

2019 U.S. Masters Swimming Annual Meeting — St. Louis, Missouri

Committee Name:	Recognition & Awards	Session #:	1
Committee Chair:	Megan Lassen	Vice Chair:	Ray Novitske
Minutes recorded by:	Ashley Braniecki	Date/time of meeting:	September 12, 2019; 11:30 am

Actions Requiring Approval by the HOD:

1. None.

Motions Passed:

1. None.

Number of committee members present: 16	Absent: 6	Number of other delegates present: 14
Committee members present (list all, including chair and vice chair): Megan Lassen (chair), Ray Novitske (vice chair), Charis Anderson McCarthy, Ashley Braniecki, Richard Burns, Nadine Day, Christine Dahlstrom, Sally Dillon, Cathy Hallman-Kenner, Christine Maki, Beth Nymeyer, Lori Payne, Nancy Ridout, Laura Val, Chris Colburn (ex-officio), Onshalee Promchitmart (ex-officio),		
Committee Members Absent: Marcia Benjamin, Carolyn Boak, Dawn-Ann Dykes, Sonny Nguyen, Ginger Pierson, Jessica Reilly (ex-officio)		

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 11:35am.

1. Megan welcomed everyone to the meeting and encouraged participation during the committee meeting. She thanked Ray for serving as vice-chair, Nadine, Sally, and Chris for providing help and personal assistance throughout the year, and the committee as a whole. The committee members were introduced.
2. Chair report: Megan reported that conference calls were held in January, March, July, and August. Meeting minutes were posted to the USMS website. The Capt. Ransom J. Arthur MD Award (RJA Award) received eight nominations. The 2019 RJA Award was presented to Jeff Roddin. The Committee also took in all nominations for the June Krauser Communication Award, Dorothy Donnelly Service Award (DDSA), and Club of the Year Award. Laura was subcommittee chair for Club of the Year Award and Nancy was subcommittee chair for June Krauser Communications Award. The DDSA Award had 15 nominations and 13 awards which will be distributed. Megan reported that during the year, the committee reviewed and approved the request for a Long-Distance Award. The Long-Distance Committee will administer the nomination and vetting process, and will provide the award. The committee was unable to provide a recommendation for MISHOF as there was a change in the deadline, but it will consider a nomination for 2020. Megan also reported that most deadlines for awards are July 1st, though RJA is March 15th.
3. Budget Review: Megan reported that expenses stayed very much in line with the previous year, though the new #USMSVolunteer stickers were more expensive than anticipated.
4. Reports on Annual Projects
 - a. Captain Ransom J. Arthur MD Award: Nadine reported that she took over the RJA Award process. There were eight nominees for the RJA Award (Dan Cox, Ralph Davis, Peter Guadagni, Chris McGiffin, Mark Moore, Jeff Roddin, Ed Saltzman, and Skip Thompson). Forty-one eligible members voted on the nominees. Those eligible to vote are past winners plus committee members. Nadine noted that the new scoring system made things much easier than in the past (ranking the top three candidates). Nadine also noted that there were two issues that arose this year:
 - i. Communication to Membership: It was previously determined that the RJA Award would be presented at the LMSC level versus at the National Championship meet, however, because the 2019 awarded nomination came from the Championship Committee, it was presented at Spring Nationals. It was difficult to present based upon constraints at the pool (no video board). Nadine also noted that announcement of the RJA Award was not prominently posted on the USMS website. As this is the most prestigious service award presented by USMS, Nadine noted that this should be improved going forward. Sally asked if Nadine had spoken to the National Office regarding this topic, and she had, they are working together.

ii. LMSC Endorsement: As part of the current nomination process, all nominees' LMSCs provide an endorsement stating that the nominee is in good standing. This year, an LMSC with two nominees had nominated and endorsed one nominee. They were reluctant to endorse the other person because he was not their nominee. Nadine suggested that the Recognition and Awards Committee should clarify that the LMSC does not have to decide if that is who they want to nominate but they must indicate whether the nominee is in good standing (e.g. they can endorse more than one candidate). Sally suggested it be added to the RJA Award policies. Cathy asked that we include clarification on the nomination form. Nadine emphasized that she is not recommending any changes to policy at this point, but simply bringing it to the committee's attention. It was noted that it will be addressed at the next conference call meeting and is considered a communication issue versus a policy change. Charis asked about description of the award and how it is communicated to the general membership. It was noted that it is distributed to the LMSC leadership, with the expectation that LMSC leaders will share the information.

