

Committee Name:	Northwest Zone	Session #:	n/a
Committee Chair:	Aaron Norton		
Minutes recorded by:	Sally Dillon	Date/time of meeting:	3/7/21 6 pm MST

Actions Taken:

Number of committee members present:	19	Absent:	N/A	Guests:	none
Committee members present: Ken Winterberger (AK), Matt Bronson, Paige Buehler, Margaret Hair (IW), Jeanne Ensign, Donn Livoni (MT), Bob Bruce, Sandi Rousseau, Tim Waud (OR), Linda Chapman, Sally Dillon, Hugh Moore, Jane Moore, Steve Peterson (PN), Jim Clemmons (SR), Aaron Norton, Bruce Schroeder, and Jerry Treimen (UT)					

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 pm MST.

1. Actions taken between meetings: Approval of the 12/6/2020 meeting minutes was conducted via email.
2. Standing Reports: Aaron asked for updates on getting swimmers back in the water.
 - a. Pool activity: PNA – Seattle city pools are still closed but many private pools are open. Lake WA Masters swim at a high school and offer three practices a day; a USA-S club operates the pool. OREG - Pools opened in late June and closed in mid-November. Most opened again as of last week. UT – Open since June except for a few weeks end of Nov/Dec. Aaron “sees the light” in UT. Vaccinations are now open to everyone 50+ and those who are compromised. He’s hoping to start meets by summertime. Bruce reported that in Southern UT, a group is doing a sanctioned meet in 2 weeks for 15 swimmers who live within 50 miles of the facility.
 - b. National Championships: As Chair of the USMS Championship Committee, Jim and his committee have been working closely with the Greensboro meet committee. It’s all a big “maybe”. They are waiting on information about the number of swimmers allowed on the deck at one time (as per state, local, and host facility regulations). He assumes the meet will have 2 or 3 split sessions (by sex or age). Time is needed to clean between sessions. The host is hoping for 1000 entries but if rules won’t allow more than 200 in a session, it will probably not be financially feasible for the host. Considerations being discussed include staging of competitors (like at World meets), no spectators, reducing events; and more. Linda asked what CDC source or guidelines were being referenced as plans were announced about the meet. Jim said it’s the guidelines for the specific region and from the host facility (GAC). Sandi thinks it may not be socially responsible to host a meet under the circumstances.
 - c. National Open Water Championships: Bob reported on the national OW events. The first two events scheduled for May 15/16 in Texas have been postponed – possibly to the end of the summer. The June 26 Foster Lake cable swim is a “big maybe” and the July 17 Applegate Lake event (10K) is canceled because they are unable to commit the resources to run the event. Both are in Oregon. Permits and sanctioning taking place and a decision to hold or fold will come in April.
Regionally, the Oregon swim series, which includes the Foster Lake and Portland Bridge swims, is canceled, The Cascade Lakes festival is planning a 1-day event instead of a 3-day event to avoid financial issues. The other three Oregon swims - Eel Lake, Lake of the Woods, and Lake Juniper - will hopefully occur.
Bob put in a plug for the 1-hour ePostal swim; Oregon is hosting it. They would encourage support from other LMSCs. Paige said the Juniper swim might overlap with the Annual Meeting.
Sally mentioned that PNA will sanction two OW swims. The June event is in saltwater and entries are limited. The other event is scheduled for mid-August near Bellingham. Details are not firmed up.
 - d. Treasurer: Ken reported that there had been no expenses since the December meeting. The current balance is \$5,133.97.
 - e. Webmaster: Hugh reported that the only activity has been the posting of meeting minutes.

- f. Records: Steve Darnell reported via email that no new updates had taken place since December.
- g. NW At-Large Director: Paige submitted the following written report.
The USMS Board of Directors held its Winter Board Meeting on March 6, 2021 via Zoom videoconference. We covered financials, national office priorities, and went through three breakout group activities designed to solicit ideas and perspectives on 1) an Aspirational Vision of USMS in ~7 years, 2) Reworking the Annual Meeting, and 3) starting the process for Determining an Appropriate Standing Committee Structure and how to best utilize our volunteers' talents and time.

National Office Priorities

I. Rebuild Membership

How: Member campaigns using the new digital technology we've invested in, pricing using the unified fee we adopted, emphasis on Try Masters Swimming Week and preparing clubs to provide the local support needed to welcome those who try, and supporting a return to events, especially financially along with LMSCs to ensure breakeven.

