

## **U.S. Masters Swimming House of Delegates - All Sessions Hybrid Annual Meeting September 12-13, 2025 Friday, September 12, 2025 5:00 PM CDT**

President **Ed Coates** called the 2025 USMS House of Delegates to order at 5:06 PM CDT.

**Welcome and Annual Meeting Opening Remarks:** **Ed** welcomed everyone to the annual meeting and thanked attendees for their time and attention over the next two days.

**Ed** recognized **Carrie Stolar**, Secretary, for the Secretary's report. The number of total delegates is 244, and 224 of them are voting delegates. At the start of the session the number of delegates in person/online is 180. **Carrie** named the guests of the President (for the duration of the Annual Meeting per the Standing Rules): **Dawson Hughes, Bill Brenner, Jessica Reilly, Bethany Burchill, Kyle Deery, Gary Keehner, Brian Robbins, and Jay Eckert.**

**Ed** recognized **Peter Guadagni**, Immediate Past President, for **approval of the proposed Standing Rules for use at the 2025 USMS HOD.** **Peter** explained that the only proposed change in the Standing Rules has been made to be consistent in how delegates/members are referred. The Standing Rules now say "delegate" throughout. **The motion was made by Peter Guadagni to approve the Standing Rules and seconded by Crystie McGrail.** Discussion: **Kirk Clear proposed an amendment to allow members to speak for 3 minutes on an issue rather than 2. Marilyn Fink, second.** Members spoke on the benefits of both the 2- and 3-minute limits. **The vote to approve the amendment failed. The proposed Standing Rules were approved via HOD vote.**

In his opening remarks, **Ed** introduced himself and welcomed the delegates. **Ed** shared a legal notice with the delegates which state that due to the pending legal actions on several fronts and on the advice of volunteer and outside/paid legal counsel, during the HOD we will not discuss or debate anything related to current Interim Eligibility policy or the prior Transgender Inclusion policy. He reviewed the Mission, Vision and Values of USMS and asked that the delegates keep the MVV in mind in all that they do. **Ed** introduced the USMS Board of Directors and thanked the outgoing BOD members, **Robin Smith, Carrie Stolar, and Teddy Decker**, who are completing their service. **Ed** shared the highlights of the BOD's activities over the last year, including onboarding 7 new members, governance work, looking for ways to improve efficiencies, and passing a 3-year budget plan. **Ed** also reminded the HOD that its duties include electing officers, amending rules and bylaws, and setting fees. USMS utilizes expert advisors to run the organization, which includes the BOD, the Long Distance Committee, the Rules Committee, the Legislation Committee, the Finance Committee and USMS staff and other volunteers. He encourages all delegates to share their thoughts and feelings and have healthy discussions, utilizing factual and accurate information. **Ed** also mentioned all the committees that are helping USMS get its business done and meet its mission. He reminded us that we are all one team and are helping our members in their swimming journeys. Finally, **Ed** gave an overview of tomorrow's HOD session #2.

**Ed** introduced **Dawson Hughes**, CEO of USMS, to give an update on the state of USMS. Dawson explained that a large part of his role is to keep USMS mission driven and focused on strategic priorities. He walked the delegates through Choose your Lane, comprised of USMS, College Club Swimming, Grown-Up Swimming, LaneMate, and USA Swimming Foundation, all of which empower adults to improve their lives through swimming. This year in particular, legal issues took the focus away from the mission and strategic priorities. **Dawson** thanked the staff and volunteers for all their work on behalf of the organization.

### **Consent Agenda:**

**Ed** recognized **Crystie McGrail**, Vice President of Local Operations, for approval of the committee reports. Approval of committee reports (Standing, Board, Executive Committee Members, Special Liaison, and Zone) per section 504.2.6 of the USMS bylaws will be by unanimous consent. **Crystie** indicated that if any of the reports are pulled, they will be discussed after the uncontested reports are approved.

Executive Committee Reports to be approved:

- President
- VP of Administration
- VP of Local Operations
- VP of Programs
- VP of Community Services
- Immediate Past President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Legal Counsel

**Crystie** proceeded to read the list of the Standing Committees to be considered today: **Championship, Coaches, Diversity and Inclusion, History and Archives, LMSC Development, Officials, Recognition and Awards, and Records and Tabulations.** **Records and Tabulations** was pulled by **Bill Tingley**.

