U.S. Masters Swimming House of Delegates - All Sessions Hybrid Annual Meeting September 8-9, 2023 Friday, September 8, 2023 5:00 PM CST

President Peter Guadagni called the 2023 House of Delegates to order at 5:11 PM CST.

Welcome and Annual Meeting Opening Remarks: Peter welcomed attendees and provided an annual meeting overview. **Peter** went through the agenda of the HOD sessions for Friday and Saturday.

Peter recognized **Carrie Stolar**, Secretary, for the Secretary report. The number of certified delegates was 228 at the start of the session and said that the number of delegates online, both virtual and in-person, was 185. **Carrie** named guests of the President for the duration of the Annual Meeting per the Standing Rules: **Dawson Hughes**, **Onshalee Promchitmart**, **Bill Brenner**, **Jessica Reilly**, **Kyle Deery**, **Gary Keehner**, and the individuals doing the closed captioning, **Denise Hinxman** and **Jacquie Gutierrez**.

Peter recognized Chris Colburn, Vice President of Administration, for approval of the proposed Standing Rules of the 2023 USMS Hybrid Annual Meeting by unanimous consent.

Peter thanked the delegates for their time and support of him and USMS. He spoke about the membership challenges, especially member retention, of the past few years and the fact many potential members don't have a club/coach/facility within a reasonable proximity to where they live or work. Peter highlighted the independent swimmer strategic initiative and its membership opportunity. He also touched on the strategic initiatives of event development, which is the focus of Relay 2023, and community development, which will be the focus of Relay 2024, as well as a local focus. He talked about pursuing our mission and providing experiences that appeal to different groups and taking advantage of opportunities like College Club Swimming (CCS) and Grown-Up Swimming (GUS). USMS is considering acquiring GUS as it appeals to groups and age groups where USMS is not strong. The BOD is dedicated to strengthening USMS' traditional programs through the strategic initiatives but is also open to opportunities to reach new populations. Lastly, Peter thanked everyone for their efforts on behalf of USMS.

Peter recognized Dawson Hughes, USMS CEO, for the 2023 Update and 2024 Priorities. Dawson thanked the departing BOD officers, especially Patty Miller and Peter Guadagni. Dawson talked about a key challenge of USMS, the member retention rate. In 2024, the priority will continue to be on building more and stronger USMS clubs and events and reaching more adults. **Dawson** talked about membership versus mission. Our goal is to get more adults swimming and we may need to look to new ways to do this while continuing to support the traditional USMS club and event model. The future focus will be on supporting the mission rather than just reporting membership numbers. Dawson talked about the USMS strategic initiatives, initially focusing on club and event development. Event participation is trending upwards, and members that participate in events renew at a rate 15% higher than those that don't. Dawson talked about the local focus strategy and the necessary resources to do that, which are both volunteer time and LMSC money. In recent years, LMSC reserves have increased significantly, in part due to the pandemic but also due to changes in how the costs of attending the annual meeting are handled. LMSC budgets should be viewed as a business plan, and LMSCs should plan on investing in their local swimming communities, providing value and quality swimming experiences for their members. In 2024, USMS will have a robust marketing campaign tied with Olympic Trials and the Olympics, and we will continue to work on our strategic initiatives. Development will begin on a platform for the independent swimmer, and we will continue to evaluate the acquisition of Grown-Up Swimming.

Peter recognized **Erin Sullivan**, Elections Committee Chair. She gave an overview of the election process and thanked the Elections Committee. **Erin** explained the floor nomination process and asked for any floor nominations by position. There were no floor nominations. Erin stated that the meet the candidates session starts Saturday morning at 9 AM.

Consent Agenda (Ed Coates):

Peter recognized **Ed Coates**, Vice President of Local Operations, for approval of the committee reports. Approval of committee reports (Standing, Board, Executive Committee Members, Special Liaison, and Zone) per section 504.2.6 of the Rule Book will be by unanimous consent. **Ed** indicated that if any of the reports are pulled, they will be discussed after the uncontested reports are approved by unanimous consent.

