

Charles Cockrell – Colonies Zone Candidate for At-Large Director



The Election Committee has deemed that Charles Cockrell is a member in good standing of U.S. Masters Swimming. The candidate has indicated he is planning to attend the HOD Meeting for this election year and, if elected, is planning to attend all HOD Meetings during his tenure in office.

The candidate was nominated and recommended by *Leo Letendre* and received a letter of recommendation from *Nadine Day* in accordance with the USMS Election Operating Guidelines.

The candidate provided the following responses on the Candidate Questionnaire/Consent-to-Run Form:

Section Two: Candidate Qualifications

- I am a member in good standing of USMS in this election year:* X Yes ___ No
- I am planning to attend the HOD Meeting for this election year:* X Yes ___ No
- I am planning to attend all HOD Meetings during my tenure in office:* X Yes ___ No
- I have attended 1 or more HOD Meeting in the past five years?* X Yes ___ No

Please list the USMS National HOD Meetings you have attended, including the dates of attendance:

2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021

Section Three: Questions

Why are you interested in this position and why do you believe you would be a good candidate?

I have been a member of USMS continuously since 1994, reflecting a lifelong passion for our sport. I recognize the positive impact that masters swimming on so many lives, including mine. I began my service to USMS as a meet director, official, and LMSC volunteer because I wanted to create opportunities for more people to join the sport. Over the years, I have been privileged to serve USMS as the chair of three different national committees and have supported our steady evolution from a grass-roots all-volunteer organization to the structure we have today.

USMS must continue to evolve to keep pace with the external environment, continuing to explore new and innovative approaches. The role of our national leadership should be to ensure that we have a clear strategic direction, an effective organization, and resources aligned with our priorities. Our efforts should be balanced with innovative thinking and “managed change” that ensures we are moving forward together with openness and transparency. The strength of our organization lies within the diverse group of people who work to ensure our success and the strong relationships that allow us work together towards a common vision.

I feel that my passion for swimming, broad experience at the local and national level, combined with my professional and volunteer experiences are well suited at this time to serve USMS well as member of the Board of Directors. In particular, I feel I can offer perspectives in strategic planning, organizational

leadership, and building strong and effective coalitions to serve USMS so we can ensure a strong foundation for the future.

What do you consider to be the major issues facing USMS now and in the future? As a person holding an elected position within USMS, how would you address these issues?

The mission of USMS is to promote health, wellness, fitness, and competition for adults through swimming. I believe USMS should be viewed as one of the premiere health and fitness organizations for adults in the United States. However, in today's environment, we face increasing challenges to build and offer programs, services, and resources for adults in diverse communities which can meet or exceed the value offered by other health and fitness pursuits. While much of this work must be done at the local level, USMS can provide the foundation with a shared vision, clear strategic direction, and goals that unite us with a common purpose. This foundation also ensures that we can set priorities and align resources with our goals to support membership efforts at the local level. This approach will allow us to be competitive as a health and fitness organization, support our current membership base, and welcome new people to the sport.

As a member of the Board of Directors, I am looking forward to working collaboratively with our USMS leadership to ensure that we:

- Foster an organization that unites diverse interests and communities to work together on common challenges, innovative ideas, and solutions with openness and transparency in our processes.
- Engage our membership base to develop strong and effective strategic plans with clear goals, objectives, metrics, and priorities supported with appropriate resources, sound governance, and oversight.
- Strengthen our ability to provide coaches, pool managers, fitness professionals, and volunteers at the local and regional levels with the resources and support to develop programs tailored to the needs of local communities.
- Continue to prioritize and support visible and engaging flagship events for our membership while seeking opportunities to make Zone and LMSC events more inviting for new participants.
- Ensure roles and responsibilities at the national, zone, and LMSC level are effective in today's environment.
- Embrace change by exploring bold and innovative ideas balanced with effective planning and implementation, including engagement with our volunteer membership base.

Please list USMS committees on which you have served. Include the dates you were on the committees and the names of the committee chairs under whom you served:

Rules Committee: Voting member 2002-2005 (Leo Letendre, Chair); Vice Chair 2006 (Kathy Casey, Chair); Ex-Officio Member 2006-2011 (Kathy Casey, Chair); Vice Chair 2014-2015 (Kathy Casey, Chair)

Rules Committee Chair 2016-2020

Officials Committee: Voting member 2002 (David Diehl, Chair); Vice Chair 2003-2005 (David Diehl, Chair)

Officials Committee Chair 2007-2011

Legislation Committee: Ex-Officio Member 2016-2020 (Meg Smath, Chair, 2016-2017; Richard Garza, Chair 2018-2019)

Legislation Committee Chair 2021-2022

Please list any other experience that relates to your qualifications for the position.

I am a senior executive for a federal government agency with 32 years of professional experience as an engineer, program manager, and executive leader. For the past six years, I have been responsible for strategic planning and management to guide two large federal research and development laboratories with budgets of just under \$1 Billion annually. This role included leadership of senior executive teams with analysis-based decisions on long-term investments, capabilities, and business development priorities. My responsibilities have also included building strong and lasting partnerships with other government agencies, private sector companies, academia, business and community organizations, and international organizations. I have experience leading engagements with external stakeholders and partners, including the general public and historically underserved audiences. In each of these roles, I sought to be a champion for diversity and inclusion to ensure that everyone has an equitable opportunity to contribute to the success of our efforts.

I believe that my professional experience has provided me with valuable insights into strategy, communications, partnership development, and the critical aspect that organizational culture and relationships play in achieving a strategic vision in a large and diverse organization.

