in regard to the ED. He also recommended that we establish a physical, as

opposed to a virtual, national office. Tom said that we need to treat Todd fairly and comply with his contract. Tracy agreed with Todd's opinion that we need a physical national office and that it should not be organized around the employees we already have.

Rob will announce Todd's resignation to our LMSCs, members of the House of Delegates and U.S. Aquatic Sports. Jim said that the EC intends to do a face-to-face exit interview with Todd. Nancy said it was appropriate for the EC to work out contract issues, but that the entire BOD needs to be involved in the larger picture.

Rob will get in touch with Todd and find out his progress on various projects. Mel will take over Todd's work with sponsors, and some duties will be assigned to EC members. We will make sure we don't lose anything of strategic value to the corporation, and determine what can be put on hold. Nancy asked if it would be beneficial to have people Todd did not work as closely with conduct the exit interview. Jeff said that in his experience, exit interviews tend to go better if the person leaving has a relationship with the person conducting the interview. **MSA to have a formal exit interview with one or two people in addition to any conducted by the president.** Tom pointed out that the transition must be organized and we need proper documentation. Mark said the exit interview would be important to us for lessons learned, and Jim reiterated that Todd is open to an exit interview. Betsy agreed that we need to give Todd the opportunity to tell us what we should do differently with our next ED. Rob asked that directors get any specific questions they would like asked to him. He also said that Jeff and Jim had already been named to the search committee, and that we were looking for subject matter experts for the other members. The search will proceed as quickly as possible. We will determine if we need an interim ED after the exit interview with Todd. Jim and Jeff will determine the composition of the search committee before the end of the midyear meeting. Mark clarified that we may determine what type of person is needed on the committee, but not specifically who that person is. It may be a good idea that some members of the search committee not be on the BOD and bring a different experience. Carolyn suggested the committee include another past-president besides Jim. Jeff, Nadine, Tom and Patty formed a subcommittee to discuss resolution of Todd's benefits.

On the issue of communication, Betsy said that she understands that it sometimes takes the EC a while to finalize its minutes, but asked if Meg could send a short summary of the EC's meetings to the remainder of the BOD before the minutes are approved. Meg said she would try. Patty said that the EC has been discussing ways to improve communication. Michael said that in particular communication about online registration had been unclear. Mark added that we need to be careful not to overload our employees by scheduling conference calls after their normal working hours.

The subcommittee of Jeff, Nadine, Tom and Patty outlined the amount owed Todd for his final paycheck. **MSA this amount.**

Audit Committee report

This committee was set up at last year's midyear meeting; it is composed of Michael and Anna Lea, and chaired by Jeanne. Jeanne asked that she be replaced as chair, because it is not her area of expertise. She has lined up a couple of people from the Finance Committee to work on creating an Audit Committee. There is some urgency to initiating this committee, because it will be needed to audit the LMSCs with more than \$50,000 income, under the terms of our crime insurance policy. Michael felt the committee

needed to be composed of members of the BOD, as this is the way other boards he's been a part of have operated, but Jeanne felt we didn't have the necessary expertise on the BOD. Jeanne clarified that we are speaking of two different groups: one to set up the committee (a task force), and one to perform the audit function. Jim felt the situation was different with elected volunteers: if those elected don't have the expertise, then we have to get the expertise elsewhere, but he agreed the BOD should still oversee the committee. Leo, as VP of National Operations, will talk to Finance Chair Ralph Davis about the Audit Committee. Betsy asked if we should delete reference to the internal auditor from the rule book. The consensus was that we will eventually need to delete that position, but should leave it there until something else is in place.

Compensation and Benefits Committee report

Nadine reported that this committee, composed of Jerry, Jeff, Jim and Sarah Welch in addition to herself, has set up group health insurance and a combined dental/vision plan for our employees. The policy was set up in New Hampshire, and is not presently jeopardized because of Todd's resignation; the policies are due to be renewed in July. Jim is plan administrator of a simple IRA, and Jeff is the administrator of the health insurance. She also reported that she and Tracy had begun working on an employee manual, but Todd took it over, and now Lee Carlson is working on it. The committee did not put together a group life insurance policy because we needed four employees. Nadine has been talking to our broker about setting up individual plans rather than group plans for life insurance.

We will need more input on compensation; thus far the committee has concentrated on benefits. A pool of money was budgeted for raises for our contractors, but Todd had not yet determined the distribution, if any, when he resigned.

Laura said she would like to see charters for both the Audit and Compensation/Benefits Committees.

Meeting recessed at approximately 6:15 p.m. CST. Reconvened Saturday, February 9, at 9:25 a.m. CST.

Policy Task Force report

Betsy went over the current draft of the policy manual. The task force is still working on defining the committees under section IV. She suggested that we may need to rename the divisions in the future, because the current names don't accurately describe what the divisions do. The organization chart will be added to the manual, along with mission statements for all committees. If a description for a committee or position is in the rule book, the pertinent article number is referenced. If not, the person holding that position has been asked to write a job description. She also noted that the rule book still references an insurance coordinator, although that function had been taken over by the ED. This reference needs to be deleted from the rule book, although it is not urgent. Meg is working on compiling a section on significant actions of the House of Delegates.

The task force recommended that a simple majority of the BOD be required to amend policy. There was concern that only a few members of the BOD would then be able to amend policy, but it was clarified that the quorum for the BOD is a majority, not

merely those present and voting, as is the case for the HOD. Meg said that she could link references in the policy manual to the appropriate article in the rule book.