Executive Committee Reports to be approved:

- President
- VP of Administration
- VP of Local Operations
- VP of Programs
- VP of Community Services
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Ed proceeded to read the list of the Standing Committees to be considered today: Championship, Coaches, Diversity and Inclusion, Fitness Education, History and Archives, LMSC Development, Officials, Recognition and Awards, Records and Tabulations.

Ed then read the Committees of the Board: Audit, Finance, Compensation and Benefits, Elections, Governance, Investment, ALTS Programming Committee.

Next the Zone Committees were read: Breadbasket, Colonies, Great Lakes, Northwest, Oceana, South Central, Southeast, Southwest.

Finally, the Liaison and Special Assignment Committees were read: World Aquatics Masters, IGLA Liaison, National Board of Review, National Senior Games, Pan Am Aquatics Masters Committee, IHOF Liaison.

The following reports were pulled for further consideration:

- Oceana by **Nadine Day**.
- Pan Am Aquatics by **Nadine Day.**

No other objections. **Reports listed are approved with the exception of the Oceana Zone and Pan Am Aquatics reports**. **Nadine Day** said that the Oceana Zone report was pulled in an attempt to find out how the \$20,000 in grant money was spent in Hawaii. The Pan Am Aquatics report was pulled for a point of clarification. The Pan Am Masters Championships are in Trinidad and Tobago, not Cleveland. The Cleveland event is a different event taking place at the same time.

The Oceana Zone and Pan Am Aquatics reports were approved.

Awards (Elizabeth Nymeyer):

Peter recognized **Elizabeth Nymeyer**, Recognition and Awards Committee chair. **Elizabeth** gave an overview of the awards announcements and presentation.

- Peter announced the Captain Ransom J. Arthur Award winner, Barbara Dunbar.
- Elizabeth Nymeyer recognized Kenny Brisbin, who announced the Coach of the Year Award winner, Rick Walker.

The following 2023 Service Awards were announced via a pre-recorded video/slideshow played during this HOD session. **Elizabeth** thanked her committee and **Ray Novitski** for his help on creating the videos.

Elizabeth Nymeyer, who introduced the video of the 2023 Dorothy Donnelly Service Award winners:
 David Brancamp, Erika Braun, Virgil Chancy, Omar de Armas, Stephen Dougherty, Kim Elsbach,
 Mike Hillegonds, Sue Jensen, Stu Kahn, Lorraine Masse, Mike Murray, Doug Sayles, Laura Shope,
 Jill Springer, Natalie Taylor.

- Kerry O'Brien, who announced the Kerry O'Brien Coaches Award winners: William Kolb, Amy San Filippo, Chuck Beatty, Kenny Brisbin.
- The 2023 Club of the Year Award to Tamalpais Aquatic Masters.
- The 2023 National Championship Meets Award to Teri White.
- Nancy Ridout, who announced the 2023 June Krauser Communications Award to Lucianne Pugh.
- Phyllis Quinn, who announced the 2023 Long Distance National Championship Award to Marisa Frieder.
- Phyllis Quinn, who announced the 2023 Open Water Service Award to Ali Hall.
- Jeff Commings, who announced the 2023 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award to Rook Campbell, Marty Hendrick, and Ally Sega.
- Ann Marshfield, who announced the 2023 Fitness Award to Stacy Sweetser and Sarah Perkins.
- Jessica Reilly, who announced the 2023 Ted Haartz Staff Appreciation Award to Teddy Decker.
- Robin Smith, who announced the 2023 Officials Excellence Award to John King and Teri White.

The House recessed at 6:44 PM CST.

Saturday, September 9, 2023 9:00 am CST

The In Memoriam Video was shown beginning at 8:30 AM CST. After delegate instructions by **Jessica Reilly**, a USMS video was shown.

President Peter Guadagni reconvened the House at 9:07 AM CST.

Peter recognized **Carrie Stolar**, Secretary, for the Secretary's report. The guests of the president are identical to yesterday. The number of certified delegates was 178 at the start of the session. The total number of delegates signed in (at the highest point) was 188 for yesterday's HOD session. There are 228 total certified delegates.

