

President

Ed Coates

It is hard to believe that two years have passed since the House of Delegates elected me President. Leading such a great organization has been a tremendous learning experience—working with the Board, volunteers, and staff, as well as meeting many of our members and hearing their swimming stories.

During this time, I have had the opportunity to experience some of the best aspects of Masters Swimming and to see how we work together to achieve our mission: “to empower adults to improve their lives through swimming.” Highlights include:

- Seeing the entire swimming community come together in Indianapolis for Olympic Trials and USMS Spring Nationals.
- Experiencing the innovation and camaraderie of the volunteer Relay in Houston, including relays, Halloween costume contests, karaoke, and valuable learning and networking.
- Helping recognize our outstanding volunteers at the annual meeting and Relay.
- Collaborating with others in the swimming community, including USAS, MISHOF, and World Aquatics.
- Attending several pool national championships and one open water national championship.
- Welcoming Grown-Up Swimming into the USMS family.
- Rolling out video stroke analysis and LaneMate.
- Expanding access for CCS members to participate in USMS events.

While many good things are happening around the pool, we have also faced unexpected challenges related to our Transgender Inclusion Policy and the Interim Eligibility Policy. Over the past several months, we have communicated with volunteers and members about the Texas lawsuit, the Florida investigation, and other related legal matters. We recognize that people hold strong views on these issues. Our goal has been to develop policies that are as inclusive as possible while also ensuring fair competition, aligning with World Aquatics, and complying with state and regional laws.

We greatly appreciate everyone’s feedback and dialogue on this important issue. As policies continue to evolve, I encourage all members to provide thoughtful and respectful feedback. If you have questions or concerns, please ask—we will provide answers based on facts, policies, and procedures. At the end of the day, we are all teammates, swimming together for fun, fitness, competition, and community.

Board Action Notice

On rare occasions, the Board is required to take emergency action on behalf of the House of Delegates between annual meetings under Article 601.5.2. These actions are temporary until the next annual meeting, and the President must notify the House of Delegates within 30 days. This serves as that notice.

What the Board did:

On Friday, August 8, the Board amended Article 601.5.2 to include Parts 5 and 6 of the Rule Book as sections that may be amended by emergency action. The Board also added Article 601.2.7, allowing legal counsel, with the concurrence of the Board, to instruct a committee of jurisdiction not to act on a submitted proposal.

Both proposals were deemed emergencies by the Legislation Committee, approved by that committee, and then submitted to the Board. On the advice of legal counsel, the Board also deemed the proposals emergencies and approved them.

Why the Board acted:

An LMSC proposal to the Rules Committee would have altered Article 102.5.3 regarding transgender athlete eligibility. Both internal and external legal counsel advised that considering or debating this proposal could be harmful to USMS and detrimental to its defense in ongoing legal matters. The Board concurred and instructed the Rules Committee to decline consideration of the proposal.

Text of the emergency changes:

Amended 601.5.2

601.5.2 Emergency Amendments Between Annual Meetings—Emergency actions to temporarily suspend, adopt, or amend any rule of competition (Part 1 or Part 3), administrative regulation of competition (Part 2), [Part 5 Organization and Bylaws, or Part 6 Amendment Procedures](#) may be enacted between annual meetings of the House of Delegates provided that the proposed suspensions or amendments are:

Note: 601.5.2 A–C remains unchanged.

Added 601.2.7

[601.2.7 Declination of Proposed Amendment by Committee of Jurisdiction—On advice of USMS legal counsel, and with the concurrence of the Board of Directors, the committee of jurisdiction shall decline to consider a proposed amendment and shall not submit it to the House of Delegates.](#)

Note: 601.2.1 through 601.2.6 remain unchanged.

Once our current legal issues are resolved, we will provide opportunities for open discussion of our inclusion policies.

