

U.S. Masters Swimming

Committee Name: Recognition & Awards

Committee Chair: Elizabeth Nymeyer

Minutes recorded by: Sally Dillon

Date/time of meeting: August 20, 6 pm CST

Actions taken: None

Number of committee members present: 7

Absent: 3

Guests: 15

Present: Richard Burns, Hill Carrow, Sally Dillon, Nancy Kryka, Elizabeth Nymeyer, Ray Novitske, Nancy Ridout and Ed Coates (VPLO)

Absent: Michael Hillegonds, Mary Jurey, Michael Moore, Daniel Paulling (Ex Officio)

Guests: Marcia Benjamin, Kathy Casey, Jeff Commings, Barbara Dunbar, Jeanne Ensign, Marilyn Fink, Cheryl Kupan, Diana Dolan LaMar, Crystie McGrail, Robin Smith, Skip Thompson, Tim Waud, Walt Reid, Ally Sega, Meegan Wilson, Jill Wright,

Beth Nymeyer called the Annual Meeting to order at 7 pm EST. Committee members introduced themselves and stated their committee responsibilities and mentioned their activities.

The minutes of the July 16, 2023 meeting were approved via email and posted on the USMS website.

Agenda

1. Introductions of Committee Members: Beth welcomed the members and guests to the meeting. The committee members introduced themselves and stated their various committee responsibilities.
2. Subcommittee review - AWARDS
 - a. Ransom J. Arthur M.D Award (RJA): The award was announced in March and Barbara Dunbar (San Diego Imperial LMSC) is this year's honoree. Ed acknowledged Barbara, who was on the call, and said that she will be giving her speech virtually. Hill noted that the award is USMS's most prestigious award, and it typically recognizes a lifetime of achievement representing a significant body of contributions and volunteerism in USMS. In addition to Barbara, eight others were nominated this year: Dan Cox, Ralph Davis, Phil Dodson, John King, Bob Kolonkowski, Mark Moore, Ed Saltzman, and Kris Wingenroth.
 - b. Dorothy Donnelly Service Award (DDSA): Beth reported that 15 volunteers will be honored during the awards presentation on September 8. There were 21 nominations, and she thanked the committee for their help in encouraging nominations for this and all the awards the committee manages. Beth noted that the East Coast was particularly well represented. Ray said he is preparing the video for all of the USMS award recipients but has not yet received the honoree information from the Officials Committee and National Office. He thanked Rich for helping improve the graphics for the video presentation and noted that Beth and Sally are helping gather photos of the recipients. Ray reminded everyone to watch the USMS Award video presentation on Friday night. Hill will repeat as the committee's "Poet Laureate" and announce the DDSA recipients.
 - c. June Krauser Communications Award (JKC): Nancy R. shared that the communications award is named after USMS's "first communicator", June Krauser. June founded the first USMS newsletter, which she typed and mailed to subscribers across the country. The subcommittee consisted of three R&A members and one member each from the Diversity and Inclusion, Coaches, and History and Archives committees. This year the committee received three outstanding nominees. The selection has been made and will be announced during the aforementioned USMS award presentation. The award has been ordered and it will be presented to the honoree by her LMSC. Nancy noted that efforts were made to encourage nominations by reaching out to leaders in the LMSCs. She encouraged the audience to nominate those in their LMSCs and clubs who excel in communication areas.
 - d. Club of the Year Award COYA: In his absence, Mike Hillegonds sent the following report: "We received three nominations for the Club of the Year award and the committee vote was close. The award recipient will be revealed at the convention in Houston." The selection committee consisted of three

members of the R&A committee and one each from the Fitness and Coaches committees. Ray noted that since 2022, the committee awards one award, which can go to regional, local, or a workout group. Rich noted that, like the RJA award, the award is considered a life-time achievement award for a club. Sally said that a USMS club with new leadership and accomplishments has received this award 3 times, so referring to the COYA as a "lifetime achievement" is not correct. It was agreed that the committee should discuss the differing opinions soon.