Elections (Erin Sullivan):

Erin Sullivan, Elections Committee Chair, thanked her committee and then announced each of the candidates for a meet the candidate session:

• President: Ed Coates and Michael Heather

• VP of Administration: Julie Dussliere

• VP of Local Operations: Crystie McGrail

• VP of Programs: **Robin Smith**

VP of Community Programs: Kenny Brisbin

Secretary: Carrie StolarTreasurer: Jill Gellatly

Erin indicated that according to 2023 election procedures, **all candidates running unopposed will be elected by acclimation**. The only contested election is that for the office of president. Elections are online and will be open for 15 minutes.

The house recessed for approximately 15 minutes from 10:35 AM CST until 10:50 AM CST.

Erin announced that Ed Coates was elected as president of USMS.

Secretary's note: More detail on the proposed rule changes listed below can be found here: Rule Changes

Rules Committee (Claire Letendre, co-vice chair): Claire thanked the Rules Committee for its work this year. MSA to adopt R-1, without objection by unanimous consent. No objection. MSA to adopt R-5, without objection by unanimous consent. No objection by unanimous consent. No objection. MSA to adopt R-2, without objection by unanimous consent. No objection. MSA to reject R-3, without objection by unanimous consent. No objection by unanimous consent. No objection by unanimous consent. No objection by unanimous consent.

Committee will meet in early October to discuss U1 - U3. MSA to adopt the Rules Committee annual report, without objection. No objections.

Consideration of proposed amendments:

Secretary's note: More detail on the proposed long distance amendments listed below can be found here: <u>Long distance amendments</u>

It was noted that proposals do not need to be pulled, they will all be considered individually.

Long Distance Committee (Phyllis Quinn, chair): Phyllis thanked the Long Distance Committee for its work this year. Proposed amendments recommended by the Long Distance Committee: MSA to adopt LD-1, without objection. No objection. LD-3 through LD-6 all reflect the way USMS has been running virtual events, both last year and this year. The national office is now considered the host for virtual events and the rule book needs to be updated. LD-3 pulled by Meegan Wilson. LD-4 pulled by Meegan Wilson. LD-5 pulled by Meegan Wilson. LD-6 pulled by Meegan Wilson. Motion to approve LD-3 by Phyllis Quinn, second by Jill Wright. Discussion: SBill Tingley clarified that if 305.2.4 passes, all the virtual events that a local LMSC or club may sponsor would have to be run through the national office. He believes that this is in the wrong place in the rule book. Jim Davidson from the LD Committee is investigating. Meegan Wilson suggested that the order of LD-3 through LD-6 are in the wrong order. Motion from Leo Letendre to suspend the discussion on LD-3 until later. Kathy Casey, second. Motion passes. LD-4 Motion to approve by Phyllis Quinn. Jill Wright, second. Discussion: Comments from several delegates focused on a lost opportunity for clubs to make money if they don't have the chance to host or cohost a virtual championship, but Robin Smith commented that the committee has been unsuccessful in getting bids. Phyllis Quinn explained that in running these events, the national office provides efficiencies. Motion passed. LD-4 is approved. Motion to approve LD-5 by Phyllis Quinn. Jill Wright, second. Rob Duguay suggested housekeeping edits for parts B and C. Motion passed. LD-5 is approved. LD-6 Motion to approve by Phyllis Quinn. Jill Wright, second. Discussion: none. Motion passed. LD-6 is approved. LD-2 Motion to approve by Phyllis Quinn. Jill Wright, second. Discussion: Charles Cockrell asked about the World Aquatics interpretation on the suit tie guidelines. For pool meets ties are prohibited, but for OW? Phyllis Quinn confirmed that the rules for ties are different for OW and pools. Many delegates commented on the discrepancy between the rules for USMS, World Aquatics and USA-S. Other comments focused in being welcoming and inclusive in swimwear. Helen Naylor made an amendment - and sent it in writing- to the rule and add "At the discretion of the race director." **Thomas Murphy**, second. **Kathy Casey** said that in rule 102.12.1 C, no zippers, ties or any other fastener systems with the exception of waist ties are allowed. Amendment presented: "The swimmer shall wear only one swimsuit in 1 or 2 pieces. All swimsuits shall be made from textile materials and not contain clasps or zippers but may have ties that fasten on the swimmer's back at the discretion of the event director." Speaking to the amendment: Helen Naylor explained that the amendment offers flexibility to a race director. Delegates commented on both sides of the amendment. MSA to call the question. Maddie Sibilia moved. Chris Colburn, second. Motion passed. Further HOD discussion took place about consistency across events. The amendment to include "at the discretion of the race director" is defeated. Discussion now reverts to the original LD-2. MSA to call the question. Jeff Strahota, motion. Chris Colburn, second. Motion passed. LD-2 is approved. Discussion on LD-3 is postponed until later in the afternoon.