USMS Executive Committee Reports

Over the past two years, we have achieved much and also faced challenges. By keeping our focus on the mission, I believe we will continue to achieve great success moving forward. I look forward to meeting and working with all of you at the annual meeting in Kansas City.

Vice President of Administration

Julie Dussliere

The Vice President of Administration oversees three committees: Legislation, Rules, and Records & Tabulation. The VP of Admin is an ex-officio member of these three committees and serves as a resource to the committees and their chairs for any issues that may require attention or advice from the Board level. Detailed reports from each committee outlining their activities in the past year are available in the committee reports section of the annual meeting webpage.

The Legislation Committee (chaired by Stephanie Gauzens) is responsible for the compilation, changes, and updates related to Parts 2, 4, 5, 6, the Glossary, Organizing Principles, and Legislation's area of jurisdiction in Appendix B of the Rule Book. The committee met several times from June through August to discuss proposed amendments as well as to prepare the packet of recommendations submitted to the House of Delegates for the Annual Meeting.

The Rules Committee (chaired by Mollie Grover) is responsible for ensuring that the competitive rules in Part 1 of the USMS Rule Book provide for fair and equitable competition in the best interests of all USMS members. The committee works throughout the year to ensure that USMS members are informed of current rules, interpretations, and rule changes. The committee accepts, considers, and reports proposed amendments to Part 1 to the USMS House of Delegates in conjunction with the Annual Meeting. The committee met multiple times between May and August to consider proposed amendments and prepare the pre-convention delegate packet. Additionally, the committee scheduled calls or conducted business via email throughout the year to address rule interpretations and protests on an as needed basis.

The Records and Tabulation Committee (chaired by MJ Caswell) is responsible for the processes of recording and verifying Top 10, All-American and All-Star rosters, and USMS National Record performances and determining related policies. The committee supports Top 10 recorders in utilizing the tools available for results uploads and collaborates closely with the USMS National Office for the automation and publication of lists, rosters and records, and pool measurement verifications. The full committee met a few times throughout the year to address bulkhead measurement issues, develop a new bulkhead measurement confirmation form, and propose rule changes to stop requiring bulkhead confirmation for Top 10 which aligns with World Aquatics. Two subcommittees met regularly to work on documentation updates and recommendations for future meet processing software. Documentation work included updated policies and procedures to reflect current practice and codify points process for pool All-Americans, Top 10 Common Questions update, and a review of record progressions with a focus on multiple records occurring within the same timeframe. Software development proposals are ongoing in an effort to anticipate future business needs.

In addition to the work with the assigned committees, I continued to serve as a member of the Governance Committee (chaired by Paige Buehler). As part of the Governance Committee, I participated in the Board Education subcommittee which identifies and provides education on best practices and other specific topics that are relevant to the Board.

Vice President of Local Operations

Crystie McGrail

The VP of Local Operations (VPLO) oversees three committees (History and Archives; LMSC Development; Recognition and Awards). The VPLO is an ex officio member of these three committees. Detailed reports from each committee's activities are available in the committee reports section of the annual meeting packet or by reviewing committee meeting minutes posted on www.usms.com.

Recognition & Awards

The committee meets roughly every 6 weeks. The committee completed evaluation of RJA nominees and the recipient will be announced this Fall. There has been a focus on reaching out to volunteers to remind and encourage them to submit award nominations at the National level. An awards best practices document is in the works as well as a digital streamline of the nomination process.

LMSC Development

The committee meets regularly as a whole and separately with smaller sub-committee groupings for more efficient work time. The Volunteer Relay group continues to impress with organizing a topic, agenda and speakers for the annual event with the support of the National Office. The 2025 topic is Coach Support and Club Development and will take place October 12-14, 2025 in Kansas City. The LMSC Standards group executed the new Standards survey on May 1st and is currently formulating reports and working with Zone Chairs to support LMSC's with missing standards. They have a target date of completion for this standards cycle of October 1st. The Volunteer communication group has been trying a new idea of "Happy Hours" offering multiple days and times to encourage strong participation for volunteers to connect, share and get resources directly applicable to their needs.

