

2026 U.S. Masters Swimming Annual Meeting — Virtual

Committee Name:
Southeast Zone

Session #: 1

Committee Chair:
Britta O'Leary

Vice Chair:

Minutes recorded by:
Lisa Watson

Date/time of meeting: August 27, 2026 7 PM EDT

Actions Requiring Approval by the House of Delegates:

1.

Motions Passed:

1. **MSA TO AWARD THE 2026 SCM SOUTHEAST ZONE CHAMIONSIPS TO FT. LAUDERDALE.**
2. **MSA TO AWARD THE 2027 SCY SOUTHEAST ZONE CHAMPIONSHIPS TO AUBURN.**
3. **MSA TO AWARD THE 2027 SOUTHEAST ZONE OPEN WATER CHAMPIONSHIPS TO BUSSELL ISLAND.**

Number of committee members present: 22

Absent:

Number of other delegates present: 1

Committee members present (list all, including chair and vice chair): Britta O'Leary (Chair), Lisa Watson/GA, Vesna Shelnutt/GA, Ed Saltzman/GA, Rob Copeland/GA, Tawana Miller/GA, Cori Linder/SC, Tom Murphy/FG, Cheryl Kupan/FL, Conner Bailey/SE, Dwayne Schalles/SC, Erika Braun/NC, Sara Dunn/NC, Barb Protzman/FG, Elaine Joggerst/FG, Leslie Scott/SC, Aaron Schneider/SO, Sonny Nguyen/NC, Stephanie Waninger/SC, John Janzen/FG, Helen Naylor/SE, Nicole Smith/SC, Linda Bostic/FG, Catherine Rust/FG, Ed Coates (USMS President)

Committee Members Absent:

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm EDT

1. **ROLL CALL-** Chair Britta O'Leary welcomed the Southeast Zone attendees to the meeting.
2. **APPROVAL OF 2025 MINUTES.** Ed Saltzman moved to approve the 2025 minutes. Rob Copeland seconded the motion. MSA to approve the Southeast Zone 2025 minutes.
3. **ZONE REPORTS**
CHAIR-Britta reported a successful year for our zone. Thus far, 34 swim meets have been held, including Spring Nationals in Greensboro. Also, 6 open water events were successfully run, including 2 national championships. For the rest of this year, 8 meets have been sanctioned thus far.
WEBMASTER: Dick Brewer (not present). Everyone agreed that Dick does a fabulous job with our Southeast Zone website.
TOP TEN/RECORDS: Andy Dyer (not present). Ed Saltzman reminded meet directors to submit their meet results in a timely manner. He also asked all Top Ten recorders to recheck the 2025 USMS Top 10 because CCS swimmer times have been added. This might impact LMSC Top 10 rankings as well as USMS, Zone and LMSC records.
4. **LMSC REPORTS**
FLORIDA-Chair Cheryl Kupan. This LMSC had 2 proposals for supporting its members. The proposal that did pass was to provide stipends for meet hosts and officials to offset meet expenses. The proposal that did not pass was to provide some type of scholarships to assist young and elderly swimmers in need of financial assistance-this proposal needs more work. Lisa Watson mentioned that Georgia currently does offer scholarships to these age groups, paying the membership registration for 2 members per Georgia club with a cap of 10 for each. Cheryl also noted that Florida pays for club registrations. Florida plans to update its bylaws soon.
FLORIDA GOLD COAST-Chair Tom Murphy. So far, Florida Gold has hosted 4 SCY meets, 1 LCM meet, and 1 SCM meet. Membership is slightly down from last year. No open water events were held. John Janzen was introduced as new Coaches chair. 2 policies have been put in place to help with meet costs: meet hosts will get \$250/day for each meet, and a stipend will be provided for officials who work at least 2 Masters meets. The number of Masters officials has greatly

increased from 10 – 20, thanks to good email communication and in person officials clinics. Florida Gold will have 4 delegates attending the USMS Annual Meeting, and is sending 3 representatives to Relay.

GEORGIA-Chair Vesna Shelnett. Current membership numbers are similar to last year. Georgia hosts a number of successful SCY meets, but is lacking in LCM and SCM (only 1 of each this year). The Georgia LMSC already covers meet costs for hosts if there is a deficit. Georgia is currently trying to revise its bylaws. The budget has been a big issue this year. Georgia is sending 2 representatives to NCC and 2 representatives to Relay. Erika Braun commented that USMS is currently working on a template for LMSC ByLaws to get more consistency.