The HOD recessed for lunch for one hour until 1:15 PM CST.

Long Distance Committee (Phyllis Quinn, Chair): Phyllis Quinn stated that the LD Committee has voted and is withdrawing LD-3. MSA to adopt the Long Distance Committee report, without objection. No objections.

Secretary's note: More detail on the proposed legislation listed below can be found here: Proposed legislation

Legislation Committee (**Stephanie Gauzens**): **Stephanie** introduced the legislation in batches. **MSA to adopt L-7**, **without objection**. No objections. **MSA to adopt L-2**, **without objection**. No objections. **MSA to reject L-4 and L-5**, **without objection**. No objections. **Motion to approve L-3 by Chris Campbell**. **Teddy Palmer**, **second**. Discussion: In response to questions about why the Fitness Committee is being eliminated, delegates commented that the scope of work or commitment to fitness education is not and a better way to implement it is being sought. Members of the committee committed themselves to supporting the national office in delivering events, programs, etc. **Motion passed**. **Motion to approve L-6 by Teddy Palmer**. **John Dussliere**, second. Discussion: **Peter**

Guadagni explained that "coordinator" has no ability to create policy as it is a regular staff position. It is a position name that is no longer used. This change modernizes the rule book to delete a term that is no longer used. Motion passed. Motion to approve L-1 by Teddy Palmer. John Dussliere, second. Discussion: Carrie Stolar, chair of the task force, provided a point of information on the task force and its work. She shared the process to update the Mission, Vision, Objectives and Values of USMS. Charles Cockrell provided additional background details and walked the HOD through the proposed Mission, Vision, and Values. Marilyn Fink explained that when this was originally published by the Legislation Committee, the preamble had been deleted. The Northwest Zone then submitted a revised preamble and has been included. The San Diego Imperial LMSC has submitted an amendment L1. Barbara Dunbar, second. The amendment, which was submitted in writing, is: Mission: To promote adult wellness, fitness, and competition through swimming. Vision: To foster a nationwide adult swimming community by providing lifelong opportunities for participation, camaraderie, and education. Values: Excellence, Inclusion, Integrity, Legacy and Respect. Several delegates commented on the proposed amendment and the difficulty of 200 people to come to agreement on specific wording. Some appreciated the nod to the roots of USMS but others felt that it wasn't forward looking. MSA to call the question. Motion by Arlene Delmage. Chris Colburn, second. Motion passed. Amendment failed.

Charles Cockrell moved to amend the original L-1 proposal. He would like to strike "fairness and competition" from the values. Kris Wingenroth, second. Discussion: Delegates commented on the appropriate number of values as well as on specific proposed values. MSA to call the question. Doug Garcia, motion. Britta O'Leary, second. Motion passed. The amendment to strike fairness and competition from L1 failed. Charles Cockrell made a motion to strike the preamble in its entirety from the guiding principles. Jeff Commings, second. Point of information by Ed Coates. Ed stated that the newly elected Executive Committee has met and agreed to take the wording in the preamble and place it on the first opening page of the rule book. This placement is not subject to the approval of the HOD. It is more appropriately placed there as an introduction to the organization and the book. This will take place as we publish the new book. MSA to call the question. Rob Duguay, motion. Britta O'Leary, second. Motion passed. Peter Guadagni, point of order, said that the preamble will be on the title page or on the page immediately after. The motion to strike the preamble from the Guiding Principles page passed. Further discussion on L-1. Delegates commented in support of and against the proposed MVV. Motion to adopt L-1 passed. Motion to adopt the Legislation Committee's annual report by Kathy Palmer. Chris Colburn, second. Julie Dussliere made a friendly correction to include missing committee member John Dussliere. Motion to approve the report passed. Stephanie thanked her committee for their work this year.

The HOD recessed at 2:24 PM CST and resumed at 2:41 PM CST.