History and Archives

The committee this year has been winding down projects and creating the description and role activities for a USMS Historian position who will continue to curate and preserve the history of USMS.

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In addition to the work with assigned committees I am a member of the Governance committee and the Legislation committee. I also participated in the Board Communications efforts with the Zones and LMSCs. Trey Taylor and I held a call with the South East Zone LMSCs on July 1st.

Vice President of Programs

Robin Smith

The Programs Division consists of three committees – Championship, Long Distance, and Officials. The Vice President of Programs is the EC liaison for, and serves as an ex-officio member of, these committees.

All three committees have a continuous work cycle throughout the year, preparing for pool and open water National Championship events and working on related activities. Detailed reports from each committee are available in the Annual Meeting packet and in the committee meeting minutes posted on the USMS website.

In addition to supporting these committees, attending their meetings, and participating in Board activities, I also served as a member of the Investment Committee and co-facilitated the Board Communications session for the Great Lakes Zone. I am completing my second term as Vice President of Programs and will term out this year. Thank you for the privilege of serving on the Board these past four years.

Key highlights of each committee’s work for this year are summarized below.

Championship Committee (Chair: Erin Sizelove, Vice Chair: Jim Clemmons)

The Championship Committee serves in an advisory capacity to pool national championship hosts and makes recommendations and decisions that enhance the quality of championship meets. The committee also works with the National Office regarding the championship bid selection process and marketing opportunities for USMS Corporate Partners.

A key objective for 2025 was to continue to manage the timelines at the two pool National Championship meets. This included looking at the order of events and setting event caps with wait lists. The committee and liaisons worked with the hosts, the National Office, and the Officials Committee to finalize early details and address issues and questions for the two 2025 National Championship meets (San Antonio TX, Federal Way WA). The committee also reviewed potential rules proposals put forth by the Officials Committee and the bid process for 2027 and 2028 Championships.

Long Distance Committee (Chair: Catherine Rust, Vice Chair: Dave Brancamp)

The Long Distance Committee is responsible for the oversight of the rules and administration of open water and long distance events, and for promoting the development of, and participation in, open water swimming. The committee works in a coordinating and advisory capacity with event hosts and makes recommendations to enhance the quality of long distance championship events. And the committee is also responsible for assuring that the competitive rules in Part 3 of the USMS rules and regulations provide for fair and equitable competition in the best interests of all USMS members.

The main priority for 2025 was to review the Long Distance Rules (Part 3) for procedural items that could be removed from the Rule Book and placed in a Guide to Operations. The Long

Distance Rules proposals will be presented to the HOD at the Annual Meeting. The committee and liaisons worked with the Open Water National Championship Hosts to finalize details and results for the five Championship Events this year. The committee also continued to review and check all results for the Virtual Championships Events.

The committee continues to collaborate with the National Office regarding the bid selection process for the 2026 and 2027 USMS Open Water National Championship Events. The objective is to increase participation by both current and prospective USMS members and provide more value to the open water community.

Officials Committee (Chair: Omar de Armas, Vice Chair: John King)

(Note – previous Chair: Mike Abegg; Vice Chair: Omar de Armas until July 1, 2025)

The Officials Committee is responsible for conducting training, education, and certification programs to ensure that the competitive program offered to USMS members is conducted with the highest standard of professional officiating and in full conformance with USMS rules and regulations.

The committee continues to promote and facilitate USMS Certification activities for swimming officials, with a focus on new officials who are only USMS-certified. There was an increase in over 100 new USMS officials, including new referees and starters, during 2025. The committee finalized the training and certification materials for the USMS Administrative Official role. These are posted on the USMS Officials website.

