



**New England Local Masters Swimming Committee  
2021 Annual Membership Meeting Minutes  
October 30, 2021**

Meeting Location: APW, 165 Southbridge Street, Worcester MA 01608

1) Chair Introduction and Roll Call

- a) Attendees – Board Officers present
  - i) Crystie McGrail – Chair
  - ii) Guy Davis – Vice Chair
  - iii) Al Prescott – Treasurer
  - iv) Mike Hurd – Secretary (virtual)
  - v) Douglas Sayles – Membership
  - vi) Alana Aubin – Communications
  - vii) Tara Mack – Awards
  - viii) Bob Ouellette – Coaches
  - ix) Sue Jensen – Officials
  - x) Jason Weis – Sanctions
  - xi) Laura Dennison – Para-Athlete
  - xii) Tracy Grilli – Hall of Fame
  
- b) Club Representatives present
  - i) Todd Whitford (GBM)
  
- c) Other NELMSC Members present
  - i) Alford Green (NEM-WAM) – SCM Championship Meet Director
  - ii) David Grilli (NEM-GSP)
  - iii) Kysa Crusco (NEM-GSP)
  - iv) Dan Epstein (NEM-CRM)
  - v) Ben Hammond (NEM-WAM)
  - vi) Matthew McKay (NEM-CRM)
  - vii) Bill Ryan (NEM)
  
- d) Absent Board Members
  - i) Jen Downing – Open Water
  - ii) Bill Meier – At Large
  - iii) Jason Eaddy – Top Ten Recorder
  - iv) Doug Bosley – NEM Rep
  - v) Jessica Stokes – NEM Rep
  - vi) John Gillis – MESC Rep

vii) Kate Radville – CRSC Rep

- 2) Adoption of meeting minutes from last year's (2020) annual meeting
  - a) Approved by voice vote
  
- 3) Treasurer's Report – Al Prescott and presumptive Treasurer-Elect David Grilli
  - a) Al presented the 2020 budget versus actuals (see attached report)
  - b) David presented the 2021 budget and year-to-date actuals and the 2022 budget (see attached report)
  
  - c) Highlights:
    - i) The 2020 budget was prepared pre-Covid-pandemic and the actual results came in under-revenued (fewer memberships) and even more under-expensed (fewer meets and other costs). The surplus was \$11K on revenue of \$19K
    - ii) The 2021 budget was also affected by the pandemic. Revenues and expenses were down (membership is down 38% since 2019, see attached membership report). The year-to-date surplus as of October 2021 is \$12K. A surplus is expected through the full calendar year. That is two years in a row with a surplus, mostly pandemic related.
    - iii) Total Assets, which are all in cash, as of October 2021 are \$44K in the main NELMSC bank account (funded by membership registration revenue) and \$4K in the NELMSC Hall of Fame bank account (funded by member donations).
    - iv) The 2022 calendar-year budget is based on 1,500 members @ \$12 each for total revenue of \$18K. However, national trends suggest that as the pandemic wanes membership may increase, thereby generating more revenue than projected in the 2022 budget.
    - v) The 2022 budget projects an \$8K deficit. We purposely created a negative budget to spend down some of the financial reserves by funding initiatives that restart post-pandemic Masters Swimming activities and annual events and strengthen the NELMSC at all levels.
  
  - d)
    - i) [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jwTKQeP\\_kv8BM5-QuPb0sdOG-VuL\\_75z/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=111247163194640078055&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jwTKQeP_kv8BM5-QuPb0sdOG-VuL_75z/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=111247163194640078055&rtpof=true&sd=true)
  
- 4) Officer / Committee Reports
  - a) **Communications:** (Alana Aubin) Nothing to report. The website and calendar are being maintained and newsletters have been sent out infrequently this year. Kysa will be taking over as Communications Chair and has been onboarded to the various accounts already. See attached report.