Secretary's note: 184 delegates are currently online/in-person.

Peter Guadagni gave an overview of the reminder of the annual meeting. He then recognized Dawson Hughes, Chief Executive Officer, for the results and 2024 budget assumptions. Dawson recognized Guy Davis, Finance Committee Chair, for the joint presentation. Dawson said that our ultimate responsibility is to provide good experiences for our members. Guy Davis gave an overview, from a financial perspective, of the BOD, the BOD committees, and the national office staff and their roles and responsibilities. Guy thanked the committees for their input and Teddy Decker, USMS treasurer, for her key role in taking advantage of COVID benefits and her help in onboarding Gary Keehner, USMS controller. Guy also gave a high-level explanation of the responsibilities, from a financial perspective, of the CEO and national office staff, and walked everyone through the USMS budget timeline. Guy shared high level financials from recent years as well as a projection for 2024 and stated that USMS benefited greatly in 2020 and 2021 from government pandemic support programs. Our investment reserves are now approaching pre-pandemic levels. He gave the HOD an overview of the capital investments, which include the digital transformation. He closed his presentation by stating that we are still working towards our goal of getting back to fiscal balance, but we continue to have a very strong financial position to work from.

Dawson Hughes introduced **Gary Keehner**, USMS controller. **Dawson** gave an overview of the strategic programs from a financial perspective.

- o Club development strategy
 - Similar budget to prior years.
 - Find clubs that are ripe for growth with support (grants (\$50,000 in the budget)).

- Find facilities for new clubs.
 - Provide startup support.
- Find coaches with interest and potential.
 - Connect with opportunities.
- Club development success stories.
- It takes about 75 swimmers with a coach on deck to create a long term, viable club.
- o Event development strategy: Relay 2023 theme
 - Matching grant program, marketing, and guidance.
 - Need help locally to identify local opportunities due to limited staff resources.
 - Goal is to have one event on each course in each LMSC.
- Marketing and event fine-tuning
 - Scale back Fitness Series to only the 30-minute challenge and move to summer.
 - Olympics and Olympic Trials marketing campaign.
 - Further refinement of Try Masters Swimming.
 - Spring Nationals to take place during the last week of Olympic Trials.
- o Community development: Relay 2024 theme
 - Local level/personal relationships.
 - Social engagement, fundraising, etc.
 - National Coaches Clinic over the same weekend.
- Independent swimmer
 - Leverage existing resources/content.
 - Initial estimate is \$50,000 in expenses.
 - Help connect with the broader USMS community.
- Grown-Up Swimming
 - If it is acquired, financials will be tracked separately.
 - Will be about a \$150,000 investment.
- 3 Year Financial Projection:
 - Slower membership growth as compared to last year's 3-year projection (58,500 members for 2024)
 - o Proposed fee increase to \$75 in 2025.
 - Return to a breakeven budget by 2025.
 - Goal: balanced fiscal position by 2025.
 - o Projected capital investment of \$150,000 in 2024.
 - LMSC financials (Guy)
 - Assets and revenue have increased, and expenditures have decreased from 2019 2021.
 - Spending increased in 2022, but still not back to 2019 levels.
 - Best use of these funds at a local level to enhance member experience.
 - Can't do any one thing to impact every individual in an LMSC.
 - Start with a plan and build your budget/make decisions based on the plan.
 - Use LMSC funds to support the mission.
- Questions:
 - Michael Moore: What is the adequate level of reserves as a percentage of expenses? Also, at what point of time in the year is this given the revenue flow of memberships? Guy explained that we are a negative working capital organization because we receive our revenues before the associated expenses, so there is an overstatement of our year end bank balances as the income has been received but the expenses have not been realized until the following year. Half a year to a year of revenues would be a comfortable amount of reserves to hold. However, LMSCs don't have significant fixed costs so they only have a smaller need for reserves. Guy also said that because we have a reasonably secure revenue stream, we can also take advantage of multiyear commitments.