Committees are being encouraged to have policies, which will be under their jurisdiction. Jeanne noted that the committees would still need oversight. Tom felt that the championship and finance sections of the rule book needed to stay in the rule book so people could find them. Meg explained that one of the purposes of maintaining things that are truly policies in a policy manual is to facilitate amendment. For example, article 104 of the rule book (operation of championship meets) can only be amended in even years. She acknowledged that it was difficult for the Championship Committee to determine what in article 104 is actually a rule and what is policy, and suggested that someone from outside of Championship make recommendations. The often-cited example of something that is really policy is article 104.5.4D(2), which deals with the meet social. Jeanne stated that actual dollar amounts should not be in the rule book. Patty suggested that championship policy be maintained as an appendix to the rule book, which would alleviate the concern that potential meet hosts would not know where to look for this information. Jim said that we need to trust the Championship Committee as the experts in running championship meets, and give them the flexibility they need to operate. Michael asked at what point would we allow committees to change policy, and what quorum would be required. Mike asked if we could append championship policies immediately after article 104. Anna Lea said she was not sure that even an outsider could split championship policies and rules, but Meg, speaking from many years experience as rule book editor, was confident it could be done. Meg also agreed with Michael that we should define a quorum for committees. As for financial policy, Rob felt the policy manual should define the overall financial policy for our organization, but FOG should be left as is. Michael noted that the HOD might want to challenge some policies, and Betsy confirmed that they could do so during the House. Betsy also wondered if policies could therefore only be changed at convention. Mark noted that the rule book states the BOD acts for the HOD between meetings, so if a policy change needs to be made during the year, the BOD has the authority to approve it.

The Policy Task Force found, during one of its conference calls, that at convention we neglected to amend a provision of FOG having to do with convention reimbursement, even though it was budgeted as if the provision was in place. Therefore, Finance Chair Ralph Davis requested that the BOD approve the following amendment to FOG IV.C.2: **“The Convention registration fee for all members of the Board of Directors, the Executive Director, the National Office Administrator, Chairs of Standing and Ad Hoc Committees, Controller, National Corporate Partner Liaison, Internal Auditor, Webmaster Magazine Editor, Liaisons, Appointments and Special Assignments, Zone Representatives and Coordinators ~~is to be included in each member’s budget and shall be reimbursed by USMS conditioned on compliance with Article 507.4.5 and 507.4.6 and included in the Convention Budget.”~~ MSA the amendment.** Rob also noted that a subcommittee of Rob, Patty and Jeff will work on overhauling our Professional Management Guidelines.

The task force also discovered that a USMS privacy policy published on our website was in conflict with the privacy policy passed by the BOD at last year’s convention. In addition, it was unclear whether the policy passed by the BOD adequately addressed the issue of registrars supplying data files to meet hosts to simplify data entry. Therefore the task force proposed adding “Those given access to member information must sign a statement that they will use the information only for the specific purpose for

which the information was requested” to the end of the policy statement, as well as replacing

“Examples of legitimate reasons for disclosure include:

- A member’s name, birth date, age, club, ID number and gender may be given to a meet director for uses related to competition, or to the Top 10 and Records Chair.
- Information concerning members of a club may be given to the designated representative of that club”

with

“Examples of legitimate reasons for disclosure include:

- A director of a sanctioned event wishing to compile a list of athletes in the meet database may receive a report of an LMSC’s members including member names, birth dates, ages, clubs, ID numbers and genders.
- A certified representative of a member club wishing to verify and communicate with club members may receive a report of club members including member names, ID numbers, mailing address and email address.”

The policy in its entirety would read:

“To protect the confidentiality of members’ USMS registration information, this information may only be disclosed for official USMS and LMSC business to authorized persons or agencies for use specifically relating to the conduct of Masters swimming. Examples of legitimate reasons for disclosure include:

- **A director of a sanctioned event wishing to compile a list of athletes in the meet database may receive a report of an LMSC’s members including member names, birth dates, ages, clubs, ID numbers and genders.**
- **A certified representative of a member club wishing to verify and communicate with club members may receive a report of club members including member names, ID numbers, mailing address and email address.**

Those given access to member information must sign a statement that they will use the information only for the specific purpose for which the information was requested.”

MSA the amendment. In accordance with the above policy, the host of the One Hour Postal requested that they be allowed to download the entire USMS database for data entry purposes. Nancy asked if the hosts could be supplied with all current USMS numbers so that the information for the meet participants could be downloaded and entered into the meet data. Leo said this is not technically feasible yet. **MSA for national championship meet hosts to be allowed access to USMS member registration information.** Jeff suggested we ask meet hosts to delete and/or return the file and impose a \$5,000 penalty if the information in the file is used for any other reasons than those stated. No action was taken on this suggestion.

There was general approval of the draft of the policy manual. When the language is finalized, the task force will resubmit the manual, and the BOD will formally vote to approve. A statement should be added that the manual is evolving, and will be continually updated.

Online registration

Leo reviewed the history of the implementation of online registration. The Online Registration Task Force recommended Club Assistant as our vendor before convention last year. Soon after convention, a short beta test was performed with eight or nine registrars; then the system was opened to all registrars for a few weeks, who began testing the system with bogus data. The system was rolled out for registrars last November when registrars began inputting new registrations and renewals into the system. The new online system includes both registration and accounting functions, and is therefore more complicated than the beloved Leoware. The new system has to balance at the end of each month, and there has been a learning curve for our registrars. At the end of each month, the financial books close at midnight Pacific time. Then there is a three-day grace period during which registrars can make financial corrections. Leo acknowledged that this new system has added financial responsibilities to the registrars' job.

