



Committee Name: Board of Directors	Date/Time of Meeting: October 20, 2025: 8:00 p.m.
Committee Chair: Ed Coates	Minutes recorded by: Erika Braun
Committee members present 17	Committee members absent 1
Ed Coates (President); Julie Dussliere (VP of Administration); Kenny Brisbin (VP of Community Services); Crystie McGrail (VP of Local Operations); Carrie Stolar (VP of Programs); Erika Braun (Secretary); Denise Dombay (Treasurer); Peter Guadagni (Immediate Past President); Dawson Hughes (CEO); Katie Kenyon (Legal Counsel) At-Large Directors: Sam Kraft (Breadbasket); C.J. Rushman (Great Lakes); Rob Heath (Northwest); Phyllis Quinn (Oceana); Nicole Christensen (South Central); Trey Taylor (Southeast); Jeff Commings (Southwest) Absent: Guy Davis (Colonies)	
Other guests: Kyle Deery (Chief Marketing Officer), Bethany Burchill (Manager, Member and Club Services)	

Actions Taken:

1. Approved. September 8, 2025, BOD meeting minutes.

Minutes:

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:02 pm
2. Welcome new members, Erika and Denise, to their first Board meeting and congratulations to Carrie for her new role as VP of Programs. Ed announced that Bethany Burchill with USMS staff will assist Erika with minute taking during board meetings.
3. Agenda review, conflict of interest declarations. There were no conflicts of interest.
4. Approval of Minutes (Action Item) – Carrie
 - i. September Board meeting minutes. **MSA for approval for Sept. 8, 2025, BOD meeting minutes.** Discussion. Correction made to date of meeting. No other discussion. **The motion passed unanimously.**
5. Minute of Good News
 - i. Jeff Commings (October)- Jeff and his club, Dolphins of the Desert, hosted their first pentathlon swim meet welcoming over 110 athletes including CCS and offering OEVT's as a gateway to USMS membership. A national record was set during the meet, and the attendees were appreciative to have a new event offered in the Arizona LMSC
 - ii. Crystie McGrail (November)
 - iii. Juile Dussliere (December)
6. CEO Update (Informational) – Dawson
 - i. Membership: Final numbers are projected to be down 1% from our 2024 numbers (currently at 57,100). The PR/eligibility policy issues and membership growth related to the 2024 post-Olympic membership campaign are cited as factors contributed to the year over year decline.



- ii. Club registration opened Oct 1. After individual discussions, several clubs that were hesitant due to eligibility policy changes have renewed.
 - iii. Website Updates: The footer was reorganized for better volunteer use. The About USMS section now includes a Governance section for quick access to the rule book, policies, guidelines, and meeting minutes. The header will remain focused on marketing clubs and events.
 - iv. Sanction Process Update: The rollout is scheduled to commence following the beginning of the year. Staff will provide training opportunities prior to the rollout.
 - v. Membership registration process: The membership registration process has been modified to include the event participation license. The update was launched in a low volume membership period and is working well. It will be fully effective for all members after Jan 1, 2026.
7. Legal Update (Informational) – Dawson & Ed
- i. The Texas lawsuit and Florida investigation have remained quiet. No action at this time.
 - ii. A new federal lawsuit by a transgender swimmer has been filed. Our attorneys will be responding to the lawsuit.
 - iii. Washington state and county nondiscrimination policies are affecting facility rentals due to new provisions in the facility use agreement that conflict with our interim eligibility policy. The meet sanction is pending until a resolution is determined.
 - iv. Discrimination complaint from a transgender swimmer in New Jersey has been filed with state Attorney General. Investigatory questions forthcoming from AG for USMS staff and Rules committee chair.
 - v. World Aquatics sanction announcement is coming this week for a USMS swimmer.
 - vi. Legal fees are expected to reach \$190,000-\$200,000 by end of the year. The expense is offset by ERTC funds we received.
8. 2026 Budget Assumptions and Preview (Informational) – Dawson
- i. 2025 budget is on track to break even excluding legal costs. Preliminary executive summary to be sent to the board to review in a few weeks.
 - ii. The organization is in a sound financial state with \$3.7M in investment reserves.
 - iii. 2026 budget is being presented to the finance committee next week.
9. Strategic Planning Activities for 2026 (Informational) – Dawson
- Dawson outlined upcoming strategic planning activities that will take place in the coming year.
- i. In December we will conduct some Governance training exercises with outside consultant funded by a grant from World Aquatics
 - ii. We will revisit discussions of our membership categories including how we use One Event registrations.
 - iii. We will finalize our guidelines on what is in the rulebook or policy and guidelines. Dawson got feedback from committee chairs on the proposed definitions.
 - iv. We will continue to focus on Club Development to drive more membership
10. Winter Board Retreat – February 20-22, 2026 – Staff to research locations in the middle of the country.
11. Executive Session – Ed - The Board entered into executive session at 9:04pm ET.
- i. CEO Compensation Training – Peter
 - ii. Board Committee membership change – Ed



Relay: October 24-26 – Kansas City

Board Office Hours: Monday, November 10 at 8:00pm ET – 2026 Budget

Next Board Meeting: Monday, November 17 at 8:00pm ET

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33pm ET.

Respectfully submitted,
Erika Braun, Secretary