

2 USMS R&A Committee Meeting Minutes Feb 15, 7:30 PM ET 2026 Recognition & Awards Committee US Masters Swimming

Committee Name: Recognition & Awards February 2026 Meeting
Committee Chair: Tara Mack "TMack" Vice Chair: Ann Marshfield
Minutes recorded by: TMack & Zoom AI Meeting Date/Time: 02/15/26; 7:30pm ET

Actions Taken: Approve [minutes](#) from 2-1-26

Number of committee members present: 12 Absent: 3 Guests: 0
Committee Members Present: Tara Mack "TMack" (Chair); Ann Marshfield (Vice Chair); Rich Burns; Hill Carrow; Sara Dunn; Caitlin Gagnon; Hayley Martin; Jane Moore; Michael Moore; Beth Nymeyer; Nancy Ridout; Crystie McGrail (VPLO)
Committee Members Absent: Emily Cook; Dan Underbrink
Daniel Paulling (Ex-Officio)
Guests: n/a

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm ET. Meeting agenda [here](#)

1 Welcome: "Roll Call": TMack recorded attendance. Ann Marshfield has agreed to serve as Vice Chair. Thank you, Ann.

2 VPLO Report, Crystie: Crystie reported there was not much to report and that there is a 2 ½ days BOD meeting this weekend and will have more shortly after this weekend. TMack asked her to share an overview of the request made by the national office regarding the bylaws, rules, policies and guidelines delineation. Crystie shared: 'Everything's kind of just organically been rolled in and balled up all together, so we're trying to kind of differentiate out what are guidelines, what are policies which are mandatory, what are rules which belong in our actual rulebook, and then what are bylaws, which belong in our governing policies. There is a longer letter explaining it and a summary chart that offers examples. She mentioned it doesn't seem to impact this committee much except when we look at what we're calling policies that are perhaps more likely guidelines. We're getting on the same page of using the same language.' She asked us to review these two documents and send any questions her way. The docs are:

a. USMS Guidelines for Rules, Policies and Guidelines document -

[board_guidelines_rules_policies_procedures.pdf](#)

b. USMS Guidelines for Rules, Policies and Guidelines Chart -

[rules_policies_guidelines_chart.pdf](#)

These are posted on the USMS Policy Documents page as the last 2 times of the Organizational section. [USMS Policies | U.S. Masters Swimming](#)

Discussion included Nancy Ridout asking that the policies be linked to the specific resources and committees for more user-friendly access to anyone looking for information. Crystie shared she would report that out.

3 Motion to Approve [minutes](#) from 2-1-26 Motion made by Sara Dunn; Seconded by Hill Carrow. Approved by unanimous consent.

4 Subcommittee Reports: Award descriptions are linked to each award.

Chairs / Designees provided a brief overview of subcommittee work; approximate timeline (including turn around time); and the approximate amount of work (hours spent reviewing / meeting with subcommittees) when serving on these subcommittees.

- a. Ransom J Arthur Award ([RJA](#)): Michael Moore, chair. Michael organizes nomination information. The RJA subcommittee contains previous recipients. The nominations are shared with the R&A committee for voting. This form is currently offline as per the R&A request in 2025. (Others are active, to be remedied)
- b. Masters International Swimming Hall of Fame ([MISHOF](#)): Rich Burns, chair. No specific committee work proposed; Jim Matysek has been submitted in the Contributor category. This nomination can be rolled forward until he receives it or until the committee decides to promote an alternative nominee. The celebration for MISHOF and ISHOF will be held congruently this year in May at the IHOF pool in Fort Lauderdale.
- c. Fitness Award ([FIT](#)): Ann Marshfield, chair. Highlighted that every USMS participant is a fitness swimmer and some of us are also competitive athletes. This award is for everyone and so it could be an individual that demonstrates outstanding contributions toward fitness activities within USMS...we like to take the competition component out of it. It can also be a group that is recognized for providing opportunities to their fitness swimmers to be more engaged. The nomination includes qualitative and quantitative information-overview and statistics to back up achievements in a measurable way.
- d. June Krauser Communications Award ([JKC](#)): Nancy Ridout, chair: Most work is done in July. There is about a 7 to 10 day window for the subcommittee to review the nominations and vote. The subcommittee is comprised of at least 2 R&A members and then representatives from other Committees, like Coaches Committee, Open Water, that kind of thing with a total of between 5 to 7 members.
- e. Dorothy Donnelly Service Award ([DDSA](#)): (TMack) Beth shared that the DDSA is the responsibility of the R&A Chair, so TMack is lead on this for 2026 and the vice chair serves on this too. (Thanks Ann) Will check the bylaws to the number of members and any other specifics for this group. She thinks 2-3 additional members. This subcommittee has used a point system in the past and Beth encouraged revamping this method to suit the subcommittees needs. There may be up to 15 people receiving this award every year, but there is no minimum

number of recipients. It is based on services at the Club, LMSC, and/or National Level or some combination of these. This award celebrates active members and volunteers at every level. Several members of the current R&A committee have received this award.

- f. Club of the Year Award ([CLUB](#)): Sara Dunn, chair. Sara scooped up Beth to be on the CLUB Subcommittee this year. Sara shared: People are very passionate about the teams they swim for. She is recruiting Caitlyn and TMack too. The submission process is a bear for this award. It likely discourages many people from nominating their clubs. TMack agreed it is painful to submit and to review submissions. The content is extensive and varied as well. Some nominations have been 19 pages long. Many include photos, videos, essays. It is extensive and uncontained. Caitlin agreed that the nominations are all so different it is challenging to compare and assess, and process the info. It was agreed that this award needs the most assistance on refining the nomination process for those looking to nominate their clubs and subsequently for the subcommittee as well. Hayley suggested AirTable. Crystie shared that the national office has decided on JotForm. Hayley offered assistance with the coding for JotForm (yay!) Crystie and TMack celebrated this benefit. Hayley will assist with coding and translating the paper content into JotForm specific data.