The member self-registration portion of the system was developed in December. It was ready for testing at the end of December, but for fiscal reasons testing began in January, when about a dozen new registrations from three LMSCs were made online. This test went well: the data was collected, invoices were issued and the money was accounted for correctly for both checks and credit cards. The system was opened to the public on January 21, in what was intended to be a relatively quiet rollout. Unfortunately, there was some confusion about what constituted a quiet rollout, and an announcement was made on our home page and in the discussion forums. We began receiving an average of about 100 member self-registrations per day. Leo noted that it was a difficult decision as to when to turn the system on. The task force was balancing the fact that January is the busiest month of the year for registrars with the fact that the One Hour Postal (our largest national championship) was being contested that month, and many swimmers needed to register to be eligible to participate. Some of our registrars from some of our larger LMSCs were overwhelmed with issues relating to the system. Three LMSCs made formal requests to turn the member interface off. In response to them, the EC voted to shut down member self-registration for the last three days of January and the first three days of February. The EC felt this was a prudent response, because we had to make sure the accounting was correct for our first and busiest month, and because we needed to be responsive to our registrars. At the end of the six-day period, the task force, and then the EC, met on February 4. As a result of those meetings, the LMSC chairs, registrars and treasurers were told that if no major problems were encountered, the system would be rolled out again, this time quietly. The member interface was turned back on February 5, but without an announcement. A little over 100 registrations have occurred since then. An announcement of the system's availability will be made February 12 if there are no major problems. Leo noted that by the end of January, about one-quarter of all of that month's registrations were made online. Carolyn commented that having rolled out a new computer system at her work in the last year, she knows that problems will inevitably occur. Betsy asked what the chain of command was for reporting issues, and was told that Leo and Registration Committee Chair George Simon are monitoring problems, and are informing Club Assistant and copying each other. Nancy noted that registrars have a private discussion forum on our website, on which many problems have been reported and discussed. Leo said that he and George have

access to that forum and have been participating in it, and that the EC has also been given access. Mark said it was clear that mistakes were made at the onset, but there has been steady improvement. Leo noted that there is a wide range of technological capability among our registrars. There is also a wide range of expectations among the registrars, which resulted in some being happy with the system, and others not so happy. Leo acknowledged that at first the task force was not comprehending the tone of the registrars, and not recognizing their frustration. He pointed out that the development has been on a live system, which has turned out to be a major problem. But he also said that Club Assistant has been very responsive in fixing absolutely critical problems. Mel asked if live testing was taken into consideration when Club Assistant was chosen. Mark said that the task force was aware this was a risk, but the savings were so much that it was deemed worth the risk. The savings will make future enhancements possible. Club Assistant also offered us a level of customization not possible with other vendors, who would have insisted on fitting our program into their “box.” Jerry asked how the billing for corrections was handled, and Mark explained that we are not billed for problems, but we must pay for any enhancements we request. Club Assistant is now being asked to implement a test environment (Anna Lea explained what a test environment was for some of the less technologically literate among the BOD). The first step will be to develop a list of requirements and then an estimate from Club Assistant. Nancy commented that no matter how much testing you do beforehand, some problems will not be identified until the system goes live. Mel asked if teams will be able to register their swimmers. Leo said this has been identified as an enhancement for the future, and that it also has insurance implications. Laura asked if clubs and workout groups can get lists of their members, and was told they could, through their registrar. Mark said that allowing workout group contacts access to their membership lists is on the wish list.

Once a list of requirements for the test environment has been developed, it will be sent to Club Assistant, who will then provide an estimate. Then the overbudget approval procedure will need to be followed. Leo emphasized that while the test environment is being built, only major issues will be fixed. Some registrars will be asked to help with testing. Anna Lea noted that the new system has caused many registrars and LMSCs to change the way they do business, and they perhaps didn’t appreciate that before. It has also caused duties to shift. We recognized the increased burden on our registrars (and in some cases, their spouses), as well as our national database administrator, Esther Lyman, and the chair of our Registration Committee, George Simon. Patty commented, to general agreement, that we should appreciate that we finally have online registration.

Club Development Task Force

Rob reported on behalf of Julie, who distributed a written report before the meeting. One of the strategic items the task force had identified was to develop a group of people within USMS who could mentor clubs. This effort was launched with a training workshop for mentors the previous week. The result of the workshop is that we now have 11 qualified mentors. At the training session, participants went over modules on how to deal with government agencies and facilities, marketing, club development and how to create interest. The participants acted out various scenarios, and then reversed roles for even more insight. Another workshop is in the planning stages, and the next workshop will include a module on finances. Tom said this initiative is the single most important

place for us to invest funds and time. Some aspects of the materials are waiting for the branding strategy to be finalized. Tom recommended that we not wait, and suggested distributing generic materials in the interim. He felt we should “just get it started.” Carolyn suggested that the new club mentors wear shirts at convention identifying them as mentors. With the development and access to some additional materials, we are now at the point where we can start sending the mentors out to work with clubs. A survey coordinated by Carolyn could give us choices on where to start.

This task force needs a new chair, now that Julie has seen to its organization. The hope is that one of the task force members will be able to take over.

LMSC Development Task Force

Rob again reported for Julie. The task force’s mission has been defined and some high-level strategy developed. It grew out of the realization that our LMSCs don’t operate uniformly. All LMSCs need to be in compliance with basic financial and other guidelines. Julie intends to continue leading this task force, but other members will need to take over while she is on leave.