- b) **Para-Athlete:** (Laura Dennison) The Charles River pool is holding workouts including Para. Hoping to do a coaches clinic in January. Working with Bob Ouellette to identify all the Para-Athletes out there. Alana to assist Laura.
- c) **Coaches:** (Bob Ouellette) We held one swim clinic in 2021 with eight attendees, which lost money. The budget request for 2022 is \$5K. More emphasis on coach development in the future period. We're seeing more triathletes attending and need to meet their needs. See attached report.
- d) **Sanctions:** (Jason Weis) Some meets are coming back, e.g., Concord SCM in November 2021. Haven't heard whether the spring NELMSC SCY Championship meet can be held at Harvard. Suggestions: An excellent, nearby venue is the new pool in Wellesley (Mass.), despite having a smaller deck area than Harvard; Colby (Maine) has a large new pool; Boston University can be configured short course yards. See attached report.
- e) **Hall of Fame:** (Tracy Grilli) The NELMSC Hall of Fame induction was a success at the Jenny Thompson meet in Dover this summer. Comments were heard from younger swimmers on how cool it was to learn about the old timers' accomplishments. The goal next year is to further improve the experience by tweaking a few aspects of the ceremony and reception. See attached report.
- f) **Officials:** (Sue Jensen) All is well in the land of officiating. Staffing is in place for the SCM championship meet at WPI in December. The officials certification program has been successful and we have a good group of officials. We have the resources to certify more officials. See attached report.
- g) **Awards:** (Tara Mack) There were 18,000 data points gathered for the Hall of Fame selection process to identify candidates this year – an amazing effort. Going to add open water to the criteria. The byword is Legacy – those who came before us to build the organization. The younger swimmers' positive reactions were a welcome surprise. Planning on a monthly e-celebration for next year. This will be recognition for a swimmer, coach, or official who deserve kudos. Will be changing the award nomination deadline next year to May 1<sup>st</sup> to align NELMSC with USMS. See attached report.
- h) **Vice Chair:** (Guy Davis) USMS is financially stable. They received \$500K in pandemic relief funds. The investment portfolio has performed well and now there is a reserve of \$4M. Membership dipped in the early days of the pandemic. It was over 60K in past years. This year it is already over 50K, which is a positive sign because the projection was in the 40's. There is a new national governance event — coined the "Volunteer Relay" — to be held in Colorado in person during early March 2022.. A virtual annual meeting was proposed for 2022, but the USMS House of Delegates voted to hold an in-person meeting. It remains to be seen whether there will be a remote option (i.e., hybrid meeting). See attached report.
- i) **Secretary:** (Mike Hurd) Turning over this position to Bill Ryan. Mike thanks the Board for the opportunity to serve.

j) **Membership:** (Doug Sayles) Membership is down from 2,400 in 2019 to 1,500 in 2021. This is a 38% decrease, larger than experienced by USMS nationally. Not having the annual NELMSC championship meets and 1-Hour ePostal event may be a big driver in the drop. The upcoming NELMSC SCM Championship meet at WPI may boost 2022 renewals. See attached report.

k) Here is a link to the officer reports.

i) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UhFl\\_uRK\\_ugSE-529PijkbcFfaVhqIC3/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UhFl_uRK_ugSE-529PijkbcFfaVhqIC3/view?usp=sharing)

5) **Upcoming NELMSC SCM Championship Meet (Worcester, Mass.):** Meet Director Alford Green reviewed the preparations and the events. Friday afternoon distance event – 1500 freestyle. Saturday-Sunday - a full slate of events. A limited number of spectators will be allowed. Everyone will be required to sign a health waiver and masks will be required for all. The average number of swimmers has been 400 in recent years, although this year may exceed that because of pent-up demand. NELMSC offered to help defray costs related to COVID-19 safety. Doug mentioned that the meet will likely also serve as the Colonies Zone SCM Championship. Registration is expected to open at 12:00 a.m. on November 7<sup>th</sup>. The meet website is [www.scmchamps.blogspot.com](http://www.scmchamps.blogspot.com).

#### 6) Unfinished Business:

- a) The USMS National Office has stopped collecting members' club affiliation fees during the annual USMS registration process. Those clubs that were grandfathered into this service must now collect their own affiliation fees directly. A NELMSC working group (Doug S., Tracy, Doug B., Guy) identified a potential Club Assistant solution that interested clubs can contract directly with CA.
- b) NELMSC records database – [www.egswim.com/ne](http://www.egswim.com/ne). Crystie has volunteered to develop an action plan for the LMSC to have more control of this data moving forward. This is an ongoing effort.
- c) Diversity & Inclusion: Todd Whitford volunteered to join Laura Dennison on this committee. Further discussion is under New Business

#### 7) New Business:

- i) **Diversity & Inclusion:** Laura: The para world and others face many barriers, such as transportation to and from a pool, the lack of changing areas with proper accommodation, coaches who are trained in para-athlete skill improvement, and many more. One way to begin is to survey the landscape to find interested swimmers or pre-swimmers, what their needs are, and the barriers to entry.
- ii) **Adult Learn To Swim (ALTS):** An example of a gap in this program is a recent clinic in NH. A diverse group attended and it was an ATLS success, but a next-step or bridge to something more is needed. One such bridge does exist for para – there is a Para-Team of about 30 swimmers. Supporting this team

is one undertaking. Have a swim lesson, then go to the Para-Team for the next step.

