

Committee Name:
Futures Task Force

Session #: 1

Committee Chair: Daniel Cox

Minutes recorded by: Chris Colburn

Date/time of meeting: 3/13/2016 8:00pm EST

Motions Passed:

1.

Number of committee members present:7

Absent:2

Number of other delegates present:

Committee members present (list all, including chair and vice chair): Daniel Cox, Chris Colburn, Aubree Gustafson, Luke Shaheen, Wyatt Bradbury, Claire Letendre, Feres Ksebati

Not present: Richard Garza and Clare Rudd.

Guests: None.

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 8:01pm EST.

1. Patty welcomed the members of the task force to the call. You represent the younger age group in USMS. Everyone (in and out of USMS) are talking about future generations. How do we appeal to a younger membership as we go forward? How do we get younger age groups engaged as volunteers? Membership, volunteers, and engagement. Don't jump to solutions first. Look at the facts, and educate others on differences and similarities, and then look to possible solutions. Shoot for the stars in terms of solutions, and if we can't achieve them today, we'll keep them as goals and aspirations.
2. Meeting cadence: what do we want to do in terms of scope and direction?

Looking at the stats:

Claire: could be boomers, but not really

Wyatt: younger age group size has been stagnant while the older age groups have grown (USMS has doubled in size since 1987)

Feres: Is this unique to swimming, or comparable in other sports? Compared to running, there is a trend that the bulk of participants are in the 25-54 age group. 18% in 18-24, and 26% in 25-34 age group. Wyatt: is this a membership comparison or just folks who have competed?

Claire: Money isn't the issue (crossfit isn't cheap)

What's the perception about Masters Swimming in the younger age groups that do or don't attract the younger age group?

Wyatt: What identity are they trying to show? Crossfit has a culture, an image that folks want to portray. Boomers are perceived as hanging on, and it's easier for folks to get involved with people their own age.

Claire: back when their parents started swimming, there were socials with people their own ages.

There's still a desire for the social aspect with people their own ages.

Dan: Involvement in the org; what's the perception of people looking in.

Aubree: Fighting burnout in the sport – some folks aren't ready to come back to swimming until they're older, unlike other sports.

It's hard for people to stay when they don't see their demographic represented. They don't see someone they can relate to who are their age.

“We don't want to swim with the parents.”

Wyatt: Masters Swimming is bureaucratic, and folks don't want that in their sports.

DC: Are most of the new members looking to compete?

W: Masters swimming is trying to be a decisive force for all of swimming, and that can be a problem. If you want to attract kids from USA Swimming, then the competitions have to be good. If you're trying to pull folks in off the street, then you need to find compelling reasons, whether it's to learn to swim or to compete.

2 approaches: College/age group swimmers -> lead to other competitions; new swimmers (maybe summer leaguers or non-competitive folks): different approach for the non-competitive swimmer.

Triathletes: are doing triathlons to compete (as are crossfit). We see people engaging for different reasons.

Should we focus on competition? Luke: What keeps younger people there are the sense of community or the competitions... The kinds of thing folks compete in are like the postals, things you can do in your own facility. Sense of community – common goals?

Is time a factor? Some folks claim time is a problem. Claire didn't swim with a team because her work schedule didn't fit.

Time is important – it's not that they don't have the time, but it's the right time to do it.

Sometimes it's not only what you do in the pool, but what you do outside the pool that helps.

Own age, sense of community, goals

What kinds of things would we do to reach out to the younger age groups to make Masters Swimming attractive:

Get coaches that are excited to be there, and get folks who are excited to make the program fit for people. The Coach has a big value proposition for the athlete. How do we support the coach to get them engaged with younger members?

Dan: we can start talking to those programs with a lot of younger members and see what attracts folks to those programs.

-Ask Anna Lea for stats

SFTL had sponsors to cover travel for the younger members

Team breakdown of ages at nationals?

Contact clubs and see why people are attracted to those groups

Can we ask for members on a club and number of members that have competed in at least one meet.

Ask AL to get data on the clubs. See if we can break it into pieces for people and look at the questions we want to ask of the clubs (either the clubs or the club presidents). Dan: #1 person in USMS is the coach on deck – they're one of the most important folks in the organization.

Wyatt: concerned USMS doesn't speak as much to competition so as not to chase folks away when that's actually why younger folks want to swim. We need to come up with a method to communicate at Convention how folks can attract younger members... and carry that on to the LMSC leadership at the summit the following year.

Want to get to the athletes as well. Can work that through the coaches.

Come up with questions you want to ask coaches, swimmers, team presidents. Based on the list of questions, we can present them in the form of a survey to present to younger swimmers.

We should also reach out to the former swimmers through our various contacts. Post a survey to FB.

Another potential avenue is the college club initiative. Attracting folks then gets people in the door sooner and keeps them there.

Try to meet next month after we've compiled some of the data. Does the 2nd Sunday of the month work?

Dan will talk to AL this week. Chris will set up the repository where we can share the list of questions. We'll get together next month to put together the survey, and then get out to meet with the clubs.

8:05pm

- 1.
2. Next meeting will be Day, Month DD, YYYY at 8:30pm TZ.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm EST.