Branding Task Force

Patty reported for the task force and noted a written report, largely put together by Tom Boyd, was distributed before the meeting. Lynn Hazlewood is the chair, and other members are Meg Smath, Hill Carrow and Doug Garcia. Todd Smith was also a member. The first thing the task force did was assemble focus groups of USMS members and nonmembers. The results showed that USMS members felt the benefit was all-encompassing. Nonmembers received these benefits from other sports, work or, in many cases, nowhere. Both groups were asked about our logo, with and without a tagline. In general, the focus groups confirmed a lot of what we already knew. The task force recommended that we keep our name and work hard to brand around it. They recommended we hire a professional firm to develop a brand strategy and brand plan. Michael agreed it was time for professional help, and was open to a new tagline or taglines. Laura asked if we knew how much professional help would cost, and the answer was no. At this point the task force just wanted the BOD’s support and direction. The BOD’s reaction to the task force’s report was uniformly positive. **MSA to direct the Branding Task Force to investigate using outside resources to develop a new brand image.**

Report of the USMS liaison to USA Swimming

Ted noted that our liaison from USA Swimming is no longer part of their staff. We will request a new liaison.

Todd had been working with USA-S and our insurance company to finalize dual sanctioning of meets, and this will be taken up by USA-S at their April board meeting. We will need three people from USMS to sit on a board of arbitration to determine which organization would pay a claim from a dual-sanctioned meet. Rob will talk to Todd to determine where we stand on this issue, and will get names to the insurance company.

USA-S has embarked on a new media initiative to attract wider interest. They also have a new task force on women and minorities. At their next meeting they will

determine what, if any, action to take in dealing with ISHOF. Jeanne encouraged us to support ISHOF by joining, which can be done online.

Mel said he often coordinates with USA-S for displays at conferences.

Club Development Task Force — revisited

Jeanne agreed to chair the task force. Jim has been added as an EC liaison. Tom will also join, so that the current membership is Carolyn Boak, Nadine Day, Rob Copeland, Jim Wheeler, Tom Boak, Tom Boyd, Mo Chambers, Jim Miller, Jeanne Ensign and Mel Goldstein. Jeanne will ask Mo if she's still interested in continuing with the task force or if she would prefer to appoint someone else from the Coaches Committee. The task force will hold a conference call February 21 at 5:00 p.m. PST. Meg will update the mailing list to reflect the new membership and reserve the conference call. The task force will choose its priorities from their report, with the first priority being club mentoring. They will continue to develop materials and a club selection process.

Officer reports

These reports were emailed before the meeting. The BOD had no questions about the reports. Jeff added that the unaudited numbers for 2007 indicate that we were significantly under budget. Laura asked if 2007 financials included our loss from the FINA Masters World Championships, and Jeff explained that loss was booked in 2006.

Governance

The role of a board of directors is usually more policy-making than implementation, but our Board is more engaged. The Policy Task Force needs to look at roles and determine if we need to change anything. Jim asked that we make roles more clear in view of the upcoming elections, so that potential candidates would know what to expect. Another major task is more clearly defining the ED's powers. Tom recommended that we focus on removing unnecessary roadblocks, such as PMG. As previously stated, Patty, Jeff and Rob will review PMG and recommend policies to put in place to replace PMG.

Business issues

Sponsorship and corporate partners

Mel reported that all corporate partner invoicing is on the same fiscal year as USMS, but all do not expire in the same year. All corporate partners have been invoiced for 2008. He is working on some new prospects, concentrating on trying to find the right niche for the partner plus provide value to our members. He is also working with a rental car company and an insurance company.

Mel felt that our marketing approach in regard to sponsors needs to be reexamined. Currently, we give sponsors access to our mailing list once a year. The proposal from the insurance carrier included a provision for receiving members' telephone numbers, but they will be told that cannot be allowed. Leo said it was time for us to step up and bring benefits to our members. He would like to see some exclusivity in our arrangements. Tom said he learned from his experience of hosting Nationals that a better approach might be quid pro quo rather than just asking for money; all negotiations

should begin with us asking potential sponsors what they need from us. He feels we must examine our current approach and how we can change it to enhance the value we offer to potential sponsors. Nancy agreed that we need to provide more tangible benefits to our members. Michael suggested that we allow sponsors access to our mailing list, and they may use it as many times as they wish if it is as spelled out in the contract; but if the contract is breached, we should refuse access. Meg said that she didn't think most of our members would object to direct mail, but would object strenuously to telemarketing, and pointed out that many of them are registered with the national No Call Registry. Tom said we should find out what other organizations do in this regard. Mark said we should give Mel the leeway to do what is best, with guidelines. Nancy pointed out that many of our members are happy we haven't allowed them to be solicited; this should continue to be a factor. Patty reminded us that the purpose of corporate partners is to give benefits to our members. Mark related that he recently joined USA Triathlon, and was struck by the fact that the USA-T website has a link to "member benefits," while ours has a link to "corporate sponsors" — a not-so-subtle distinction. Immediately upon joining he got an email confirmation of his registration with USA-T and links to member benefits. Leo said there are two different categories of benefits: (1) those directly involved with what we do as swimmers and (2) those that provide value in life — insurance, haircuts, etc. He believes our membership would take more kindly to the first option. We need to get with the program and begin generating automatic emails that welcome members and outline benefits; this should be possible to link to the new registration system. Mike observed that we will probably make some members angry no matter what we do, so we need to grow up and do what other successful organizations do. Mark said we should offer values more tailored toward particular sponsors, and offer to create as much exposure for benefits as possible. Tom recommended we appoint a task force to move this forward. Jim said the EC needs to put this on their agenda and asked for names of others who can contribute. Patty said that without an executive director, she doesn't think the EC will be able to get to this. Betsy suggested we hire an interim ED to get things going. Tom volunteered to chair a task force with Mark, Leo and Mel to identify the value of USMS to corporate partners and benefits to our members, and find ways to implement this value into our program for corporate sponsors. We will need to work through the Marketing Committee to accomplish this.