b. Dorothy Donnelly Service Award – Megan reported that there were 15 nominations and that 13 individuals will be presented with the award. Ray noted that under the new nomination format, more detailed and meaningful accomplishments were provided versus “fluff”, and that one nomination was sent back to the nominator for more information. The new form also requests submission of a photo of the nominee, which makes the final presentation and award ceremony much easier.

c. June Krauser Communications Award – Nancy reported that three quality awards were received. One to two weeks were designated to researching the nominees. Nancy and Megan redesigned the application form and this was the first year the new form was used.

d. Club of the Year – Laura thanked subcommittee members Ginger, Dawn-Ann, Chris, and Cathy for their work on the subcommittee. Most nominations were from the previous year. This year, the subcommittee looked at criteria to ensure they are capturing what is intended. Additional clubs were contacted; however, some clubs did not believe they were qualified or able to convey accomplishments based upon the criteria. Laura noted that voting was unanimous and the nomination process can continue to be improved. The committee would like to review and revise the nomination materials.

e. MISHOF – The name has been updated on the website. Other topic discussed during Chair report.

5. Reports of 2019 Projects

a. Hashtag Initiative – The online volunteer store is no longer functioning. To rejuvenate the volunteer base, Beth, Cathy, and Charis have been working on #USMSVolunteer which can be used on social media. It was noted that a little more traction was made this year. Beth will distribute #USMSVolunteer stickers at a HOD meeting and encourage delegates to use the hashtag while at convention. Also planned is a quarterly local volunteer recognition and best practices newsletter, which is in the initial draft.

b. Service Award Nomination Forms and Materials – It was discussed that the nomination form for Club of the Year would be edited.

c. Award Web Page Bios - The subcommittee has been working on completing the task of writing bios for DDSA recipients. Sally reported that the subcommittee has made progress, and that the individuals remaining are from years that lack a paper trail. In some instances, individuals may be easy to identify but it is unknown why there were nominated. Rich said it is almost impossible to get old information online about himself and suggested that the committee try different means to receiving information, such as going directly to the individual or put out requests to entire membership. Sally reported that Ashley has completed all the 2018 award bios. Megan noted press releases for 2019 award recipients have been completed and that the National Office has subsequently provided very specific guidelines as to how press releases should be written. Some re-writes will be necessary.

6. Questions from the audience.

a. Anita Cole, Southern Pacific, noted that she was a previous DDSA recipient said that her submission form lacked pertinent information, while other information was not accurate. She suggested standardization going forward. Anita also spoke of highlighting swimmers of the month, locally, and ways to share awards. Sally referred Anita to the USMS website where results of previous surveys regarding “recognizing your volunteers” can be found. They contain many suggestions. Go to usms.org, select > Guide to Operations > Awards to find the surveys and more.

b. Mary Jurey, Southern Pacific, asked why the Recognition and Awards Committee does not administer the Fitness Award. Sally responded that the Fitness Committee received permission many years ago (over 20) to create their annual award. It is up to that committee to determine criteria and how to administer the award. The Recognition and Awards Committee publicizes all of the USMS awards in *Streamlines* and *SWIMMER Magazine*. It also makes sure the winning members are posted on the Award pages. Ed Coates asked if the Recognition and Awards Committee would complete all tasks for awards. The response was that the R&A Committee is not responsible for soliciting and selecting award recipients, beyond the few that have been stated that belong to this committee. Each of the other committees should promote their awards, encourage nominations, select the recipients, and arrange for the awards.

Tasks for the Upcoming Year

1. Review of nomination forms and materials for Club of the Year.
2. Seek and increase nominations, provide guidance to those who have already submitted unchosen nominations.
3. Replace Volunteer store with a newsletter for local recognition and utilizing #USMSVolunteer program.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:36pm.