II. Grow the Number of Clubs Delivering Masters

This has multiple facets from identifying what makes clubs successful, to creating a database of pool facilities, to finding/training coaches and finally to providing support to start up and then turn over a club while supporting its continued growth.

III. Repackage & Improve the Value Proposition for the Independent Swimmer

We are now competing with in-home exercise such as Peloton and boutique gym Zoom workouts. We need to improve the convenience factor of masters swimming and remove the intimidation factor because we can't attract the independent swimmer with our "awesome community" attribute. Swimming information content delivery has to move to digital because we can't rely on keeping those swimmers with a magazine showing up every other month.

How can YOU best support these initiatives around your area?

Annual Meeting - 2021 Virtual Annual Meeting was approved for published dates. Further communication on the plans and rationale and the opportunity to solicit feedback from the LMSCs will be done soon following the same model as the unified fee meetings.

Standing Committees and Volunteer Roles - Breakout groups considered the alignment of our current standing committees with the organization's needs and how we might begin to structure our national level volunteers to line up with those needs. The goal is to pick up and build off of the work started by the Volunteer Task Force back in 2017-2019. An ad hoc committee with membership from the Board, LMSC Development and LMSC leaders will be formed to work on this more deeply. The Governance Committee has been tasked with looking at the current board committees and whether they meet the needs of the Board.

Both of these efforts (in-person volunteer summit and standing committee alignment) will benefit from participation by individuals from our membership who have experience with organizational management and adult education and training along with knowledge about and a desire to improve U.S. Masters Swimming. **Know of anyone?**

Financials - Good News: Based on the membership numbers on January 31, we are on track to exceed the 40,000 member assumption used for 2021 budgeting by ~2,500 members. This gives us some flexibility financially this year and helps toward Dawson's/Peter's goals of 1) breakeven budget by 2023 and 2) reserves above \$2.5M.

Prior to the Winter Meeting the Board also reviewed suggested improvements to the National Board of Review created by an ad hoc committee led by Sarah Welch. We have also been given some "behind the curtain" looks at what the digital transformation improvements are allowing our marketing department to accomplish toward bringing new members to USMS in non-traditional ways (traditional being someone shows up at a club practice.)

Comments and questions: Sandi noted that many people enjoyed the opportunity at last year's convention to sit in on meetings that would normally not be available due to scheduling conflicts. Paige said the board is considering conducting all business meetings online; in-person meetings may not include the

usual volunteers. Sandi also noted that during the USMS Board meeting, it was mentioned that the Long Distance Committee was encouraging the National Office to take charge of the ePostal championships. Donn said the goal is to increase participation with the NO's efforts and the LDC has a working committee involved in these plans. Paige noted that the board voted to support the committee's changes.

3. Old Business:

- a. 2021 Zone Championship Schedule: At the December meeting, no decision was made regarding bidding for 2021 events and the topic was deferred to March. It was agreed that it was unlikely that SCY and LCM events could be held. A SCM meet might be able to take place in the fall. It was MSA to cancel the 2021 NW Zone championships, with the exception of the SCM meet. Bids for that meet will be due to Aaron by June 1. We discussed the meet rotation and whether to adjust the policies to remove 2020 and 2021. The consensus was that none of the LMSCs were concerned that they missed their turn on the rotation and the schedule will stand as is.
- b. Revision of NW Zone Policies: A subcommittee was formed at the December meeting to consider the inclusion of additional zone positions. Hugh led the subcommittee, which included Sally, Ken, Sandi, and Aaron. A number of revisions were proposed that included a list of positions that could be filled by the Zone Chair: Treasurer, Secretary, Records, Awards, and Webmaster. Additional changes were recommended to clean up the language in the policies. The Chatter was discussed and it was agreed that we should continue with regular issues. The method of notifying zone members about meetings and other zone business was discussed and it was agreed that a list of the leadership teams would be maintained and the Chair or his designee would send meeting announcements and/or materials to all. The emails going to large groups of members will be BCC'd.

It was MSA to approve the policies as amended.

4. New Business

- a. Oregon is hosting Natural Water Swimming webinars: - Tim shared that as a result of many open water swim groups being established in recent months, he developed a webinar series. Many outstanding speakers have been lined up. Aaron suggested that it would be great to have a similar Zone webinar.
- b. Feedback on 2021 Board Initiatives: Aaron noted that UT has a new Club Development position. The leader seeks out pools with adult swimmers in an effort to develop new programs. He is reimbursed for travel expenses. Sandi said that it was mentioned at the USMS BOD meeting that many facilities would welcome Masters programs.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm MST.