

2020 USMS Open Water Committee – Minutes

Committee Name:	Open Water Committee	Vice Chair:	Mark Johnston
Committee Chair:	Kim Elsbach	Date/time:	- 7:30 PM EDT
Minutes recorded by:	Kim Elsbach	5/17/20	

Number of committee members present:	Absent:	Number of other delegates present:
Committee members present (list all, including chair and vice chair):		

Full-Committee Scheduled Meetings for 2020 (all meetings from 8-9 PM Eastern Time):

January 12, 2020
February 9, 2020
April 19, 2020
May 17, 2020
June 14, 2020
August 16, 2020

Meeting Information:

1. Date: Sunday, May 17, 2020
2. Time: 7:30 pm EDT
3. Respond to Zoom Invite from Kim Elsbach

Minutes:

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm EDT.
2. Attendance and determination of quorum: 12/14 voting members present, so quorum is achieved.
3. Discussion of proposals to disband OWC and enfold into the LDC as formal legislation or as a Pilot.
See attachment for proposals
 - Mark Johnston made motion to vote on proposals, and Bob Bruce seconded.
 - Mark Johnston discussed the rationale for both proposals
 - Bob Bruce discussed the history of the OWC
 - Several members provided comments and discussion (Will Reeves, Jay Eckert, David Miner, Becky Cleavenger, Bob Kolonkowski, Alana Aubin)
 - A vote was called and those who didn't have computer connection sent votes via email.

4. FINAL TALLY OF ANONYMOUS VOTE

Proposal 1: (2 of 11 voting) 18%

Proposal 2: (6 of 11 voting) 55% Passed

Proposal 3: (3 of 11 voting) 27%

Comments to include with vote:

“One thing I think that we can consider taking on as a committee (depending on the results of the vote) is to make recommendations in light of COVID-19. It could be around a while (>1 year) and if not, there is always another one (historically, flu, HIV, SARS, MERS, now C-19 and who knows what's next but there will be something. The USMS communication was pretty much pool-centric.”

5. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM EDT.

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Full OWC (Voting Members = 18; Quorum is Voting Members= 9; Ex Officio Members = 5)

X = present, O = absent

Present	First Name	Last Name	LMSC	Email
Voting Members				
X	Denise	Brown	Michigan	dbrown@fillinghome.org
X	Bob	Bruce	Oregon	coachbobbruce@gmail.com
X	Becky	Cleavenger	Southern Pacific	beckycleavenger@yahoo.com
X	Kimberly	Elsbach	Pacific	kdelsbach@ucdavis.edu
X	Karen	Le Febre	Pacific	karen@bigskyendurancesports.com
X	Bob	Kolonkowski	Metropolitan	rpk248@netzero.com
X	Rory	Grigull	Florida Gold Coast	rory@paqswim.com
X	Mark	Johnston	Montana	coach@flowswimmers.com
O	Joe	Linford	Utah	Joeblinford@gmail.com
X	Timothy	Murphy	South Texas	tmurphy@global.t-bird.edu
X	Helen	Naylor	Southeastern	helen.naylor@vumc.org
X	William	Reeves	Utah	swimrwill@gmail.com
X	Marie	Vellucci	New Jersey	marielovestoswim@aol.com
Ex-Officio/Associate Members				
X	David	Miner	Ex -officio	dminer02@gmail.com
X	Jay	Eckert	Ex officio	jeckert@usmastersswimming.org
o	Ali	Hall	Ex officio	mi.consult.ahall@gmail.com
x	Alana	Aubin	Ex Officio - LDC	cochaubin@outlook.com
o	Jim	Davidson	Ex Officio - LDC	jedavidson98001@yahoo.com
x	Donn	Livoni	VP Programs	dlswimmer22@gmail.com

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ATTACHMENT: FINAL Proposals from Open Water Committee

Proposal 1

*The Open Water Committee ceases to exist as a separate committee within USMS. The few tasks currently assigned to the Open Water Committee in the USMS Rulebook (i.e., upkeep of the Open Water Guide to Operations and handling of Category I Swimwear petitions), and a couple of other tasks (i.e., monitor OW Forum and oversee OW Service Award), will be transferred to the Long Distance Committee. **Specific projects related to Open Water Swimming may be undertaken by an Ad Hoc project group of volunteers overseen by the National Office. This will prevent overloading of work for the Long Distance Committee.***

Proposal 2

Undertake Proposal 1 on a pilot basis starting in January, 2021 to see how it works. The Committee could return to its current format in January, 2022 if the pilot is unsuccessful. The pilot option would not require the legislative amendments described below.

Proposal 3 – Do Nothing

Maintain the current charge of the OWC. The charge and structure of the committee may need to be reviewed and revised in the future, given the current centralization of marketing, promotion, and communication from the National Office.

Background

The current charge of the Open Water Committee, listed as point 507.1.11 in the 2019 USMS Rulebook.

The Open Water Committee shall promote the development of and participation in open water swimming. The committee shall develop educational resources for open water participants and event directors. The committee, with input from the Long Distance Committee, shall prepare guidelines pertaining to the management of USMS open water swimming for approval by the Board of Directors. The committee shall increase awareness about open water swimming and identify opportunities to promote USMS. The committee shall consist of the committee chair and sufficient members to execute the committee function. The Long Distance Committee chair shall be an ex officio member of the committee.