**Crystie** then read the Committees of the Board of Directors: **Audit, Compensation and Benefits, Elections, Finance, Governance, Investment, ALTS Programming Committee.**

Next the Zone Committees were read: **Breadbasket, Colonies, Great Lakes, Northwest, Oceana, South Central, Southeast, Southwest.**

Finally, the Liaison and Special Assignment Committees were read: **International Gay and Lesbian Aquatics (IGLA), National Board of Review (NBR), and World Aquatics Masters (AQUA)..**

No other objections. **All reports listed are approved with the exception of the Records and Tabulations report.** **Bill Tingley** said that at the Records and Tabulations Committee meeting in conjunction with the annual meeting, a list of recommendations was presented and accepted by the committee to share with the staff related to enhancements to the results database. He has not seen it and would like that list to be added to the minutes of that meeting or added to the Records and Tabulations' annual report. **MJ Caswell**, chair of the Records and Tabulations Committee, said that she will add the document to the committee's meeting minutes. The **Records and Tabulations report was approved.**

**Awards:**

**Ed** recognized **Elizabeth Nymeyer**, Recognition and Awards Committee chair.

- **Ed** announced the **Captain Ransom J. Arthur Award winner, Ed Saltzman.**

The following 2025 Service Awards were announced via a pre-recorded video/slideshow played during this HOD session. **Beth** thanked her committee and the other committees that worked on these awards. In addition, she recognized **Caitlin Gagnon** for creating the video and encouraged everyone to nominate worthy members for the 2026 awards.

- **Elizabeth Nymeyer** introduced the video of the **2025 Dorothy Donnelly Service Award** winners: **Alana Aubin, Cindy Meyer, Katherine Olson, Linda Hepworth, Molly Hoover, Molly Meyer, Susan Ehringer, Tara Mack, Tracy Grilli, Dave Gibson, Samantha Kraft, Doug Hayden.**
- **Nancy Ridout** announced the **2025 June Krauser Communications Award** to **Kysa Crusco.**
- The **2025 Open Water Service Award** is awarded to **Andreas Lorenz and Nicole Christensen.**
- The **2025 Fitness Award** is awarded to **Nickel City Splash Swim Team Adult Learn to Swim Program Lead Instructor Judy Wolf.**
- The **2025 Long Distance National Championship Award** is awarded to **Jill Wright.**
- The **2025 Ted Haartz Staff Appreciation Award** is awarded to **Phil Dodson.**
- The **2025 Officials Excellence Award** to **Judy Gilles and Mike Whaley.**
- The **2025 Kerry O'Brien Coaches Award** winners: **David Cameron, Cheryl Corvo, Kevin Dorn, David Ensor, Mike Heaney, Steve Stahl, Brad Pence, and Ally Segal.**
- The **2025 Club of the Year Award** to **Swim Melbourne Masters.**

**Ed** congratulated the award winners and said that the **2025 Coach of the Year** will be announced at Relay in October.

The House recessed at 6:19 PM CDT.

## **Saturday, September 13, 2024 9:00 am CDT**

After delegate instructions by **Jessica Reilly**, a USMS video was shown.

President **Ed Coates** reconvened the House at 9:04 AM CDT.

**Ed** recognized **Carrie Stolar**, Secretary, for the Secretary's report. The guests of the president are **Dawson Hughes, Bill Brenner, Jessica Reilly, Bethany Burchill, Kyle Deery, Gary Keehner, Brian Robbins, and Jay Eckert**. The number of delegates and guests online was 185 at the start of the session. There are 244 total delegates, and 224 of those are voting delegates.

**Ed** reviewed the legal notice, "due to the pending legal actions on several fronts and on the advice of volunteer and outside/paid legal counsel, during the HOD we will not discuss or debate anything related to current Interim Eligibility policy or the prior Transgender Inclusion policy" with the delegates.