Please list any other information you would like included.

LMSC Service: Virginia LMSC Vice Chair (2000-2002), Chair (2002-2006), Treasurer (2009-2016), and Officials Chair (2009-2022). Meet Director for several pool meets in Virginia from 1995-2006. As a certified meet official in USA Swimming and USMS, I have worked every deck and administrative position and conducted clinics to train and educate new officials, especially in masters-specific rules and meet operations.

I have a B.S. degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Virginia and an M.S. degree in Aerospace Engineering from the George Washington University. I've been fortunate to attend several business and organizational development programs over the years at the Center for Creative Leadership, University of North Carolina Business School, the Federal Executive Institute, and Stanford University Business School (planned for July 2022).

Please write a short summary statement that will be posted on the display board with your photograph at the HOD Meeting

I am excited to be a candidate for At-Large Director from the Colonies Zone. I believe that USMS has a bright future as one of the premiere health and fitness organizations in the United States, though we face increasing challenges to ensure that our programs and services are competitive and can meet the needs of diverse communities. USMS has evolved substantially from our grass-roots origins to a unified and effective national organization. To continue this steady evolution, we must have a model that engages our diverse membership with openness and transparency to unite us towards an effective strategic plan with clear and measurable goals. Innovative ideas and solutions, including updates to the roles of our national, zone, and LMSC organizations, where appropriate, balanced with effective planning and resources will help us achieve these objectives.

I look forward to building upon 27 years of service to masters swimming at the LMSC and national level, and leveraging 32 years of professional experience as an executive leader, to serving USMS as a member of the Board of Directors. I am excited to work together with our diverse and passionate membership from across the country to build our programs and services, promote and expand engaging events for members, and foster an inclusive organization.

Thank you for your contributions to masters swimming and for your support.



**U.S. MASTERS
SWIMMING**

From: Leo Letendre

Date: 22 Apr 2022

Subject Line: Charles Cockrell

To: The Elections Committee

It is with great pleasure that I hereby nominate Charles Cockrell to run for the position of At-Large Director originating from the Colonies Zone.

During the election process, you will see all of Charles' accomplishments in USMS. However, I would like to convey several traits that I believe will make Charles' addition to the Board of Directors a valuable one.

I first got to know Charles during my time as chairman of the Rules committee. During that time, I saw that Charles was a rational, well-spoken member of the committee who consistently thought through all of the implications of any proposed changes to the rules. As he progressed through to eventually become Chair, he maintained this vision and worked hard to instill the same approach in others on the committee. Charles was never afraid to involve others in the drafting of legislation or policy. For example, having been chair when the first policy concerning the inclusion of transgender participants was promulgated, Charles has included not only me but others who were originally involved as the policy have evolved over the years.

While Charles has predominately been involved in the "wet" side of USMS through his work on the Officials and Rules Committees, as well as directing numerous meets, he has recently demonstrated his understanding of the "dry" side of the organization by being Chair of the Legislation Committee. Observing his work there has not diminished my high opinion of his skills and commitment towards moving the organization forward while maintaining a sense of fairness towards all.

While this document could go on for several more pages, I would like to end it with the highest recommendation I can give for Charles' election to the Board of Directors. Charles' experience, expertise and commitment are exactly what our Board, or any Board for that matter, need to succeed.

Closing,

Leo Letendre

Member of the Colonies Zone,

Past Vice President of USMS



**U.S. MASTERS
SWIMMING**

Letter of Recommendation

Nomination **Charles Cockrell**

Recommendation **Board of Directors-At Large for Colonies Zone**

From: Nadine Day

Date: 03/30/22

Subject Line: Letter of Recommendation

To: The Elections Committee

It is my honor to write this letter of recommendation for Charles Cockrell to the USMS House of Delegates as an At Large Board of Director Candidate for the Colonies Zone. The background knowledge that Charlie has with USMS legislation and rules is vital to the USMS Board. He will be able to make an immediate impact and contribute with his understandings of the Rules and Regulations of U.S. Masters Swimming. He was instrumental in streamlining the process that we currently have.

The U.S. Masters Swimming Board is a policy making board and Charles has the understanding of the needs of our members. He also has the professional background in strategic planning and implementation. He is a NASA Program, Strategy, Communication and Business Development Executive. He has been responsible for multimillion dollar projects. We have entrusted the board with approving the USMS Annual Budget and Projects. Charles has proven that he is responsible and has an understanding of the task at hand. He is not afraid to inquire when he has questions or concerns. He will be able to justify his decisions for our organization.

Charles has proven that he is good with working with others and even those that may disagree with his view point. He has proven that during the House of Delegate. He listens and does not pass judgment. He makes sound decisions in the best interest of our members.

He also has an understanding of the LMSC structure. Charles has served as Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Officials Chair. As USMS gives more ownership to the LMSCs to lead; it is important that board members have an understanding of the LMSCs. By serving on the board, he will promote the needs of our members and bring more value for their membership. Charles has served our competitive members hosting meets and volunteering as an official. He also supports his teammates, those whom compete and those who do not.

He is a champion for diversity and inclusion. From that National to the LMSC to the club to the member perspective, Charles is an advocate for all of us. He is the best candidate for an At Large Board position.

I am proud that Charles has finally taken the leap to run for a board position; he has been ready. Now he is willing and he will serve us well.

Please support Charles Cockrell for the Colonies Zone At Large Board of Directors position.

Nadine Day,

US Masters Swimming Past President