Partnership with USA Triathlon

Carolyn wondered if something could be worked out so that someone could join both groups at a discount. She felt we need to get the message to triathletes that we're the best place for them to train for their swimming leg. Betsy suggested we investigate holding joint events. Mark pointed out that while joint membership and events sounds good, there are insurance issues because the two organizations don't have the same insurance carrier. Jerry said he has talked with USA-T officials and they are open to working together. Mark suggested we consider exploring common insurance with USA-T. A potential roadblock to encouraging triathletes to join us is one-event registration: its lack in some LMSCs may prevent triathletes from participating in our events. Anna Lea pointed out there is limited benefit to us in offering one-event registration to triathletes, because few one-event registrants convert to full registration. Nancy noted there is a difference in focus between the two organizations: USA-T focuses on competition, and USMS on a

healthy lifestyle. Our focus for recruiting triathletes should be on them getting the benefits of coaching and camaraderie, not simply more competition. Jim noted that how coaches manage their workouts with both triathletes and non-triathletes is critical, and we should involve the Coaches Committee. Mark added that some teams have separate workouts for triathletes, which works well, and also that several USMS clubs have partnered with Team In Training (a program that raises money for leukemia and lymphoma research by providing training for triathlons and bicycle and running races). Nadine said that our survey indicated that our triathlete segment is 18 percent of our membership and that this segment gives highest importance to coaching. Laura said that when she coaches she always offers an all-freestyle workout that appeals to triathletes, in addition to any other workouts. At the same time, she is careful not to neglect the non-triathletes. Mel said we are also missing the boat at universities that have swimming as a club sport. Leo said he hasn't met a triathlete yet who doesn't need to improve in swimming, and we are the experts in adult swimming. We need to market to them.

Web review

Mark reviewed the current web activities, including online registration support and updating the Club Assistant database on our website (we need the database also on our site in order to build tools that will tie in with records, event rankings, etc.). The meet results database service was suddenly discontinued by its provider recently, requiring Jim Matysek to rebuild the database and improve it. One of the improvements is that the new results database will be sorted by USMS number so that swimmers will not be repeated in the rankings. Online registration for SC Nationals is up. Jim has identified contractors to help with some tasks; the goal is to build a stable of contractors. The current work in the queue should be finished in March, after which work will begin on changing the calendar of events from static to dynamic. Jim will continue work to develop administrative tools to allow volunteers to post information on the website. He is also working on a database for sanctions, which will tie in with the End-to-End Event Management Task Force chaired by Anna Lea.

Work continues to load all the event results into the results database. Mark reminded meet directors to turn their results in using the USMS club name, not workout group name. Web staff is trying to help meet directors flag errors in their meet entries so the errors don't have to be corrected later when the Top 10 is compiled; Jeanne Seidler is contacting these meet directors and has found that often the problem is that meet entries are read incorrectly. Betsy asked if the results database was exclusively done with HyTek results, and Mark told her that was not the case, that most results can be converted to SDIF format, which is what the results database uses.

Laura asked about progress on providing premium content for our members; nothing has been done yet in that direction. She also asked if we could provide more prominence for open water on our website. Mark said that is planned for when the website is redesigned, based on survey results and hiring an IT consultant. The consensus of the BOD was that providing premium content is important. Michael asked if we could post old issues of *SWIMMER* on the website. Mark said the tools we have available for posting the magazine are difficult to work with, and we would first need to improve these tools. He added that we are very far behind in technology, and that the wish list is more than our IT staff can accomplish. Mike felt the home page is static and **moved that we**

post random relevant editorial content on the home page until such time as the Publications Management Committee develops rules for it. His motion was seconded. Mark clarified that this is not a task that has been assigned to the Publications Management Committee. The second to Mike's motion was withdrawn. Leo **moved that the EC find someone in the interim to do a reasonable job of providing current content so it can be posted on a more routine basis to change what's on the home page.** His motion was seconded. Meg said she did not think it was a good idea to "slap stuff up" on the website just because it's available; we need a plan. Jeanne asked what the purpose was of hiring an IT consultant, and Mark answered that although we recognize we need content, staff, etc., we don't know how to set priorities. The IT consultant would help us with these priorities and determining staffing needs. Money to hire a consultant has been budgeted. Jeanne suggested we put hiring this consultant on a fast track and spend some of the budgeted money. Jim pointed out that the BOD has already recognized the need and budgeted money; money is not the issue. It's getting organized and getting going. Mike pointed out that the current discussion was not germane to the motion. Patty suggested that sports management interns would like to work on a project such as providing content for our home page, and that we should take advantage of that opportunity. Michael said we should task someone to write content while we're exploring IT management. Nancy volunteered to provide content, and Betsy said she would help. Patty pointed out that we are still in the process of branding, and some of the articles we might post might not fit with our branding strategy. This begs the question: Is it better or worse just to post for the sake of posting? Mark said the Communications Committee had performed an audit of our website to find out what needed to be updated; they identified applications, entry forms and fitness article of the month, among others. He also clarified that the Publications Management Committee does not own the web content. The web should work the same way that *SWIMMER* does, in which the Publications Management Committee does not manage the content — Bill Volckening does. Todd had wanted to expand Bill's role to include managing website content, but that change is now in limbo with Todd's departure. Michael noted that items in the What's New section stay up a long time. Meg explained that when a new What's New item is added, it goes to the top of the list, and what's at the bottom of the list is bumped; if we do not have a lot of content for What's New, then it does indeed remain the same for a long time. Betsy suggested we inform the PMC that we have volunteers to provide content. Mark said another option was to contract with another publisher, which has offered before to provide content. It could be updated via an RSS feed from them. Jeanne commented that the publisher in question seems to focus only on competition, and felt we would want our home page to have a broader focus. Mike noted that his Community Services Division has three committees that provide articles for the web. Those articles could be shifted from their current location to the home page. Betsy felt that once new items start being posted, others would begin supplying more items. Leo commented that if we start getting new content online, that would be a good segue to eventual premium services. Meg pointed out that right now there is no place on the home page to insert news articles; we can't redesign the website, but we could put these items in the What's New section and provide links to longer articles. She also said she would be willing to edit the content to make sure it conformed to USMS style and that there were no copyright issues. Leo said he was frustrated that our website is static, but Jeanne was concerned that we would sidetrack the