Update: All Awards online deadline submissions are NOW due on or before **July 1st, 2026**.

5 Online forms & Best practices=> Awards Nomination Forms: All hands on deck

- a. **From 2025:** USMS BOD to determine what platform we are to use = JotForm. Every award has a slightly different 'style' and the goal is to create the most user-friendly nomination forms for members and subsequently committee members as well. The forms don't have to be exact copies but JotForm will allow for a better interface, storage, and comparison feature.
- b. **Urgent:** TMack shared that Most Awards are actually "Live" online. R&A requested to have them offline until we received platform selection so the committee can update and streamline the nomination process. Note: [RJA](#) is 'offline' as requested. Crystie and TMack will work on this offline, and this is in the process of being addressed. TMack mentioned she had already received an inquiry from someone seeking to send in a nomination. TMack asked this person to hold off for now and to await further updates and information.
- c. TMack requested all Subcommittees and all members to review current Nomination Forms and provide written requests of specific info that should be uploaded into JotForm for each award nomination. The chairs of the subcommittees will lead this task, but all help is needed for this process. If one has served on a subcommittee or has completed a nomination as a member of USMS, please provide feedback. A timeline and action plan is forthcoming. R&A tentative timeline goal is to upload revised forms **on or before April 1, 2026**.

NOTE: Crystie mentioned the national office would need two (2) weeks to upload data

and allow for a test run by the R&A committee. The overall process would be a month before going live via the national office. The timeline will be established in the next few days with appropriate deadlines from this process. The deadlines to submit award nominations remains July 1st. Each subcommittee will send TMack the content they want uploaded into JotForm. Some of the awards, like the JKCA for example, has already been streamlined and Nancy Ridout mentioned she would like all of the current content carried forward. Additional insight from Hayley to add minimum word count and maximum word count on these individual responses. Club of the Year form will be improved by adding these frameworks to the questions. Michael mentioned he is not familiar with JotForm and will focus on the 5 or 6 main items for the RJA nomination form. Crystie reiterated that we are taking the paper forms of the nominations, insuring we have all the content we want and or add / remove as necessary, and sending these items to the national office to be uploaded into JotForm. Michael said that's great as he would keep the nomination mostly the same as last year with some minor modifications. TMack requested chairs send information to her and she will send them all to the national office as one batch. Hayley explained what the backend of JotForm looks like and volunteered (as tribute) to help with the Club of the Year nomination form. TMack mentioned that it seems like most of the nominations are mostly set and can be converted to JotForm with minor editing and that Club of the year is the main focus for updating.

Caitlin requested a set deadline to promote nominations. She mentioned April 1 as well. She will make / update tiles for social media campaigns and we will coordinate dates as a committee.

6 Additional Contributions and Tasks by R&A Committee:

- a. Request from Daniel Paulling for R&A Nominations Ad for **February 2026** for the May 2026 edition of STREAMLINES. Caitlin offered to coordinate with Daniel on this process. Thank you, Caitlin!
- b. Social media and direct outreach, Caitlin updated the committee on how she creates tiles and promotional material to be posted and shared by clubs and LMSCs to promote the nomination process. She also discussed the emailing campaign the R&A committee does each year. Word of mouth is a powerful method to boost nomination submissions. Nancy Ridout asked about the updated list for emails. TMack said she has been editing the list and it will be shared with the most updated contact information she has been able to find over the years.
- c. TMack celebrated Caitlin's efforts on the 2025 Awards Video. And said we can focus on this item later in the spring.
- d. TMack mentioned that the R&A Minutes from May 2025- Dec 2025 are missing / incomplete / not posted. TMack will work with Beth and the volunteer who does the uploads to get these uploaded on the USMS website.

7 Old business

- a. TMack shared a brief overview of the Historical Documentation Filing. Sally Dillon previously sent the R&A historical documents to TMack, Beth, and Crystie. The focus will be to designate an online location for these documents, and upload them.
- b. Additionally to gather additional information from other committee members, update, and post other historical documentation for access online.
- c. TMack mentioned and thanked Nancy Nevid and others for updating many of the current bios and that we will want to double check them and complete the missing bios during May/June. Some bios are incomplete or missing and date back to the 1990s. This discussion was tabled by TMack to a later date so the committee can focus on nomination forms.
- d. TMack suggested our committee look for ways to collaborate with other Committees- there has been discussion of some recipients receiving multiple awards in a given year. Is this a concern? She asked if there are collaborations that we are missing out on.

8 New Business

- a. TMack shared that the NELMSC presented Bill Brenner with a Lifetime Appreciation Award in October 2025. He was 'over the moon'. We have heard from other LMSCs this was of interest and also long overdue. Bill has coached thousands of swimmers and coaches. TMack can provide a template and she suggested that we table this discussion for now as per the committee's focus on the nomination forms.
- b. Crystie mentioned the LMSC Peer to Peer meetings as a great way to get the word out about these awards. Ann Marshfield mentioned that she is on the LMSC Development committee and is leading these calls and that it would be great to have committee members on these calls for collaboration and to get the word out.

Ann Marshfield made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Hill Carrow seconded. All approved.
Meeting Adjourned 8:36 pm ET.

Next Meeting is Sunday, March 15th, 7:30 pm ET