### **Elections (Kris Wingenroth):**

**Kris Wingenroth**, Elections Committee Chair, thanked her committee comprised of **Britta O'Leary, Paige Bueller, and Jason Weis**, for their work over the last two years. She also thanked **Stacy Abrahms** for her technical support. **Kris** explained that the candidates for office will be divided into two groups, the first is comprised of the candidates that are new to their positions and the second are those that are seeking reelection. **Jacky Merianos** will moderate the session for both groups. The session will include introductory comments by each candidate and a question-and-answer portion: (i = incumbent)

- President: **Ed Coates (i)**
- Vice President of Administration: **Julie Dussliere (i)**
- Vice President of Community Service: **Kenny Brisbin (i)**
- Vice President of Local Operations: **Crystie McGrath (i)**
- Vice President of Programs: **Carrie Stolar**
- Treasurer: **Denise Dombay**
- Secretary: **Erika Braun, Diana Dolan LaMar**

**Kris** indicated that after the Meet the Candidates session, **all candidates running unopposed will be elected by acclamation**. Elections will take place online and the polls will be open for 30 minutes.

The HOD recessed for approximately 45 minutes from 10:00 AM CDT until 10:46 AM CDT.

**Ed** recognized **Kris Wingenroth**, Elections Committee chair, to announce the election results. **Erika Braun** has been elected Secretary of the USMS Board of Directors.

**Ed** thanked the Elections Committee and shared his congratulations to those elected to the BOD today.

### **Proposed Amendments and Legislative Voting**

#### Rules

Secretary's note: More detail on the proposed rules listed below can be found here: [Rules](#)

**Ed** recognized **Mollie Grover**, chair of the Rules Committee.

Mollie thanked the Rules Committee for its work this year and explained that the jurisdiction of the Rules Committee is Part 1 and the glossary of the Rule Book.

**Motion to adopt R-7, without objections, by unanimous consent.** No objections. **R-7 was adopted. R-4 and R-5 were pulled for individual consideration.**

The next section includes proposals recommended for adoption as amended. **Motion to adopt R-6 and R-8, without objections, by unanimous consent.** No objections. **R-6 and R-8 were adopted.**

The next section includes the proposals that are recommended for rejection by the Rules Committee. **R-1, R-2, R-3, R-9, and R-10** are recommended by the Rules Committee for rejection. **R-1 and R-2 were pulled for individual consideration. Motion to reject R-3, R-9 and R-10, without objections, by unanimous consent.** No objections. **R-3, R-9 and R-10 were rejected.**

**Kathy Casey made a motion to adopt R-4. Christina Fox, second.** Discussion: **Emily Challis Clark** commented that watches transmit pacing signals to swimmers and asked how officials will know what has been enabled/disabled? **Omar de Armas**, chair of the Officials Committee, responded that if a device is activated, the swimmer would be questioned. **A poll was initiated. R-4 was adopted.**

**Kathy Casey made a motion to adopt R-5. Christina Fox, second. Discussion:** Several members mentioned that having to name a referee in advance is difficult and could delay sanctioning and do not support this proposal. **Eric Gordan** asked why the rule was recommended. **Omar** responded that it was submitted and recommended because in the past, meets were about to take place, and they did not have referees. If the referee is announced with the sanction, the referee is more of a participant or partner in planning the meet. **A poll was initiated. R-5 was rejected.**

In the voting for **R-1 and R-2**, a reminder to vote "No" if you agree with the committee that the proposal should be rejected.

**Kathy Casey made a motion to adopt R-1. Second by Christina Fox. Discussion:** Many delegates spoke on both sides of the proposal. **Roger Von Jouanne** proposed this rule change as it becomes very subjective as to exactly when a non-continuous turning action occurs (for a backstroke turn). He feels that there is no competitive advantage if you initiate a turn too soon. He gave a synopsis of the rules for high school, USA Swimming and USMS. **Robin Tracy** would like clarification about whether changing this rule would affect the eligibility of swims for World Aquatics records and Top Ten. **Mollie** said that that might be likely. **Rebecca Friedberg** said that the call for the DQ is non-subjective, it is "delay in initiating the turn." The swim must be completed on your back. **Rob Duguay** is in favor of R-1 because it removes some of the subjectiveness from the official. Regarding a potential difference in USMS vs. World Aquatics rules, he said that a common practice is to note the rule difference on the swimming sheets at meets such as Nationals. This gives the swimmer the benefit of the doubt. **Susan Ehringer** feels that USMS should be consistent with World Aquatics. She asked **Nadine Day** for her opinion. **Nadine Day, in a point of clarification**, said that to be included in World Aquatics Top Tens and to set World Aquatics records, World Aquatics rules must be followed. **Teddy Decker called the question. Chris Colburn, second. A poll was launched. The motion passed. Marcia Benjamin** said that a coach's job is to teach the swimmer how to do this correctly. **Nadine Day** read the World Aquatics rule. She supports the Rules Committee's position. She also spoke to the earlier point of clarification. If this rule passes, the times won't qualify for World Aquatics records and Top Ten. **A poll was initiated. R-1 was Rejected.**

**Kathy Casey made a motion to adopt R-2. Second by Christina Fox. Discussion:** **Phil Dodson** provided background on the proposal submission. A poll was initiated. **R-2 was rejected.**

**Mollie moved to adopt the Rules Committee annual report by unanimous consent, without objections. No objections. Mollie** thanked her committee for their work.

### Long Distance

Secretary's note: More detail on the proposed long distance rule changes listed below can be found here: [Long distance](#)

**Ed** recognized **Catherine Rust**, chair of the Long Distance Committee. **Catherine** thanked the Long Distance Committee for its work this year and the attendees of the forum.

The proposals will be approved by unanimous consent. All proposals have been approved by the committee. The proposals were divided into two categories. The first group are those that are considered processes and procedures as well as rules that are no longer relevant and are recommended to be removed from the rulebook. The second group clarifies existing rules in the rulebook. **Group one: LD-1 was pulled. Hearing no objections, LD-4, LD-8 through LD-10, LD-12 through LD-15, and LD-19 are approved by unanimous consent. No objections.**

**Dave Brancamp, motion to adopt LD-1. Phyllis Quinn, second. Discussion: Marilyn Fink** feels that the proposal should be defeated as she feels that the duties won't be assigned if this is removed from the rule book. **A poll was initiated. LD-1 was adopted.**

Group two clarifies existing rules in the rulebook. **Group two: LD-11 was pulled. Hearing no objections, LD-2, LD-3, LD-5 through LD-7, LD-16 through LD-18 are approved by unanimous consent. No objections.**

**Dave Brancamp, motion to adopt LD-11. Phyllis Quinn, second. Discussion: Kathy Casey made a motion to modify LD-11 as shown on the screen in the HOD. Phyllis Quinn, second. Discussion: Kathy Casey** stated that the timeframe was changed from 7 to 10 days to allow more time for the Long Distance chair to respond to protests. For virtual national championships, this also give 10 days to allow the chair more time to investigate and respond to protests. **Phyllis Quinn** said that she wrote the original proposal and approves the 10-day timeframe. **Rome Yount** feels that a time limit for the committee to address a protest should be included. **A poll was launched. The amendment to LD-11 passed. Discussion (on the amended LD-11): Phyllis Quinn** clarified that the Long Distance chair decides and it does not go to the full committee. This has not changed. **A poll was initiated. LD-11 was adopted as amended.**

**Catherine moved to adopt the Long Distance Committee's annual report by unanimous consent, without objections. No objections.**

The HOD recessed for lunch at 11:58 AM CDT.

The HOD resumed at 1:02.

### Legislation

Secretary's note: More details on the proposed legislation listed below can be found here: [Legislation](#)

**Ed** recognized **Stephanie Gauzens**, chair of the Legislation Committee.

**Stephanie** introduced the proposals that were recommended for adoption. **L-1 and L-2** were pulled for individual consideration. **Chris Colburn made a point of order.** Since he is the chair of the History and Archives Committee, he is suspending his parliamentary responsibilities for this discussion. **Chris Campbell made a motion to approve**

**L-1, Christof Kertesz, second.** Many members spoke in support of the History and Archives Committee. **Sandi Rousseau** stated that appointing a historian is fine but feels that we would still need volunteers to complete the tasks of the committee. **CJ Rushman made a point of order** to clarify that the president can make special appointments and assignments per the bylaws, and they determine the responsibilities of the position. **Nadine Day** commented that the committee, comprised of 4 members and 2 ex-officio members, met once this year and, per the minutes, the sole focus of the meeting was to dissolve the committee. The unofficial committee met in March and posted minutes detailing its work. **Nadine's** concern for the process is its timing, with the official committee meeting taking place less than two weeks prior to the deadline to submit legislation. She does not want to risk losing energy, passion, institutional knowledge and the goodwill of volunteers with the dissolution of this committee. She hopes to see open communication and thoughtful decision making before making a committee change. **Chris Colburn made a point of order** to say that the committee met twice this year. **Chris Colburn made a point of clarification** that he was appointed chair of this committee on March 31 and the committee was named by April 10. **Kirk Clear** said that he was a member of a task force that reviewed the work of the committee, and they met for a year. He summarized the primary conclusions of the task force's final report. The task force provided 3 viable options for the work of the committee, with the preferred recommendation to continue current committee for 2 years, then transition to a USMS historian. **Ben Wycoff** would like the HOD to vote no on this proposal and spoke to volunteers gaining experience so that they can contribute on the national level. **Maryanne Barkley** said that the ongoing work needs to be transitioned to individual contributors, and she hasn't seen this done. **Phyllis Quinn called the question. Teddy Decker, second. A poll was launched. The question was called.** **Nancy Rideout** said that the history of USMS is vital to its success and is best done by a standing committee, not an individual. A standing committee is accountable to the membership and is an opportunity to give back. **CJ Rushman** shared a point of history. In 2017, a task force was formed to look forward per the strategic plan and looked at all the committees. The final report was presented to the HOD in St. Louis in 2019 and recommended to start sunseting committees. **Chris Colburn shared a point of order** and clarified that he has not been appointed to the historian position. **Crystie McGrail** is excited about the prospect of a historian position. Such a role will enable a cohesive history and story of USMS and rather than little projects. **Patty Miller** said that this proposal prioritizes how you use your volunteers. It is not a slight on volunteers. If the committee continues to exist, it needs to be very clear as to what is the history that we intend to memorialize? **A poll was initiated. L-1 was rejected.**

**Aaron Leonard made a motion to adopt L-2. Christof Kertesz, second. Bill Tingley** would like to amend L-2 (The amendment was already submitted to Jessica.) **Claire Letendre, second. The amendment was ruled out of order as it pertains to 503, not 507. Bill appealed the ruling to the President. Ed concurred with the ruling that it does not directly address the amendment before the HOD. Bill appealed to the HOD. Stephanie asked for a motion about whether the article 503 is germane to 507. Motion (inaudible). Second, Claire Letendre. Bill** feels that it is germane as the original amendment takes the standing committees out of being required to meet in conjunction with the annual meeting. 503.2 and 503.3 are edited in this amendment for zone meetings to match the meeting requirements for the other standing committees. **Patty Miller** said the rule, 507, has been in process of legislation change for many weeks. The deadline for amendments is passed and what is being proposed on the floor is a change to a totally different rule, 503, and while it may have impact, it is not germane to 507. **Rick Hartman** said that this should have been addressed separately not as a ride along and it shouldn't be considered. **Stephanie had a point of order** and explained the mechanism of 601.4.2 (emergency amendments) to make amendments on the floor of the HOD. **A poll was launched. The HOD has backed the ruling of the chair. The amendment is not germane to L-2.** The discussion was resumed. Several members spoke against this amendment saying that this prevents delegates from becoming engaged and knowledgeable about the committees' work. **Stephanie shared a point of order by clarifying the rules of a quorum for a committee and stated that the quorum requirements did not change.** **Chris Campbell** said that this legislation does not delete the requirement for holding a committee meeting in conjunction with the annual meeting but rather gives the option of holding or not holding a meeting and that decision is the responsibility of the committee itself. The committee meetings that are held in conjunction with the annual meeting become a year in review. Delegates need to attend meetings throughout the year to be/stay informed. **Teddy Decker called the question. Susan Ehringer, second. A poll was launched and the question was called. Peter Guadagni** said that there is a section on the website for policies. He also explained that this legislation is put forward to recognize the change that we have had in the annual meeting since COVID. Rather than meet for several days and attend committee meetings and the HOD, committee meetings in conjunction with the annual meeting are held sometime in the month before, and those can still happen. All committees are encouraged to communicate when they are meeting, and any member can attend them. This proposal is not taking power away

from anyone. It is just clarifying that committees should be open to all members all the time. **Jacky Merianos** spoke about the fact that all committees need to meet and these meetings are open to everyone and invited everyone to attend. **A poll was initiated. L-2 was adopted.**

