

U.S. Masters Swimming

Committee Name: Recognition & Awards

Committee Chair: Elizabeth Nymeyer

Minutes recorded by: Sally Dillon

Date/time of meeting: October 15, 2023, 6 pm CST.

Actions taken: MSA (Hill/Rich) to keep the RJA deadline the same date as it is (March 15) and not change it.

Number of committee members present: 9

Absent: 1

Guests: 1

Present: Rich Burns, Hill Carrow, Michael Hillegonds, Mary Jurey, Nancy Kryka, Michael Moore, Beth Nymeyer, Ray Novitske, Nancy Ridout,

Absent: Sally Dillon

Guest: Crystie McGrail VPLO

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm Central time by Chair Beth Nymeyer.

1. Beth welcomed everyone and introduced Crystie McGrail – the new VP of Local Operations. Crystie reported that the USMS Board of Directors is wrapping up the committee business for the year and getting ready for new members. Topics include the Grown Up Swimming initiative and the USMS budget. Crystie was a LMSC Coaches Chair, and she's served on the USMS Coaches Committee.
2. Approval of minutes: The Annual Meeting was our last and the minutes were approved via email and are posted on the USMS website.
3. Subcommittee reports:
 - a. Ransom J. Arthur M.D. Award (RJA): Michael Moore, chair.

There was significant discussion regarding the best place and time to announce the RJA award, and the deadline for submitting nominations. Historically, the award has been presented, or at least announced, at the Spring National Championship meet. Nominations have been due March 15 to allow for this. Since it is also USMS's most distinguished award, a presentation ceremony has traditionally taken place at the Annual Meeting (with USAS through 2019). Beth's biggest concern is workload spread and balancing for the R&A committee. Other comments made were:

 - makes sense to get the best candidate is to wait.
 - makes sense for all awards to be due the same date.
 - RJA packaging a little more difficult to stage the presentation.
 - we have had 9-11 great candidates. If presented at SCY meet, need 45 days.
 - good to have 3/15 deadline and to be the first award – more flexibility, "secret" not necessary, more time to honor the person.
 - Jumbotron at INDY is a great option, and everyone is glued to it.
 - no one can hear at nationals; better at the annual meeting.
 - it already is at the annual meeting; SCY nationals adds additional recognition.
 - Crystie (reporting for Ed Coates) – July 1 is better; it is a small clique now.
 - do as we are but get it in the magazine right away.
 - upcoming convention is virtual so present it at Volunteer Relay.
 - helpful to be consistent.
 - Ray works hard on the video and needs time. Keep the March 15 date for flexibility, worried about workload if later.
 - the RJA award is not part of the annual award video.
 - all other awards are one paragraph. By separating the RJA, it gives the recipient more respect.
 - Hill offered to make a motion to keep the date the same.
 - Beth noted that Daniel Paulling needs a decision so he can get the date in the Jan/Feb Swimmer.
 - suggestion that the award winner be announced at their LMSC banquet.
 - don't need a banquet.
 - some recipients are not at nationals.
 - announce the winner right away; doesn't need to be a secret.

MSA (Hill/Rich) to keep the RJA deadline the same date as it is (March 15) and not change it.
Discussion continued:

- Jumbotron - do something techy like a video, photo, or digital movie and describe the award.
 - I like Hill's poetry but feel "swim meet people" are too distracted.
 - timing – after the 500; 15 minute time slot is worth a try, some will listen
- b. June Krauser Communication Award (JKC): Nancy R reported that Sally (and Steve Peterson) presented the award to Lucianne Pugh, PNA's editor of *The WetSet*. It's a beautiful award. Sally mentioned to Nancy that we should add to the committee's "best practices" the suggestion that the same person should not receive an individual award twice. Someone was nominated for the JKC award who received it just 2 years ago.
 - c. Dorothy Donnelly Service Award (DDSA): Beth thanked Nancy K, Sally, and Ray for writing, editing, and posting the bios quickly. She expressed additional thanks to Ray for the time he spent on the video and for Hill, who wrote the DDSA poem and helped Ray. Ray thanked Rich for his help on the graphics. Ray noted that USMS linked to his Vimeo account instead of using the USMS You Tube account and linking to the USMS computer. Beth asked Crystie to have Ed Coates investigate the issue. Further discussion involved who owns the hard copy? Could USMS use the tiles to link? How should it be shown on the USMS website?
 - d. Club of the Year Award (COYA): The "local/regional" designation needs to be removed from the award banner in the future. Beth noted that the website still includes that information, and it lists Charis Anderson McCarthy as the contact person. Both need to be corrected. Ray asked about Instagram – does Daniel Paulling use it? Beth offered to post a link to the story on Instagram.
 - e. Masters International Swimming Hall of Fame Award (MISHOF): Sally submitted a report via email: Still no news from the Hall of Fame regarding the R&A committee's nomination for Contributor: Nadine Day. The nomination was submitted nearly a year ago and voting took place last March. Rich Burns has recently exchanged emails with Meg Keller-Marvin at the HOF and reported "no progress and no decisions". No word as to whether they are accepting nominations for 2024 either. Eventually we will find out if a 2023 class is going to be named. If not, Nadine will be nominated for 2024. Jim Matysek is a potential nominee for the "Pioneer" category. Michael Phelps was inducted into ISHOF on September 30 along with other notable athletes and contributors. The following USMS members were inducted into the 2023 ISHOF class for their special contributions: Gail Dummer received the John K. Williams Jr. Award (for adaptive aquatics – a long time passion of hers). Cullen Jones received the Aquatic Safety Award. And Elaine K. Howley received the Buck Dawson Author's Award (for co-writing a book with Tom Gompf). We know Elaine as a frequent contributor to USMS's *Swimmer* magazine. Rich indicated that the HOF and USMS national office are discussing potential locations for the Masters presentation and no decision has been made.
 - f. USMS Fitness award: Prior to the meeting, Sally emailed the committee members about this award. She encouraged the R&A committee to add the Fitness Award to our list of award responsibilities and noted the following precedents:
 - The MISHOF award became the R&A committee's responsibility when the USMS ISHOF committee was dissolved ~15 years ago.
 - The Communications award was established by the USMS Communications Committee and when that committee was dissolved in 2012, the R&A committee became responsible for it as well. Mary expressed support for the proposal and indicated that better publicity is needed. She has been a member and served as chair of the newly dissolved Fitness Committee. Nancy R said that fitness is not our committee's responsibility. Beth suggested this be on the next meeting agenda.
4. Additional items
 - a. Creating Best Practices for Awards: Beth wanted to form a subcommittee; Ray and Nancy K. volunteered. Nancy indicated that Sally would like to be included as well.
 - b. Date for next meeting: Beth suggested dates – 11/19, 11/26, and 12/3. With no consensus, Beth offered to send an email with other choices.
 - c. Bios (stories) for award winners: Ray reported that bios have been completed for the following USMS awards: Officials, Kerry O'Brien, Coach of the Year, Long Distance, and Ted Haartz awards. He encouraged Mary to write the bios for this year's two Fitness award recipients.

MSA to adjourn at 7:24 pm Central time (Ray/Crystie). Thank You Nancy Kryka for your extensive notes!