RFP for IT consultants by pursuing this course. **The motion was approved by a vote of 11-3.**

USMS SWIMMER

Betsy commented that the magazine keeps improving. There have been some issues with changes in personnel at the publisher, and publication delays attributable to various reasons. The consensus was that we need to manage the process better. Mike noted that 13,000 swimmers in the Pacific and Southern Pacific LMSCs depend on timely delivery of the magazine in order to get their newsletter and meet information, which is bundled with the magazine. It had been suggested that one way to counter delivery delays to the West Coast would be to print in the middle of the country instead of on the East Coast, but unfortunately our publisher does not have a relationship with a printer in the middle of the country.

Meeting recessed at approximately 6:10 p.m. CST and reconvened at 9:00 a.m. CST, Sunday, February 10. Betsy left the meeting after Saturday's session.

FINA World Masters Championships

Michael reported that the local organizing committee distributed all the assets of the corporation, with USMS receiving the cash. The directors of the LOC all resigned on December 31, 2007, and the LOC corporation dissolved.

MSA the following resolution:

WHEREAS, under the terms of an agreement dated September 15, 2004 (the "Agreement"), United States Masters Swimming ("USMS") agreed to advance operating funds to the XI FINA Masters World Championships Local Organizing Committee ("LOC") for management of the XI FINA Masters World Championships; and

WHEREAS, USMS advanced a total of \$265, 324.43 to the LOC; and

WHEREAS, the LOC repaid to USMS \$125,828.09 in principal out of net revenue remaining after payment of all reasonable and necessary expenses from the XI FINA World Masters Championships; and

WHEREAS, on March 6, 2007, the USMS Executive Committee approved a motion to forgive accrual or collection of any interest owed under the Agreement; and

WHEREAS, there remains \$139,496.34 in principal that was advanced to the LOC by USMS and that has not been repaid; and

WHEREAS, the LOC has no remaining net revenue and has ceased operation,

NOW, THEREFORE, the USMS Board of Directors hereby forgives repayment of the remaining amount of \$139,496.34 by the LOC and agrees to forego any other sums, including interest, owed by the LOC to USMS.

The vote was 13-0, with Michael abstaining.

FINA issues

Nancy read the BOD an email from the honorable secretary of the FINA Masters Technical Committee in regard to the issue of accepting times achieved at events sanctioned by USMS, but not put on by FINA member bodies, for records and World Top 10. There appears to be no written policy on this issue, although FINA is on record as accepting meets sanctioned by an NGB. The issue appears to be that meets such as the IGLA championships, even though sanctioned by USMS, are put on by a competing organization. Patty pointed out that IGLA is more a special interest group than an organization that competes with FINA. Carolyn noted that USMS passed a strong resolution at last year's convention that any event sanctioned by us should count for records and Top 10. Rob felt we should concentrate on what we can do, which is to submit the times, not state what we think FINA should do. **Leo moved that WHEREAS the USMS Board of Directors has discussed the use of results from USMS-sanctioned meets, RESOLVED THAT times achieved at sanctioned events be considered for USMS national records, USMS Top 10 times and FINA world records.** The motion was seconded. Patty commented that what we are hearing still sounds like hearsay, and FINA's directive is still not clear. Leo added that it is important for us to make a statement, but we must realize we don't control FINA; we're submitting the times, and that's all we can do at this time. Jim cautioned us not to go further than the resolution. Nancy asked if our resolution will also apply to recognized events, but FINA has never accepted times from recognized events. Carolyn stated that if ultimately FINA rules against accepting these times, we owe it to our members to publicize this decision. Jim asked if it was our responsibility or IGLA's. Mark recommended we wait until we know the outcome, and then we can decide what to do. **MSA the motion.** Nancy also noted that the FINA Masters Technical Committee will meet for the three days before the FINA Masters World Championships in Perth in April.

