

USMS Convention—Dallas, Texas. 2010

Committee Name: Open Water	Session #: 1	Report #: 12
Committee Chair: Lynn Hazlewood	Vice Chair: Glenda Carroll	
Minutes recorded by: Lynn Hazlewood/ Glenda Carroll	Date/time of meeting: 9/16/2010 1:30 PM	

Actions Requiring Approval by the HOD:

1. No action items.

Motions Passed:

1. No motions.

Number of committee members present: 9	Absent: 3	Number of other delegates present: 63
Committee members present (list all, including chair and vice chair): Lynn Hazlewood, Chair; Glenda Carroll, Vice Chair; Jim Wheeler; Michael Collins; Laurie Hug; Fred Pigott; Rick Walker; Heather Hagadorn, Ex Officio (LD Committee); Dave Diehl, Ex Officio (Executive Committee); Mark Gill, Ex Officio (National Office staff)		

Minutes

The meeting was called to order by the chair at 1:33 pm

1. Introductions: Each member of the committee present introduced themselves and described their open water experience.
2. Report from the Chair: The chair reviewed the open water development goals pursued by the Open Water committee this year. These goals include: 1) re-branding USMS open water to make it more visible inside and outside USMS, 2) separation of open water and pool activities in printed and digital materials (where appropriate), 3) swimmer development (includes clinics, camps and training programs), 4) coach development (ably handled by the Coaches committee and the Club and Coach Services Division), 5) event development (headed by Glenda Carroll, OW Vice Chair) and 6) building supporting infrastructure (technology and rules). Details of these projects can be viewed in the convention packet annual report. A spreadsheet (attached) was distributed that demonstrates the relationships between open water development goals and broader USMS goals.
3. Uniform sanction process: At the July 2010 meetings, the U.S. Masters Board of Directors discussed a proposal for a uniform open water sanction process. At the time, "Jeff [Moxie] reiterated that the Open Water Committee needs to develop sanctioning guidelines for running open water events." (*Minutes of USMS BOD July 10, 2010 Meetings, pg. 8, <http://www.usms.org/admin/minutes/bod-2010-7-10-1.pdf>*). Prior to convention, the committee published a concept document as a discussion starting point. The remainder of the meeting consisted of a wide-ranging discussion of the sanction process. Many members of the audience participated along with committee members. The ideas gleaned from the meeting and pre-convention comments from LMSCs will be discussed during the committee's fall meetings.

Among the topics discussed were:

- a. Finding balance in the sanction process among the three event development constituents: USMS, LMSCs and event hosts.
- b. Making sanctioning easier and more turnkey for event hosts through a uniform process and consistency across the country plus the issue of whether LMSCs should be able to meet and exceed the specified requirements.
- c. Working with USA-Swimming to bring age group swimmers into our events.
- d. Sanction fees, including whether we should have fees at all or refundable bonds.
- e. The issue of using sanction fees to provide an income stream for USMS to offset the expense of supporting open water programs.
- f. Whether performance bonds are effective in ensuring that we have well run and safe events.
- g. The benefit of having a national process to require accountability of sanctioned events for safety issues and grievance processes.

- h. The benefit of having someone at the national level to assist event hosts and LMSCs in resolving issues.
 - i. The value of the one-event registration for event development and outreach to non-USMS open water swimmers.
 - j. The issue of whether clinics should be sanctioned.
4. During the sanction process discussion, the question was asked "Why sanction events at all?" What is the value for an established and popular event, particularly if they have their own insurance and publicity. The meeting felt that we need to be able to answer this question in a positive way, rather than focusing on the negative aspects of our sanction process. In the coming months, the committee will work developing an benefit list to use in recruiting existing and future open water events to become USMS sanctioned events. Meeting participants identified a number of positive existing and proposed benefits, including:
- a. Benefits to be derived from proposed legislation intended to make the sanctioning process more turnkey and user friendly.
 - b. Benefits to be derived from proposed open water rules changes that are intended to provide development opportunities for event hosts.
 - c. The existence of large LMSCs with an existing base of thousands of swimmers.
 - d. The proposed national ranking system for open water swimmers.
 - e. The possibility of direct marketing to over 50,000 swimmers across USMS.
 - f. Web site promotion for events.
 - g. USMS Calendar of Events event listing.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm
