

United States Masters Swimming Governance Committee Conference Call December 10, 2009

Action Item:

1. MSA the minutes of the 3-17-09 meeting.
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Chair Anthony Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. EST. Also present were Meg Smath, Nancy Ridout and Don Mehl. Michael Moore joined the call at 7:50 p.m. Guests : Jim Wheeler and Mark Gill joined the call at 8pm EST (and Don Mehl left the call).

Action plan

We reviewed the action plan resulting from the Board of Directors training meeting in October 2008. One of this committee's tasks is to develop a charter, which has been done, but it has not been approved. We were not sure if the BOD needs to approve the charter. We also discussed where the charter would reside. Meg thought the charter was already in the policy manual; Anthony will check with Betsy Durrant to find out if this is the case.

Policy about directors applying for USMS employment

One of the tasks given to this committee is to develop a policy about directors applying for jobs with USMS. The prevailing opinion at the post-convention meeting of the Board in Chicago seemed to be that a director would have to resign in order to apply (past-presidents, who cannot resign from that status, would have to take a leave of absence). The justification for resigning was that the executive director, who would be responsible for new hires, would be in an awkward position if he did not select the director. Others felt this position was too harsh, and that merely taking a leave while applying was enough. We were not certain what the actual will of the Board was, since most directors did not actually express an opinion. Therefore, we decided to draft two options (one requiring resignation, the other requiring a leave of absence) to present to the Board. Nancy volunteered to draft these policies.

Safety coordinator

When the insurance coordinator position was eliminated from code at the convention in Chicago, also unintentionally eliminated was the safety component of that position. Governance was given the task of determining how to promote safety consciousness in the organization. Mark Gill and Jim Wheeler joined the call for this discussion. Don left the call at this time due to a prior commitment.

Jim shared an outline of what he felt should be the duties of a risk management coordinator:

- Evaluate operational policies and practices from an aquatic safety and risk management perspective.
- Advise USMS of current best practices relating to hosting or sponsoring aquatic events and programs.

- Review aquatic safety elements of meet bids and program proposals made to USMS.
- Provide aquatic safety information and resources to help minimize USMS exposure to loss due to aquatic injuries and accidents that may occur.

He also suggested publishing articles on safety issues in *SWIMMER* magazine. And he warned that in the near future, dual supervision would probably no longer be allowed, and explained that dual supervision means one person acting as both lifeguard and coach.

Mark has been consulting with USA Triathlon about liability issues, and suggested incorporating safety oversight into the championship bid review process. He noted that currently no staff has responsibility for issues related to safety or risk management.

We agreed that we need to distribution information to facilitate safety, and also implement procedures to limit liability. A key point was that our focus should not be solely on national championships. We also had questions about who would define best practices. We will ask for feedback from the Championship and Long Distance Committees.

Next meeting and adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. EST. Our next meeting will be January 18, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. EST.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Smath