- iii) Stroke clinics and ePostals: Reach out to Joe (from New England Adaptive) who has worked in this area. Stroke clinics can be developed for para-athletes and pre-swimmers with specific curriculum for these groups with a goal to be a bridge to lap swimming, workout swimming, or ePostals.
  - iv) The USMS coach training plan needs improvement to address this bridge group. When promoting these clinics, it is important to use the correct language to be inclusive. Messaging is important. Laura has the language for para-athletes, but not for other groups.
  - v) Discussion regarding socioeconomic diversity in the NELMSC.
  - vi) Swim-Fit: Bob has started a program where the lifeguards and others engage with lap swimmers to teach the skills to get them into the workout lanes — turns, reading the clock, intervals, drills, and workout nomenclature. Lap swimmers are one growth area for the NELMSC. Discussion regarding whether lap swimmers want to become workout swimmers or just want to swim laps. Is it realistic to try to convert them to Masters workouts?
  - vii) USMS and National efforts: Laura communicates with other para-athlete-swimmers across the country. Their two primary concerns are: pool access — transportation, locker-rooms, etc. — and knowledgeable coaches. There is consensus in the para community that USMS coaching clinics can be improved to better serve this community. It is possible to have para-training for Masters coaches, but how to implement?
  - viii) Open-Water: This is another area for inclusion.
- b) Recap of virtual 2021 USMS annual meeting:
- i) Guy: Whether to hold the 2022 USMS annual meeting in-person or. virtually was an issue that divided the delegates. The HOD voted to hold an in-person meeting in 2022, and the USMS BOD is evaluating if there can/should be a virtual attendance option.
  - ii) Guy: How does the NELMSC want to be represented if the USMS annual meeting is in hybrid format with a virtual option, and what 2022 budget provision is appropriate? Action: \$3,000 was allocated in the 2022 budget for three NELMSC delegates to attend the meeting in person.
  - iii) Guy: USMS's focus going into 2022 is local development — increasing both the number of clubs and membership in existing clubs. The planned “Volunteer Relay” meeting in Colorado in March will aim to help local volunteers network, share ideas, collaborate, and motivate each other in local development.
  - iv) Doug/Guy: For 2022, USMS is offering a new \$199 (\$229 after Jan 1st) premium membership option that includes standard USMS membership, exclusive welcome package, free registration to the Fitness Series events,

ePostal National Championships, and other virtual events, free USA Swimming Supporters Club membership, and access to exclusive webinars featuring Olympians. Other potential membership options — e.g., multi-year and lifetime memberships — may be offered in the future.

- v) Guy: The USMS five-year strategic plan (from 2016) is being updated. The focus is shifting from the national office to supporting local clubs. \$50K is set aside for club development across all LMSCs. USMS CEO Dawson Hughes has reached out to local clubs for input. He wants to include local ideas.
- c) Guy: What things does the group see locally, what resources or support do you need from NELMSC?
  - i) Doug: Need help accessing pool space.
  - ii) Bob: Most coaches want to coach and not be administrators
  - iii) Doug: Suggested training a volunteer in each NELMSC state to be conversant enough in Masters Swimming's value proposition and pool monetization talking points to get aquatic directors to meet with USMS Senior Director of Club & Coach Development Bill Brenner.
  - iv) Crystie: Could we support pool-building initiatives?
  - v) Doug: New pools are so expensive and the economics of aquatics are so challenging that the LMSCs and even USMS do not have the resources to move the needle. Without a major change in strategic priorities, the best we can hope to do is promote and support Masters Swimming programs by helping improve pool programming and management.
  - vi) Matt McKay: new Myrtha pool in Wellesley was built by a developer with no financial investment from the town. The town owns the land under the pool and receives land rent. The prime source of income for the Wellesley pool is swim schools. The developer is looking for other towns to replicate that model.
  - vii) Discussion re: barriers to new pool construction: exorbitant cost, existing NE pools are in poor condition; we are not a sun-splashed region where year-round US Swimming teams can support a pool and the livelihood of coaches; municipality budgets are already stretched; the MDC pools are not in good condition and are liability-averse; land in New England is expensive.
  - viii) Comparing youth-hockey to youth-swimming: local hockey rinks are papered with dozens of banners from national sponsors and have great backing from Youth Hockey organizations; USA Swimming is lagging far behind in these areas. More can be done, such as US Swimming sponsorship, partner-advertising, and pool development.

8) New Proposals:

- a) None.

9) Elections:

a) The following candidates were unanimously elected to the Board. Their terms start immediately.

- i) Chair – Alana Aubin
- ii) Vice Chair – Guy Davis
- iii) Membership Coordinator – Doug Sayles
- iv) Top 10 Recorder – Jason Eaddy
- v) Treasurer – David Grilli
- vi) Secretary – Bill Ryan
- vii) Pool Sanctions Chair - Jason Weis\*
- viii) Open Water Sanctions Chair – Jen Downing
- ix) Coaches Chair – Bob Ouellette
- x) Officials Chair – Sue Jensen
- xi) Awards & Recognition Chair – Tara Mack
- xii) Communications Chair – Kysa Crusco
- xiii) NELMSC Hall of Fame Chair – Tracy Grilli
- xiv) Para-Athlete Chair – Laura Dennison
- xv) Immediate Past Chair – Crystie McGrail \*\*
- xvi) At Large (Fitness) – Bill Meier
- xvii) At Large (Club Development) – Ben Hammond
- xviii) \* also College Club Swimming Liaison
- xix) \*\* automatic appointment for one term

10) Resolution and Orders:

- a) **Approved:** An amendment to the current 2021 budget adds \$1,500 for scholarships (30 scholarships of \$50 each) for NELMSC coaches attending the USMS Coaches Certification Training in late-November 2021. (See attached revised 2021 budget.)
- b) **Approved:** \$7,500 was approved as a loan to the organizers of a spring 2022 NELMSC SCY Championship meet if needed to secure the pool rental contract. The advance will be repaid from meet registration fees.
- c) **Approved:** The 2022 budget was unanimously approved (see attached).

11) The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.