**Motion to adopt the Legislation Committee's annual report by unanimous consent. No objections. The Legislation Committee's annual report was approved.** **Stephanie** thanked her committee for their work this year.

**Ed** recognized **Dawson Hughes, Brandon Franklin** (chair of the Finance Committee) and **Teddy Decker** to present the strategy and 2026 budget assumptions. **Brandon** reminded the HOD that the BOD provides strategy, direction, oversight, and approves the budget while the Finance Committee provides oversight/advice/guidance on the financials, investments, comp and benefits, and audit. **Brandon** walked the HOD through the USMS budget timeline/process. He also shared USMS financial history since 2019. He commented that any cash shortfall was the result of a strategic and planned decision to invest back in USMS.

**Dawson** gave a high-level overview of the strategic programs of USMS including College Club Swimming, Grown Up Swimming, LaneMate, and the partnership with USA Swimming Foundation with ALTS. He gave a historical look at participation in USMS programs since 2019. It showed that the total mission impact, less COVID years, has grown primarily due to CCS and GUS. He also noted that there are thousands of unregistered swimmers on USMS clubs. Membership fees will stay the same for 2026-2027 at \$75. **Dawson** shared the plans and their potential impact on the budget for the year, including revisiting club development, the virtual annual meeting, navigating legal issues, re-prioritizing digital work, and evaluating YTD membership early in 2026, CCS fees and insurance.

**Dawson** said that we will be re-focusing on club development in 2026. We will continue to build pipelines to membership, build out established products and services, and build community focus on swimming while increasing operational efficiency (like sanctioning). He shared the success and growth of GUS in 2025 and said that LaneMate will be fully implemented. For 2026, we are projecting membership at 58,000/59,000 and are planning a breakeven budget. Staffing levels will remain the same.

Questions:

1. **Tom Moore** asked about the cash reserves. If we have too much cash can we spend to advance our technological capabilities? Do we have mechanisms to spend the reserves for strategic initiatives? **Dawson** said that we do, but we have limitations, like bandwidth limitations on the staffing side, etc. We have strong reserves, but we have legal unknowns, so we need to be careful and strategic with our reserves.
2. **Marilyn Fink** asked how the number of unregistered swimmers is determined. **Dawson** said that during club registration, the club contact shares that number of swimmers in their program and so it is a self-reported versus registered comparison.
3. **Doug Sayles** asked if there is a five-year technology plan that the Board has seen that lays out the priorities? **Dawson** answered that yes, there is a plan and timelines for the significant projects like the sanctioning project, the communication structure, the events results database, and bringing the CCS registration information in-house. **Doug** asked if there is any discussion of structural changes to the governance structure? **Dawson** said that there are discussions about how we can be more efficient in the use of our resources, including where volunteers can have the most value.

**Dawson** reminded the HOD that if anyone has any questions, please contact the national office.

### Closing Comments

**Ed** said that the HOD has completed its agenda. He thanked the HOD's members for their time, attention, passion and hard work USMS. He also recognized the Board of Directors for their time and effort, especially the outgoing members, **Robin Smith and Teddy Decker** and welcomed **Denise Dombay and Erica Braun** to the Board and

welcomed **Carrie Stolar** in her new role. He reminded everyone that the tentative date for next year's virtual annual meeting is Sept. 18-19 and that the Volunteer Relay is in Oct. in Kansas City.

**The House of Delegates of U.S. Masters Swimming concluded its business and adjourned at 2:33 PM Central.**

**Respectfully Submitted, Carrie Stolar, USMS Secretary 2024-25**