- e. Masters International Swimming Hall of Fame award (MISHOF): In early March, the R&A committee Nominated Nadine Day to the Hall of Fame in the Contributor category. Sally reported that while the selection committee members cast their votes later that month, there has been no official announcement as to who will be honored for 2023. Our contact at the HOF (Meg Keller-Marvin) has said that the announcement won't come until after a decision has been made as to where and when an induction ceremony will take place. Rich added that he has been in contact with Meg regularly and that since USAS no longer meets together, it has become more difficult finding a venue that serves all the MISHOF honorees. Nancy R. noted that our committee does not nominate USMS members for the performance awards (athletes). We instead can only nominate for the Contributor, Coach, or Pioneer categories. Sally noted that our previous nominee (and inductee in 2022) was Coach Kerry O'Brien. The athletes earn points for achievements in the water (international and national) and they are only considered for the HOF once they reach a certain level of points. Beth emphasized that the R&A committee only deals with volunteer, service, and contributor awards. She noted that she has been contacted by swimmers looking for performance awards and she replied that she can only provide a "virtual High-five".

3. Subcommittee reports – PROJECTS

- a. Social media outreach: Beth sent emails and posted on Instagram and Facebook to encourage friends, teams, and fellow board members to nominate volunteers for the USMS awards.
 - b. Email outreach: Nancy R. said that the Google Doc that the committee used to follow up on who had been contacted did not work as well as it did last year. Beth acknowledged that there were problems with the document and promised to start a fresh document for the coming year. Focusing on the Colonies Zone, Ray contacted each LMSC separately to encourage nominations. He personalized each message for each LMSC and noted that there were a lot of East Coast nominations as a result. Speaking to the guests at the meeting, Ray encouraged nominators pay close attention to the nomination form and to focus on the specific areas of service in the Masters community. Success as an athlete is irrelevant, as are contributions to other organizations. Beth said that since the National Office doesn't allow us to send group emails to LMSC officers, our efforts have focused on reaching out to LMSCs within our zones. Nancy R. suggested that a task for next year might be to have someone on the committee prepare a Google Doc with the contact information for all the LMSC leaders.
 - c. Award stories/bios: Ray would like our committee to be ready to post the stories/bios of the 2023 recipients. He asked for volunteers, but there were none. Ray also noted that other award giving committees continue to be slow in providing stories about their award recipients. He is guiding several of the committees to get them caught up.
4. Award Presentations in Houston: Ray didn't have anything else to add that wasn't reported earlier. Hill asked about the National Championship Award presentation and Ed suggested that Ray and Hill discuss offline the procedure for getting the award to the recipient.
 5. 2023 Projects and Committee Goals. Beth asked the committee for suggestions.
 - a. Google form for award nominations: Stacy Abrams worked on the project to create these forms for R&A's awards, but the project was not completed before she left the committee last month. It needs to be a priority for the coming year. Ray suggested we invite the other committees to use the same form. Sally suggested we get ours done first, use them for at least a year, and then share the concept with the others. Beth will ask Stacy for the latest iterations so the committee can move forward with the project.
 - b. DDSA – all time recipient list: Sally has kept a list of all DDSA recipients for many years. It includes an alphabetized list, making it quite easy to see if someone has already received the award. She suggested that the document be posted on the DDSA award page so anyone looking to make a nomination can confirm whether the person has not already received one. Ed was not familiar with the document but offered to look into the feasibility of posting it. Sally will send the document.

In closing, Beth encouraged “new people” to consider joining the R&A committee. She noted that the committee is a great place to learn about the USMS awards, service in USMS, and the value of volunteering! Sally asked the committee members to review the minutes quickly once they receive them. A quick turnaround will be needed to get them posted to the USMS website before the Annual Meeting begins. Nancy R. thanked the visitors for joining our meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm EST.