Strategic planning

The Board reviewed the committees assigned to the four divisions; while Julie Heather is on leave, Registration has been temporarily assigned to the National Operations Division. Mike had asked about transferring International to Community Services, but the consensus was that it was a better fit where it is now, in Member Services. Tom commented that the distribution of committees among the divisions seems unbalanced, particularly for National Operations. Leo explained that the purpose of having Legislation, Rules, Long Distance and Finance all in one division was for synergy, and that most of the time having jurisdiction over these committees is not a heavy time commitment. Meg commented that we should be careful that the committees in a division fit the office, not the person in the office. Mark suggested renaming some of the divisions; e.g., Member Services might more appropriately be called Communications. He noted that he now has jurisdiction of none of the same committees he started with, and feels less has been accomplished because of all the shuffling. The BOD decided to make no changes in committee assignments at this time.

Todd Smith had taken over the responsibilities that formerly were handled by the YMCA, USA Triathlon and National Senior Games liaisons. Michael commented that there is much opportunity for synergy with the Senior Games. Mark asked what the goal

is for that liaison. Mel gave some background, and said that when Scott Rabalais held that position he worked with the Senior Games management to show them how USMS could help them run their meets better. Mel also noted that when he set up a booth at the Senior Games in Virginia, the only people who approached the booth were already USMS members; he felt most of the Senior Games participants who are not USMS members are not interested in joining us. Meg said that when the Senior Games were in Louisville last summer, some new members were recruited, but it was largely because the USMS swimmers at the meet made an effort to make the non-USMS swimmers feel welcome; Joanne Tingley also manned a table and wooed swimmers. Nancy felt there was value in having a local contact as a liaison for the organizational aspect, as was the case in Louisville when Bill Tingley was the liaison (Bill was the event director for swimming, and concentrated most of his efforts on running the meet). Carolyn felt that the best way to recruit Senior Games participants was through coaching, and that we should therefore involve the Coaches Committee in any outreach. Mark felt that a liaison should be working at the national level, not the local level. Tom said we should figure out how the two organizations can work together. Michael noted that although Senior Games has a national meet only every other year, it has state championships every year. He agreed with Carolyn that coaching was something that would be valuable year in and year out. Nancy suggested holding a clinic for participants before the state qualifying meets. Mel explained that Scott's main contribution was in providing officials, running meets and taking the burden off of Senior Games staff. He recommended that we go in with a plan of how we can help. Mike asked what we would get out of such an arrangement. Rob asked Meg to look back through past secretary's documents to try to find Scott's outline. Tom commented that it sounds like we want to work more closely with Senior Games but we don't have anyone to do it right now; maybe we should wait to move on this until we have hired a new ED. Mike agreed, and said in the meantime we should try to clarify our mission. Michael volunteered to help with this effort.

Mel, who had been YMCA liaison before Todd took over, will return to that role. Tom recommended Jerry Clark as USA Triathlon liaison. Jerry said he would be happy to serve and would draft a mission statement. **MSA to appoint Jerry Clark as USA Triathlon liaison, under the Member Services Division.**

Mel recommended a closer relationship with NIRSA (the National Intramural-Recreation Sports Association). This is the organization that coordinates collegiate sport club championships, and represents a big growth opportunity for us. The Marketing Committee designated money in its budget to join this organization. Nadine said that Mel should become an associate member so that he can speak at their meetings. Tom suggested that we develop a structure for college clubs. Most are run by students but financed by universities. Perhaps we could offer a special membership fee for club teams. Mike said there are organizations similar to NIRSA pertaining to the Fitness and Sports Medicine Committees, which we could join at some level; not all are specifically aquatic. Patty asked if Marketing has a plan to reach out to NIRSA and any other organizations. Mel and Nadine said they would put together a plan and work through the Marketing Committee.

Although it is evident that it would be beneficial for us to reach out to other organizations, we need a strategy for liaisons and partnerships, because the "shotgun approach" is not working. A motion was made **for a group of interested persons led by**

the at-large directors and the past-presidents to form a task force to develop a policy and a strategy for our interactions with related organizations. The motion was seconded. Patty noted that the strategy would need to be tailored to each organization. Mike suggested we pick one or two strategies and concentrate on them. Patty added that we will have to investigate to figure out which organizations to concentrate on, and that this sounds like what Marketing should be doing. She wondered if they have been directed to do this, and added that efforts like this should be informed by our branding efforts. Jeanne said that this type of activity is not her strength, and asked to be excused from such a task force. Nadine explained that Marketing did do research along these lines when Tom Boyd was chair of the committee. Tom Boak commented that implementation of any strategy would ultimately be at the club level. Michael asked what the next step would be for the Branding Task Force and wondered if we should wait for a branding strategy before we began a task force to reach out to other organizations. Carolyn said that she has been a member of several task forces, and what was key to the success of the Club Development Task Force in particular was that its membership was a combination of directors and committee members. Nadine felt that we should not drop everything waiting for a branding plan. Patty suggested that the task force on outreach to organizations should just do exploration work for the time being. Tom pointed out there is an array of things we're going to try to accomplish, and the Executive Committee's job is to provide an atmosphere in which all of these things don't bump into one another, to make sure the efforts are coordinated into a plan that makes sense. Nancy felt there was no conflict with the proposed task force and the branding task force. Mark said that when we formulated our strategic plan, our committees told us what they wanted to do, and then we created high-level strategy. He felt we should now turn that back to something the committees should accomplish. Mel complimented the Marketing Committee, and said he feels that they are moving forward. Tom commented that the mission, objectives and goals were not straightforward for all committees. Patty wondered if we should ask Marketing to do this. Laura felt Marketing would have no idea what to do if given this task, because the task is too nebulous. **The motion passed 7-6.** Laura declined to participate in this task force. Those interested in serving will get together and decide on a chair.