- Leo Letendre: The new swimmer packages/Swimmer magazine went out to the wrong people this year. What happened and how did it affect the budget? Also, what steps were taken to ensure that it doesn't happen again? Dawson explained that it was a manual error that cost about \$25,000. With the new Salesforce technology, it shouldn't happen again.
- Meegan Wilson: Stated that there seems to be some negativity towards regional clubs and workout groups, and she thinks that they add camaraderie and provide a place for independent swimmers to register. Why is it difficult to find information about regional clubs and workout groups in Club Finder? Dawson said that there isn't negativity towards workout groups. They are treated the same as clubs. Club Finder is designed to help you find a pool. The national office staff can also help you. Regional clubs don't have a location.
- o **Ben Wyckoff:** Asked about the unified fee. The proposed benefits haven't really materialized and the drawbacks seem significant. Some LMSCs have significant reserves and others have none. What are your thoughts to make it more equitable or thoughts to modify the unified fee? **Dawson** explained that the concept of unified fee is still young and will need some tweaks along the way. Clubs have struggled, generally not LMSCs, and there is club and event grant money available.
- o **Tom Boak: Tom** thanked the staff and **Guy Davis** on the quality presentations that have been given. Tom would like to see an in-person annual meeting in 2024. **Dawson** talked about the 3-year annual meeting plan (hybrid/virtual/hybrid) presented last year given the pandemic and related membership issues. That plan is built into the financial assumptions for the budget for 2024
- Ally Sega: In Connecticut they would like to do things for the members and to attract new members. Many think that the membership fee is expensive. There is no easy path for how an LMSC can reduce the fee. Can we add something to the registration process, like a discount code, to reduce the cost to potential members? Dawson responded that we do have some additional capabilities and we are evaluating the best use of those. In terms of fees, the HOD approved the unified fee, and any adjustment would have to come before the HOD. One example would be Try Masters Swimming paired with a new member discount.
- Becks Freeburg: How can a group of Workout Group Swimmers who swim for a corporation
 apply for a grant? Dawson said that it is a unique situation and the national level can support you,
 but you should start at the LMSC level.
- Sally Dillon: Pacific Northwest has a scholarship program to help pay for annual fees and meet fees. She also talked about the straw vote that was taken last year about meeting in person for the annual meeting. Peter responded that two votes were taken. The first, which failed, gave control on the manner of meeting to the HOD. The second, which passed, gave control to the BOD. The BOD's 3-year meeting plan of hybrid/virtual/hybrid had been presented.
- Chris Wagner: Asked about the member survey that was conducted in June. Dawson shared that we partnered with a university in Denver on a member and non-member survey. The results are being analyzed and the data will be back in October and we will share a summary of the analysis and results. We will also compare results with a survey that was previously conducted.
- Ben Wyckoff: Said that his LMSC has considered scholarships and don't want to place an undue burden on the treasurer. Dawson said that he would be happy to talk offline to help simplify the process for the treasurer.
- o **Paige Buehler: Paige** talked about the in person/virtual annual meeting topic. She said that 42% of the total delegates this year are virtual, and of those 101 members, 41% are new delegates. We are reaching new delegates by having a virtual option. We also just saw the resources that LMSCs have available to them, and that if it is important to your zone, you can get together locally to attend virtually. **Dawson** also said that Relay is a great event and it is in-person. It is full of best-practices and networking.
- Alana Wilson thanked everyone for allowing The Woodlands to host the morning workout. The Gulf LMSC provided the buses.

 Sandi Rousseau: Sandi said that we gave power to the BOD over the manner of meeting (of HOD), but we have new BOD members. She would like to see a straw poll to get a sense of the HOD.

Closing Comments

- **Dawson** shared that there is a lot of work that happens in the next two months, especially around finalizing the budget for 2024. If you have concerns, please contact us at volunteer@usmastersswimming.org and/or schedule a call with **Dawson**. He also thanked **Jessica** and the national office staff in attendance.
- **Peter** recognized the past presidents of USMS. He said that the BOD will continue to have conversations with the LMSCs and Zones. He would also like to see more input from the coaches.
- He appreciates all of the effort that everyone puts into USMS and challenges everyone to figure out what you can do to improve the experience of those that you swim with at your club and LMSC.

The House of Delegates of U.S. Masters Swimming concluded its business and adjourned at 4:17 PM CST.

Respectfully Submitted, Carrie Stolar, USMS Secretary 2022-23