SOUTH CAROLINA- Chair Nicole Smith. South Carolina has experienced steady growth in its membership. Meet Directors receive a flat reimbursement of \$1000 for running meets. They are trying to increase their number of Masters officials, and are revamping their LMSC website. There is a new Social Media Chair in place. Like some other LMSCs, South Carolina is forming a unified state team for competing at Nationals.

NORTH CAROLINA- Chair Sara Dunn. NC is flat in terms of growth from last year (increase of 11 swimmers). There are 2 NC meets coming up- a 'fun' meet in Wilmington with a cap of 150 swimmer, offering 25s and fun relays; and a SCM meet in Cary October 17-18. There was a great turnout at Spring Nationals in Greensboro with over 2000 swimmers participating. The North Carolina Hall of Fame ceremony will be held in October: this year, one Masters swimmer and one Masters coach are among the inductees. NC is sending 3 representatives to Relay and 5 to NCC.

SOUTHEASTERN-Chair Cori Linder. This LMSC has had a good year, hosting successful meets and open water events. Tuition is provided for Coaches clinics. Southeastern helps pay for large well known open water events. Membership is around 1000 swimmers. Southeastern will have 2 delegates at the USMS Annual Meeting.

SOUTHERN-Chair Aaron Schneider. Aaron also serves as Vice Chair on the Coaches Committee and is chairing NCC this year. There will be 2 Olympians and an Olympic coach present at the 3 in water sessions to be held at NCC. Membership is up 5% from last year. Club memberships are slightly down; workout groups remain constant. Larger groups continue to grow. The Southern regional team has 4 workout group. The LMSC is financially viable. Meets are currently funded \$500 per day by the LMSC. Aaron noted that most meet attendance comes from nearby Texas.

5. REVIEW 2027 MEET SCHEDULE

Britta encouraged everyone to check out the Southeast Zone website for information on upcoming events for 2027. For potential meet hosts, be sure to contact webmaster Dick Brewer to publicize your meet on the SE Zone website.

6. FUTURE SOUTHEAST ZONE CHAMPIONSHIPS

2026 SCM - The Ft Lauderdale Hall of Fame pool has bid to host the 2026 Southeast Zone SCM Championships. Meet Director John Janzen noted that this meet will offer all events and all relays, except mixed 200 relays. High Point awards and medals will be given out. Dates are November 13-15. Lisa Watson moved to approve this bid, and Cheryl Kupan seconded the motion. **MSA TO AWARD THE 2026 SOUTHEAST ZONE SCM CHAMPIONSHIPS TO FT LAUDERDALE.**

2027 SCY- Auburn, Alabama is bidding to host the 2027 Southeast Zone SCY Championships. Meet Director Conner Bailey noted that this is always a well-run meet, which has been running successfully for many years. Average attendance over the last 15 years has been 182 swimmers. Last year's meet also included an LMSC Challenge along with the High Point Team Awards. The location is also centrally located within the Southeast Zone. A question was asked about including 400yd relays. Conner said that he could have 400yd relays instead of 200yd relays. Dates are February 6-7. Tom Murphy moved to approve this bid. Lisa Watson seconded the motion. **MSA TO AWARD THE 2027 SOUTHEAST ZONE SCY CHAMPIONSHIPS TO AUBURN.**

2027 OPEN WATER- Helen Naylor offered Bussell Island as a potential bid for the 2027 Southeast Zone Open Water Championships. Bussell Island is near Lenoir City, Tennessee. The event offers 800yd, 1 ½ mile, and 3 mile courses. Date is May 22. Lisa Watson moved to approve this bid. Tom Murphy seconded the motion. **MSA TO AWARD THE 2027 SOUTHEAST ZONE OPEN WATER CHAMPIONSHIPS TO BUSSELL ISLAND.**

7. INPUT ON SLACK COMMUNICATION

Britta informed everyone that all committees will eventually be moving to Slack for communication. Tom Murphy commented that this should allow more volunteers to get involved. Slack also has an app for interested users.

8. OLD BUSINESS-None

9. NEW BUSINESS

1. LEGISLATION PROPOSAL L2- this proposal will move Southern to the South Central Zone. Aaron Schneider noted that this makes sense since most members are from Louisiana, and much closer to Texas. The LMSC is on board with this proposal.

2. SOUTHEAST ZONE AT LARGE CANDIDATE- Tom Murphy is the candidate from our zone. Tom commented that he is eager to help USMS grow and has been active since 2022.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 PM, EDT.