ED search committee

Jim reported that the search committee will consist of himself, Jeff, Ted, Nadine and a human resources expert (to be determined). Carolyn suggested that this committee's mission should be to search, but not select; they should not present only one candidate if other viable candidates are available. Jim felt the committee could bring forward two candidates whose qualifications are nearly equal, but said that he did not want to see us in a situation where we had several candidates who were actively campaigning for the job. Laura pointed out that most likely any candidate will be gainfully employed, so we should not release a candidate's name until that person is hired. Anna Lea felt that the best course would be to give a general description of a candidate, and not release a name. She compared the process to that for championship bid presentations.

Compensation and Benefits Committee

Meg checked last year's minutes and determined that the term for members of that committee was one year. Several options were discussed, including extending the term of the current members and making appointments at the annual meeting rather than the midyear meeting. Jim felt the appointments should not be tied to at-large directors' terms so that the membership of the committee would carry on from administration to administration. Laura **moved that we extend the current term of this committee until a new BOD is elected and that at such time we can then look at what the terms should be.** The motion was seconded. The motion was withdrawn. **MSA to reappoint the committee as composed at last year's midyear meeting.**

Online registration — revisited

Leo reported that at the end of the previous day's meeting he informed the registrars that after the member self-registration system has been live for a week with no significant problems that we would then announce that the system is live. Nancy commented that she had planned for the first announcement that she was going to write for the home page to be about online registration, aiming for an announcement on Tuesday (February 12) or Wednesday (February 13).

Privacy issues

The new registration program can export an RE1 file that will list the names, registration numbers and birth dates for all of an LMSC's members. A meet director can then import this file into Meet Manager, saving much data entry time (and eliminating the potential for clerical errors). Rob asked if this was a privacy concern. The consensus was that this is a legitimate use for registration data, and that the registrars would be the gatekeepers of this information. Anna Lea volunteered to help with improving the RE1 output. Mark asked if the file could include several LMSCs, for regional meets, and was told that right now, a meet director would have to contact each LMSC's registrar. Jerry asked if we would allow other meet management companies access to our database. Michael suggested that in such a case we "salt" the database with a name/address that would let us know the company had used the data for bogus purposes. Leo said another option was to give such a company an algorithm for the check character, as long as they sign a nondisclosure agreement, in order to verify membership. Carolyn asked if we still need to require that a copy of the registration card accompany entries for Nationals. Tracy clarified that a copy is not needed, since the registration number is matched against our database when she enters paper entries into the online meet entry system.

Elections

Anna Lea and Carolyn are undecided about running for reelection. All other at-large directors plan to run for reelection. As a reminder of the procedure, the zones will put forth their nominees and the HOD will elect the directors.

Succession planning

We should keep the strategic plan in mind as we consider possible successors. This is something else Todd was going to work on, so little has been done yet. One suggestion was to send regular emails to LMSC officers keeping them up to date on BOD activities so they can decide if they're interested in running. The goal is to build awareness, but we want to guard against being perceived as designating our own successors (the Putin syndrome). We should distribute the officer and director job descriptions to delegates.

Mike, Jeff, Patty and Jim left the meeting at approximately 11:30 a.m. CST.

Convention schedule

Meg had distributed the draft convention schedule to the BOD before the meeting and asked that they get back with her by Thursday, February 14, with any needed adjustments. Michael noted that this year travel arrangements for West Coast delegates will be a problem, and it would be practically impossible for West Coast BOD members to arrive in time for a meeting at 4:00 p.m. EDT on Wednesday. Meg and Jeanne thought there was now a provision in FOG to allow directors to come in the night before in such a case. Jeanne said she would double check to make sure this is the case. All agreed this was the most sensible solution. If West Coast delegates will be coming in the night before the BOD meeting, then we could start the meeting earlier in the day. Meg will make this adjustment, assuming FOG allows the delegates to arrive early.

It was suggested that we hold another club mentoring workshop the day before convention begins (this would not preclude having a workshop sooner than convention). The Club Development Task Force will need to decide and let Meg know, so she can let Convention Coordinator Victor Buehler know.

In order to speed up the committee appointment process, we will try to get committee preferences for returning delegates before convention. We will also try to get committee evaluations. As part of the new delegate meeting, we will ask them what meetings they plan to attend to indicate a possible preference. Meg said she is composing an email to send to all delegates as they are named, explaining procedures and what to expect at convention. She will send it to the BOD for critique once she has finalized it.

Assessing our performance

The consensus was that we need to improve communication. A suggestion was made that employees hold a face-to-face meeting, similar to the BOD's midyear meeting. We could also provide staff meeting time at convention.

We acknowledged that we were not as successful in our ED search as we hoped. We also acknowledged that it is sometimes difficult for us to get closure. Mark noted that we tend to get bogged down in implementation. Jerry suggested we streamline future agendas.

Jeanne thanked Rob for all he does for the organization. We also thanked Tom for his work on the separation process for the executive director. We discussed strategies for the exit interview, and Mark volunteered to drive to Indianapolis and meet with Todd in person; Jeff and Nancy volunteered to participate by telephone. **MSA to appoint an exit interview committee of Mark (in person), Jeff and Nancy (by telephone).** Rob will

also meet separately with Todd to iron out transition details. Nancy will coordinate the process, and directors should let her know of any specific questions they would like to be asked.

Next EC and BOD meeting dates and adjournment

The Executive Committee will have its next conference call at 8:00 p.m. EST on February 25. We will discuss by email when to have the next BOD call, probably in March.

The meeting adjourned at 12:12 p.m. CST, February 10, 2008.

Meg Smath
Secretary