The two 2025 USMS National Championship pool meets (San Antonio, TX and Federal Way, WA), and the 2025 College Club Swimming (CCS) National Championships (Mesa, AZ) were fully staffed with officials throughout the multi-day meets. Note that USMS certification was strongly encouraged for all participating officials. Teri White represented USMS Officials as the Discipline Manager for Meet Referees at the 2025 World Aquatics Masters Championships in Singapore.

The committee submitted several rules proposals to the Rules Committee for consideration regarding Article 104 National Championship Meets.

Please plan to join the Championship Committee, the Long Distance Committee, and the Officials Committee at their meeting sessions scheduled in conjunction with this year's Annual Meeting.

Vice President of Community Services

Kenny Brisbin

USMS Diversity and Inclusion

The Diversity & Inclusion Committee spent much of 2025 balancing its planned work with several issues that arose during the year. While these unexpected situations took time away from original priorities, the committee still made progress toward making USMS more welcoming and inclusive.

Early in the year, the committee voted to move from monthly meetings to bi-monthly meetings. This change allows us to focus on meaningful updates while still holding special meetings if needed.

One ongoing discussion from late 2024 involved a proposal from the South Texas LMSC to set a cutoff time for distance freestyle events at their championship meet. While the D&I Committee doesn't have the authority to approve or reject local proposals, we offered ideas to avoid excluding swimmers, such as adjusting event seeding, capping entries, or moving events in the schedule.

We also continued our work to help establish USMS clubs at facilities that either have only USA Swimming programs or no swim programs at all. The initiative was put on a brief hold as a separate matter was addressed due to some offensive items distributed at the Relay event in Houston.

Once the committee resolved the issue. The focus was again on "establishing clubs." Members shared leads with VP of Club Development Bill Brenner, though challenges remain.

We also continued pushing for every LMSC to have a D&I Committee. As of August 2025, 14 LMSCs do, though some remain resistant, saying diversity and inclusion is not an issue in their area or they don't see the value in having a formal committee.

The year also saw significant attention on the transgender competition policy. In June, we discussed eligibility review requests with input from CEO Dawson Hughes. While the Board of Directors is responsible for the policy, the D&I Committee stressed the need to keep inclusivity at the center of the discussion and asked for more background on the eligibility review process.

At the July 30 meeting, we reviewed the year's work and again focused heavily on the interim competition eligibility policy. We also discussed plans for a peer-to-peer webinar for all LMSC D&I Chairs. Chair Jeff Commings announced he will step down at the end of 2025 but hopes to stay on the committee for at least a year to help with the leadership transition.

Coaches Committee

The Coaches Committee continues to be a strong resource for our members, focusing on training, education, and communication. Every member of the committee is actively involved, and together we've made solid progress on many projects since the last annual meeting.

For the USMS Relay, all sessions and presenters are confirmed, and presenters are working on their materials. Special thanks to Aaron Schneider for partnering with the Relay Task Force to put together another excellent program for coaches. Our Web Workouts program is running smoothly, with the current group of writers wrapping up their terms. We'll start taking applications for 2026 writers in September and October, covering both short course and long course workouts, with new writers beginning in January.

The Awards subcommittee reviewed eight Kerry O'Brien nominations and four Coach of the Year nominations this year. Recipients have been selected and will be recognized at the annual meeting. On the education side, participation remains strong—since August 2024, we've certified 216 coaches at Level 1, 142 at Level 2, and 128 at Level 3. We've also held in-person certifications in nine locations, with five more planned before year's end. These offerings continue to be a valuable way to help coaches develop and stay current with best practices.

For Level 4 certification, we've received one application for 2025 and are working with the applicant to gather any needed follow-up information. Communication with LMSCs has been a priority, with regular updates going to Coaches Chairs and new outreach plans in the works to reach more coaches. Mentoring also remains a focus—we're actively looking for coaches who want to be mentored and pairing them with experienced leaders.

On-deck coaching Nationals is going well. The added visibility on the USMS Nationals page has helped. We're also encouraging more coaches to write for the USMS website and *Streamlines*, with committee members available to help shape ideas into publishable pieces.

