

## U.S. Masters Swimming

**Committee Name:** Recognition & Awards

**Committee Chair:** Elizabeth Nymeyer

**Minutes recorded by:** Sally Dillon

**Date/time of meeting:** March 24, 2024, 6 pm CST.

**Actions taken:** MSA to continue the Fitness Award for at least one year.

**Number of committee members present:** 14

**Absent:** 1

**Guests:** 1

**Present:** Rich Burns, Hill Carrow, Sally Dillon, Sara Dunn, Jessie Feng, Caitlin Gagnon, Tara Mack, Ann Marshfield, Michael Moore, Nancy Nevid, Sonny Nguyen, Ray Novitske, Beth Nymeyer, and Nancy Ridout

**Absent:** Teresa Frias

**Guest:** Crystie McGrail, VPLO

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm Mountain time. Beth welcomed the committee members and noted that Michael Hillegonds has resigned from the committee. Mike has been the chair of the Club of the Year award, so a replacement is needed.

1. USMS VPLO Crystie McGrail announced that Nadine Day has been selected as the 2023 Masters International Swimming Hall of Fame (MISHOF) Honor Contributor. Nadine was nominated by the R&A committee in February of last year. The induction ceremony will be held October 4-5, in conjunction with the ISHOF Honoree weekend. Crystie also reminded the committee that the USMS Volunteer Relay and Coaches Clinic will be held October 18-20. Two separate registrations will be required, so attendees cannot register for both.
2. Meeting minutes: The January 28, 2024 minutes were approved via email prior to the meeting. Sally noted that she received a few housekeeping changes from Ray. She will edit and submit a revised version for posting on the USMS website.
3. Date of the next R&A committee meeting: Sunday, May 5 at 7 pm Central. This is an hour later due to a potential conflict for Beth.
4. Subcommittee reports:
  - a. Ransom J. Arthur Award (RJA): Michael Moore reported that he has received nine (9) nominations and 9 letters of endorsement. Michael noted that the Google form information was very scrambled when put into Word. He thanked Sally for reformatting the information so all documents will be easy to navigate and compare. The nominations have been combined into one multi-page document, which prevents any nominations from being missed. The endorsement letters will also be in one document. Michael intends to send three emails to the voters. The nomination and endorsements will be in separate emails to avoid overloading someone's email server. To encourage the reading of all of the materials, the third email will be sent a week or more later with the voting instructions. The voting program allows the names to be in random order as they go out to voters. Voters will be asked to rank their top three choices (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>). The deadline to vote will be around April 22. Michael clarified that eligible voters are the members of the R&A committee and past recipients of the RJA award who are currently USMS registered. Nancy R. suggested Michael include an explanation of the random listing of the nominees.
  - b. Masters International Swimming Hall of Fame (MISHOF): Sally reported that now that Nadine has been selected as the 2023 MISHOF Honor Contributor. the subcommittee is prepared to move forward with our next nomination. As mentioned in previous meetings, we have been looking at nominating Jim Matysek to the Masters Pioneer category. The focus for Jim's nomination would be his development of USMS's first website, online registration for national meets, and the original USMS online forums. Much of the information has already been gathered. Nancy R. offered to provide supporting information because she was USMS President during that time. Sally asked if there were objections to nominating Jim, or other suggestions for a nominee. Beth said that Dawson Hughes and Ed Coates are "talking with MISHOF" and suggested we table this. Crystie said that the deadline to nominate was March 31 – just a week away. Rich said he had spoken with

Meg at the HOF recently and she hadn't set a deadline. Meg reiterated that the delay in announcing the 2023 class was due to the difficulty in determining the location of the induction. Obviously, 3/31 is very short notice, but the deadlines in the past had been "soft". Maybe this one is also. Sally expressed her concern that others outside the committee are inserting themselves in the process to nominate for this award. While it is recognized that anyone can submit a nomination, the R&A committee was tasked with preparing and nominating worthy candidate many years ago and she sees no reason why we shouldn't continue to do so. Crystie said the National Office and Ed Coates only want to coordinate who is submitting award nominations. Rich offered to speak to Meg again regarding the deadline to nominate.

- c. USMS Fitness Award: Ann spoke passionately about her desire to continue the Fitness Award, even though the committee was sunset. She'd like the R&A committee to take it on and help encourage nominations. Beth suggested we review the awards forms and make recommendations as needed. Caitlin and Ray both spoke to the high percentage of "fitness" swimmers in USMS and those who support fitness deserve to be nominated. It was suggested that groups that put on fitness events are worthy of recognition, not just individuals. Nancy R said the parameters need to be clear and Rich offered to help with criteria. **It was MSA to continue the Fitness Award for at least one year.** A committee has been formed and Sally offered to provide an amendment to the R&A Policies before the next meeting.
- d. June Krauser Communication Award (JKC): No report.
- e. Dorothy Donnelly Service Award (DDSA): No report.
- f. Club of the Year Award (COYA): With Michael Hillegonds resigning from the committee, a new chair is needed. Sara Dunn volunteered. Sally offered to serve as an advisor.
- g. Award bios: Ray noted that Nancy N. has been revising some older stories (with Sally's occasional help). He is still trying to get other award-giving committees to contribute stories. If we can't get their help, we might need a new strategy, such as asking for bios as we go forward leaving the past unfinished.
- h. Best Award Practices document: The goal is to have a document that we can share with other award-giving committees, that will improve nomination information. Tara mentioned the development of the various award documents and Beth noted that Stacy Abrams had previously created a Google form. Nancy R asked when the USMS announcement about awards will be released and reminded us that all nomination forms need to be updated prior to that. Ray suggested the subcommittee discuss online upgrading how other committees evaluate awards. Nomination letters need to include significant contributions, not just praise.
- i. Social media and direct outreach subcommittee: Caitlin is the chair. The goal is to create posts promoting awards, reach out and share with the National Office, and create a new Ad for 2024.
- j. Award Video for Annual Meeting: Ray will be helped this year by Caitlin, Nancy N, and Jessie.
- k. RJA selection process info for new committee members: Sally asked everyone to thoroughly review the nomination materials and become "informed" about all the candidates before casting votes. The RJA award is the highest award given by USMS and it typically goes to a "robust volunteer". She noted that the first section asks about "National offices held" and said that many nominees will answer "none" because there are not that many elected positions. But nominees usually have served on national committees and most (if not all) have been robust volunteers at the zone or LMSC levels. Accomplishments in the pool are not relevant. Volunteer contributions at the local, regional, and national level are very relevant. The voting link won't be sent until a week or two after the documents are distributed, so please give the documents your full attention.
- l. Awards in general: Ray noted that some past board members have commented that there appears to be a redundancy in awards. Some people have received more than one award for virtually, the same body of work. Beth suggested we discuss this at the next meeting.

MSA to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 pm Central time.