
Action Item:

1. MSA the minutes of the Nov. 12 and Nov. 18 conference calls.
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President Rob Copeland called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. EST. Also present were Jim Miller, Julie Heather, Leo Letendre, Mark Gill, Meg Smath, Rob Butcher, Mike Heather, Patty Miller and Jeff Moxie.

Introduction

Rob C commended Treasurer Jeff Moxie, who has been keeping watch over USMS's investments in these turbulent economic times. Our investments are in CDs and therefore safe and not subject to the same miseries that have beset most of our 401(k)s.

The EC offered its congratulations to former Board member Anna Lea Roof and USMS Webmaster Jim Matysek on their recent marriage.

Executive director's report

Rob B reported that he continues to have very positive dialogue with the YMCA Championships Committee about USMS taking a greater role in operation and promotion of the YMCA Masters Nationals. The 2009 YMCA Masters Nationals will be in Fort Lauderdale at the Hall of Fame, but that contract is up after the 2009 event, and the YMCA is potentially looking at new locations. If a new location is selected, that could also have an impact on how we become involved. These are still details to be learned and worked through, so we can develop a win/win opportunity. He also noted that USMS has added 96 new clubs in 2008, a growth rate of more than 15 percent in clubs. Rob so far has visited clubs and coaches in North Carolina, Pacific, Southern Pacific, Florida, Texas and South Carolina. In addition, Mel Goldstein and Ashley Gangloff have been visiting clubs in Arizona, Iowa, New York, Vermont and New England. The grassroots club development tour meeting has been very helpful as they listen to how USMS can be of better service to clubs and members and also promote the value of USMS.

Midyear meeting

The midyear Board of Directors meeting will be held in Dallas, Feb. 6–8, 2009. The EC determined there was no need for a separate EC meeting beforehand, so the entire BOD should arrive Friday, Feb. 6, in time for a meeting at 3:00 p.m. Departure will be Sunday afternoon, Feb. 8. Rob B will coordinate the hotel details.

Approval of minutes

MSA the minutes of the Nov. 12 and Nov. 18 conference calls.

Postal swim proposal

Rob C previously asked the staff to develop a plan to shift postal events to a headquarters responsibility. The EC went over a proposal prepared by the staff on transitioning the administration of the postal swims to the National Office. Rob B explained that the staff's goals are to more efficiently operate and promote the events, leading to greater participation. The staff feels that promoting the events as fitness-oriented rather than competition-oriented should increase participation. The plan is to still allow potential hosts to bid on the postals, but pay them a flat fee stipend. For that stipend, the host would be responsible for managing and submitting results and awards and would keep merchandise sales. Entries would move online and USMS would manage that process much as it does for national events, and USMS would agree to promote postals. In addition, the staff is recommending creation of shorter postals such as a 500 swim and 30-minute swim so more beginners wouldn't feel so intimidated by the distance of an hour swim or 3K for time. The staff further suggested we drop the split requirement unless someone was going for a national record. Leo felt that no one does the 10K event for fitness alone; the motivation for those participants is primarily to achieve All-American recognition. Therefore, participation in some of the longer events could go down if the emphasis was too much on fitness. But he added the One Hour event is different from the other events, and many who complete that event are doing it as a fitness event. Jim said he would like to see the events spread out over the year, and he felt there was room for both competitive and fitness swimmers. Leo cautioned against too much emphasis on marketing the longer distances as elite events, because they could also be important for increasing open water participation. Mark suggested that tabulation of All-Star and All-American awards could be done by the Records and Tabulation Committee. Generally, it was agreed that this proposal was a good first step and Rob B will take the EC feedback to the staff to make revisions.

Progress on National Office bids

Rob B noted that the location of our headquarters will be one of the most important decisions USMS has ever made. It will set the tone for the continued shift of responsibilities and implementation of our action plan for many years to come. He has invested a great deal of time in the process and visited all the communities that have the potential to be our home, touring the areas and meeting with their leaders. It is anticipated that up to five potential locations may submit proposals. He will present all the proposals at the midyear meeting in Dallas so the Board may vote on our where would be best for USMS to headquarter.

VP recommendations

The vice presidents need to provide input on committee size and structure to the Governance Task Force. They also need to guide their committees through setting goals and objectives for 2009. Patty reported that the Governance Task Force has met a couple of times, and is still gathering input from stakeholders.

Club registrar interface

Development of an interface for club registrars is beyond the scope of the current work Club Assistant has been doing for us. Leo estimated a cost of about \$3,600 for development of the club registrar interface, which has already begun. He expects to have it ready to go in January 2009. There appears to be money in the 2008 budget for this project, pending Finance Committee approval. The ability for clubs to do their annual club registration online is also on the list for development.

Next EC meeting and adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m. EST. Our next meeting will be Dec. 16 at 6:00 p.m. EST.

Meg Smath
Secretary