

U.S. Masters Swimming

Committee Name: Northwest Zone

Committee Chair: Jill Wright

Minutes recorded by: Sally Dillon

Date/time of meeting: December 10, 2023, 6 pm MST

Actions taken: MSA to order 1000 2nd place ribbons.

MSA to approve PNA's bid to host the LCM Zone meet at King County Aquatic Center.

Number of committee members present: 16

Absent: n/a

Guests: None

Attendees: AK: Ken Winterberger, IW: Robert Heath, Paige Buehler, Dave Cabrey, Margaret Hair, MT: Jeanne Ensign, OR: Tim Waud, Christina Fox, Sandi Rousseau, Joy Ward, PN: Sally Dillon, Steve Peterson, SR: Jim Clemmons, Jill Wright, UT Bruce Schroeder, Jerry Treiman.

Call to order: Zone chair Jill Wright called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm MST.

A. General business

1. Actions taken between meetings: The minutes of the 8-24-2023 NW Zone Annual Meeting were approved via email. They are posted on the Zone and USMS websites.
2. Chair report: Jill reported on the USMS clinic that was held in her LMSC in November. Sawtooth Masters applied for a USMS Club Development Grant because they'd not had any club coaching for 3 years. USMS had some requirements for the grant, which included Grant recipients must take part in "Try Masters Swimming" and have USMS certified coach/s (ALTS is ok). Sawtooth Masters and USMS promoted the clinic, but everyone came from Boise. Going forward, Sawtooth Masters has to turn in financial reports to USMS. 44 swimmers attended and 4 or 5 became new members.
3. Financial report: Ken reported that the zone has \$8619.92 in its account. Sally asked if any of the LMSCs requested financial help with the expenses to go to convention. She expected some to want help with the early arrival expense. Ken said no one has asked and noted that there is a form on the website for those wishing to apply for funds. Jeanne reminded us that we are virtual this year. She also said that although there is Zone support for small LMSCs, MT looked into the financial support for Relay offered by USMS. The application suggested spending down reserves first so MT did not request support. Sally reported that PNA paid the \$70 USMS registration for its clubs and workout groups and continues to look for ways to spend down some of its assets. Jill thinks we should still contribute to the zone and wonders what else we could use the money for. Ken reminded us that it can be used for coaching clinics. Jeanne suggested someone write up a paragraph for the newsletter to let members know about scholarship opportunities. We need some suggestions and parameters. Sandi suggested we might help zone members meet next year when we have only a virtual convention. Jill will gather suggestions; please send to her in early January. Ken confirmed that we will continue with the per swimmer fee in 2024. Dave said he will publish information on the website.
4. Webmaster report: Dave is keeping it up to date when information comes to him. He is being very responsive. Ken suggested moving the links for grant requests (add the others) to a more visible position on the web page. It was noted that we could post ideas for the grants (along with the links to apply for support). Dave brought up "comma delimited files" that are on the website. It was agreed that the Excel files were sufficient, and he should delete the other.
5. Records report: Steve Darnell is doing a great job updating the records. He is very proactive, reaching out to the records/top 10 chairs in the other LMSCs when needed.

6. Zone Chatter report: Christina was thanked for producing another great newsletter. Dave has typically removed the previous Chatters but said he could find a place for previous issues. Sally will look for old copies and send them to Dave for archiving.
7. Secretary report: Sally asked the chairs to let her know when there are changes to leadership teams, so she can keep the mailing lists up to date.
8. NW Zone At Large Director report: Paige's report, as printed in the recent newsletter, is below. Questions/answers are noted in italics.

The acquisition of "Grown Up Swimming" was the largest activity at the Board level this quarter. It gives us a summer league product to go alongside our main product (annual membership in year-round clubs). In 2023, there were 7 leagues in seven areas in the U.S. primarily in eastern cities.

Expansion to a total of 18 cities is planned for 2024 with league managers already contracted.

Question: Will the national office be tracking data to determine if this program leads to increased USMS membership? Paige said the membership model is like College Club Swimming (CCS), which is tracked. Sandi (who listens to USMS BOD meetings) said they have tracked this for CCS, and she thinks they plan to track for the GUS program. Paige said it is a complementary product to USMS.

Question: What did we pay and are we paying the organizer's salary. \$125K was paid for the program, i.e., name and the organizer's time, Brian Robbins. He will continue to direct the program. Payments change as we hit different milestones. USMS didn't pay up front for it, but the end total is \$125K. They're paying for the future value of the activity (and the name).

Question: What is the fee structure? Paige thinks \$70/season, which includes 5 competitions. It's designed to be like summer league events. The program was promoted at the Volunteer Relay to expand in areas where kids leagues exist and there is a demand. Currently 18 cities are targeted in 2024. Paige said 188 clubs registered for CCS this year (2023/2024), down from 194 last year. The national event has reached its maximum (well over 2000 participants). Steve wondered out loud if Mr. Robbins was aware of USMS before starting his program.

The USMS Board approved a budget that gets close to breaking even for the first time since the pandemic. The loss before depreciation (non-cash) expense is \$57,000.

Board/Zone communications will continue to be held periodically. A subgroup evaluated the feedback gathered from the late-summer sessions. Three themes emerged for future conversations: 1) tailoring programs (like Club Development grants) to scale for the size of the LMSC, 2) helping LMSCs with large cash reserves, and 3) discussing Volunteer Relay and Annual Meeting format plans.

With the sunseting of the Fitness Education and Sports Medicine Committees in recent years, the vice presidents decided to realign their ex officio duties as follows:

- VP Admin: Legislation, Rules, Records & Tabulations*
- VP Programs: Long Distance, Officials, Championship*
- VP Community Services: Diversity & Inclusion, Coaches
- VP Local Operations: History & Archives, Recognition & Awards, LMSC Development

9. NW Zone championship events update – recap of 2023 events. OW was canceled, all others took place. Sally summarized this year's events in her report on the award ribbon status. SCY – PNA Champs, hosted by Blue Wave Aquatics in Federal Way, April 15/16.

- 270 swimmers entered.

LCM - held in The Dalles, OR on August 5.

- 87 swimmers entered.

SCM meet held in Federal Way, November 18/19.

- 172 swimmers entered.

- The OW Zone championship event was scheduled to take place at Elk Lake in Oregon. It was canceled due to poor air quality from forest fires in the area.

B. New business

1. Zone Ribbons: Sally provided an end-of-year summary of ribbon use. She noted that we need more 2nd place ribbons. All other places are in good supply. **It was MSA to order 1000 2nd place ribbons.**
2. Connecting volunteers: Sally suggested the webmasters in the zone connect so they can share and post the various events taking place in the northwest on their websites and social media. She offered to distribute a mailing list to the webmasters. The idea was well received, and it was decided to connect the Membership Coordinators as well. Paige suggested using the USMS alias addresses.
3. Bids for 2024 Zone championships: Only one bid was received prior to the meeting. PNA bid to host the LCM Zone championship on July 6/7 in Federal Way. **MSA to approve PNA's bid to host the LCM Zone meet at King County Aquatic Center.**
4. March meeting: After consulting our calendars, it was decided to meet on Monday, March 4 at the usual time (6 pm Mountain, 5 pm Pacific, 4 pm Alaska).

MSA to adjourn at 7:05 pm MST.