This charge identifies 4 goals:

- 1) promote the development of and participation in open water swimming.
- (2) develop educational resources for open water participants and event directors.
- (3) with input from the Long Distance Committee, prepare guidelines pertaining to the management of USMS open water swimming for approval by the Board of Directors.
- (4) increase awareness about open water swimming and identify opportunities to promote USMS.

With the establishment of the USMS National Office, the Open Water Committee is no longer needed to carry out these goals, as explained below:

1. Promoting development and participation in Open Water Swimming. The National Office has taken over the marketing, development and promotion of Open Water Swimming, and has centralized all communications with

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USMS members. This move requires that all communication with event directors, LMSC Chairs, and individual members go through the National Office and not come from the Open Water Committee.

2. Develop educational resources for open water participants and event directors.

Similar to the point above, because all communication with event directors, LMSC Chairs, and individual members should go through the National Office and not come from the Open Water Committee, the committee must look to the National Office to solicit ideas and feedback with regard to educational resources.

3. The committee, with input from the Long Distance Committee, shall prepare guidelines pertaining to the management of USMS open water swimming for approval by the Board of Directors. The Open Water Guide to Operations document is maintained by the Open Water Committee, but requires few changes on an annual basis, and may be maintained by one or two people. If a larger overhaul of the Open Water Guide to Operations is needed, the oversight of this overhaul needs to come from the National Office as they are tasked with all communication with USMS members (who may provide input into the Guide to Operations).

4. The committee shall increase awareness about open water swimming and identify opportunities to promote USMS.

As with point 1 above, the National Office has centralized all marketing and promotion of Open Water Swimming.

In sum, with the establishment of the National Office and the desire to centralize all marketing, communication and promotion of Open Water Swimming with USMS members, the Open Water Committee is no longer needed or able to carry out its charge as currently written. In practice, The Open Water Committee is only needed to carry out the few tasks identified in the USMS Rulebook (i.e., upkeep of the Open Water Guide to Operations and handling of Category I Swimwear petitions) and a couple of other tasks (i.e., monitor OW Forum and oversee OW Service Award).

Specific Legislative Amendments for Proposal 1

~~**507.1.11 Open Water Committee**—The Open Water Committee shall promote the development of and participation in open water swimming. The committee shall develop educational resources for open water participants and event directors. The committee, with input from the Long Distance Committee, shall prepare guidelines pertaining to the management of USMS open water swimming for approval by the Board of Directors. The committee shall increase awareness about open water swimming and identify opportunities to promote USMS. The committee shall consist of the committee chair and sufficient members to execute the committee function. The Long Distance Committee chair shall be an ex officio member of the committee.~~

Rationale: The promotion, development, and educational resource functions are now being carried out by the National Office staff and the Open Water Safety Coordinator, making a standing committee of volunteers unnecessary. USMS members with subject matter expertise may become part of a volunteer pool from which the National Office can draw for specific projects.

301.2.1 Open Water Guide to Operations—The ~~Open Water~~ **Long Distance Committee** shall develop maintain the *Open Water Guide to Operations* for the use of USMS open water officials and event hosts. The

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guide shall contain the governing policies, management of rules, and links to education applying to open water swims.

Rationale: The *Open Water Guide to Operations* is already fully developed and would be better maintained by the Open Water Coordinator in conjunction with the Long Distance Committee where the “*governing policies and the management of rules*” are actually formulated. The Open Water Committee is an unnecessary layer. The “*links to education applying to open water swims*” is a function best provided by the National Office and the staff in control of the USMS website.

203.2.C -- Other Sanctions—The Board of Directors shall consider and may approve other sanction options recommended by the Long Distance Committee, ~~with input from the Open Water Committee~~, that allow sanctioning of events that include USMS and non-USMS members.

Rationale: The Open Water Committee is an unnecessary layer. The Long Distance Committee and the Open Water Coordinator are sufficient.

303.4.2.C – Rules for Cat 1 Swimwear in Open Water -- Exemptions to the restrictions in articles 303.4.2A-B may be granted to a swimmer, on a case by case basis, by the chair of the ~~Open Water~~ **Long Distance Committee** or designee. Exemptions will be granted only for conflicts due to the swimmer’s verified religious beliefs or verified medical conditions.

- (1) Procedures for applying for an exemption will be published by the ~~Open Water~~ **Long Distance Committee** and posted on the USMS website.
- (2) No exemptions to these restrictions will be granted for swimwear that would give a swimmer a competitive advantage.
- (3) The decision of the ~~Open Water~~ **Long Distance Committee** chair may be appealed only to the entire ~~Open Water~~ **Long Distance Committee**, whose decision shall be final and binding on all parties.

Rationale: The default “designee” has traditionally been Bob Bruce, and his role could continue as the designee of the Long Distance Committee. It is the belief of the Open Water Committee that this “RULE” is better aligned under the Charter of the Long Distance Committee.

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