Peer-to-peer engagement has been a bright spot, with a successful Coaches Social at Spring Nationals and another planned for Summer Nationals. Internationally, Head Coach Chad Durieux and USMS swimmers are competing in the World Aquatics Masters Championships in Singapore. Thanks to Jacky Merianos and Rob Duguay for their support in making sure our swimmers are well-prepared.

The committee continues to work closely with the Diversity & Inclusion, Long Distance, Adult Learn-to-Swim, and LMSC Development committees to share relevant information with our Coaches Committee and LMSC Coaches Chairs.

Looking ahead, our main priorities are building a nationwide communication system for coaches.

Immediate Past President

Peter Guadagni

As immediate past president, I have no specific organization responsibilities on which to report. I serve as a member of both the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors and continue to be impressed with the dedication and commitment of both the elected national leaders and the U.S. Masters Swimming staff.

My appointment to the Finance Committee marked my 12th year being associated with the group in some capacity. The business acumen and financial expertise of my fellow members of this committee are impressive. USMS is fortunate to have this team overseeing the organization's finances and related processes.

Finally, I continue to serve on the Governance Committee and its Education Subcommittee and as a member of its Onboarding Subcommittee. Most volunteers come to the U.S. Masters Swimming Board of Directors with little or no National Governing Body board experience and both subcommittees are aimed at helping board members understand their general, legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

Secretary

Carrie Stolar

As I complete my second term as Secretary for the Board of Directors. I want to thank the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and the National Office staff for their support and guidance again this year. Thank you to all the delegates, coaches, volunteers, and contributors at the local and national levels for your dedication and passion for swimming and USMS. My activities for the past year included taking the minutes for all the Executive Committee and Board of Directors Zoom calls, our in-person Board of Directors' meetings in February and July, and last year's House of Delegates sessions. After the distribution of minutes and their subsequent approval, I post them to the USMS website. Additionally, I worked with committee chairs and zone leaders to post their meeting minutes to the website.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as Secretary for the Board of Directors. I will do my best to ensure a smooth transition to my successor.

Treasurer

Teddy Decker

Due to the hard work of Gary Keener and several volunteers in 2022, USMS recently received over \$190k of government funding from the federal Employee Retention Tax Credits. These funds help to offset some of the net operating losses we have had the last few years as a direct result of COVID. Memberships are recovering in 2025 and we are seeing good expansion in the Grown-Up Swimming investment from a year ago. USMS continues to have a healthy financial base and we don't anticipate needing to draw more out of our savings reserves than budgeted in 2025.

Audit: The 2024 audit and 990 tax returns are completed and approved by the BOD. Copies are publicly available through the USMS website.

Investment: The investment Committee (IC) continues to meet quarterly to review USMS's investment portfolio. As of the end of July our investments are sitting at about \$3.6MM or approximately one year of operating capital.

Finance: The finance committee (FC) has met several times in 2025. Accomplishments so far include continuing to monitor current financial results and outlook and starting to work on the 2026 budget.

Legal Counsel

Katie Kenyon

Introduction

This role assists the Board of Directors and USMS with governance and oversight serving as a resource on all manner of issues that arise. To be an effective advocate for USMS, I work with USMS staff, the National Board of Review, various committees and board members to understand and assist with the activities, challenges and goals of USMS. I view myself as a partner and advisor where needed. USMS is currently named in litigation filed in the state of Texas and the state of Florida has threatened litigation.

Discussions and Projects Since Last Annual Meeting

1. Participated as non-voting member on the USMS Legislative Committee.
2. Participate when requested on the USMS Eligibility Review Committee.
3. Attended scheduled meetings of the USMS Board and USMS Executive Committee as a non-voting member.
4. Work with the National Board of Review when requested.
5. Consult with external legal counsel on pending and threatened litigation.
6. Provide assistance to USMS and Board.