

Committee Name: Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Chair: Jeff Commings

Minutes recorded by: Chris Campbell

Session #6

Date of meeting: 12/3/2025

Time of meeting: 8 pm EST

Actions Taken:

1. None.

Committee Members Present: 7

Absent: 1

Guests: 0

Present: Jeff Commings (Chair), Chris Campbell (Vice chair), Sharon Snyder, Vicki Shu, Laura Dennison, Mary Jurey, Megan Shovlin

Guests: None

Absent: Lucila Davies, Keny Brisbin (Ex Officio—VP Community Services), Daniel Paulling (Ex Officio—National Office Staff)

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 8:07 pm EST.

1. Approval of the meeting minutes from the previous Committee meeting (held October 8, 2025) was by email vote prior to this meeting.
2. Committee Chair Jeff Commings reminded attendees that legal ramifications precluded any discussion of any ongoing legal issues and litigation.
3. Jeff reminded the Committee that he will be stepping down after 6 years as Committee Chair (and 2 years as a member of the USMS D&I Task Force before that).
4. The D&I webinar, held on 11/12/2025, was reviewed. Megan, Vicki and Laura were the presenters, with Jeff and Chris also attending. There were 4 additional non Committee members in attendance.
 1. There were 3 calls in preparation for the webinar, and it was presented in a roundtable format, rather than as a lecture presentation.
 2. There was solid and robust dialogue about best practices and goals among the participants.
 3. One very concrete suggestion that came out of the discussion was the inclusion of an accessibility statement as part of meet announcements. Development of boilerplate verbiage furthers USMS's Vision, Mission and Values of creating an inclusive environment for all USMS members at USMS events.
 1. As a reminder, there are sections in the USMS Rule Book which address accessibility and accommodations for members requiring such things, and Meet Directors and Officials should review them prior to the event (e.g., hand signals for the hearing impaired).

5. There was nonspecific discussion concerning using the Committee's expertise in assisting USMS navigate issues concerning inclusive competition of Transgender membership. While no specific topics were addressed, the Committee wishes to be involved in the discussions going forward in an advisory capacity to the Board of Directors and the National Office.
 1. Jeff reminded the Committee that only the USMS President (Ed Coates) and the CEO (Dawson Hughes) are currently authorized to speak for USMS on these matters. Any Committee members facing any such questions or comments are to refer them to Ed and Dawson.
6. The Committee continues to see value in and recommends pushing for the collection of more demographic and identification data among USMS members. The Committee feels that more data will be helpful in identifying areas where the values of inclusivity and participation can be strengthened.
7. Marketing USMS is seen as vital. Currently, the very name of "Masters Swimming" implies a level of elitism and can be construed as intimidating. Potentially rebranding the organization may be worth considering. In addition, pictures speak volumes, and it would be worthwhile for USMS to publish fewer pictures from Nationals competition and other meets, and to publish more pictures featuring workout groups, practices and other noncompetitive events. There may be an optics problem when it comes to portraying USMS as a more diverse organization if we only show our National level competitors. While such pictures are great, they are not as reflective of USMS's diversity and inclusivity as they should be.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 7, 2026 at 8pm Eastern Time.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50pm EST.