

Committee Name:	Diversity and Inclusion	Session #:	1 2022
Committee Chair:	Jeff Commings	Date/time of meeting:	1/5/2022 8pm EST
Minutes recorded by:	Jeff Commings		

Actions Taken:

1. MSA'd Minutes of December 1, 2021, meeting.

Number of committee members present	11	Absent:	1	Guests:	0
Committee members present (list all, including chair and vice chair): , Jeff Commings, Sarah Welch, Megan Johnston, , Ally Sega, Virgil Chancy, Leann Rossi, Rook Campbell, Vicki Shu, Connor Bailey, Leo Letendre. Ex-Officio: Chris Campbell, Daniel Paulling. Guests:					
Not present: Diana Triana, Wilson Josephson					

Minutes

1. Welcome and Announcements. Jeff welcomed members to the new year and new Diversity and Inclusion Committee. He expressed his excitement in welcoming people to the new year and new work plan for the Committee. He reminded members the meetings are on the first Wednesday of the month. Jeff asked members to approve December meeting minutes. Ally moved and Virgil seconded the motion to approve. The committee approved the minutes of the December D&I Meeting as presented.
2. He asked new members in turn to introduce themselves:

Connor Bailey: Current (new) Chair of SE LMSC and swims with Auburn Masters, a retired professor of rural sociology. Conner grew up swimming and has been swimming masters since '85/6 and consistently since the early '90's. He's a self-described sprinter 'wanta-be' who ends up competing best at longer distances.

Rook Campbell: Member of Southern Pacific, swimming with both So. Cal Masters and Hollywood Aquatics. Rook is a professor of journalism/communications also with a background in sociology and teaching in communications. He's been swimming since adulthood. With the pandemic he began swimming open water and distance. Sports governance and human right. A former professional cyclist. Swims with So Cal Aquatics and Hollywood Aquatics.

Leo Letendre: been participating with Masters since about ...He's a retired chemist. Leo met his wife on a swim meet in St. Louis. Leo's history includes chairing the Rules Committee during the adoption of the USMS transgender policy.

LeAnn Rossi, is the tax assessor for Fulton Co. government. She's been swimming ince age group and joined masters in ..Ill swam at No. Illinois University. She's swum many Gay Games. Living in the South (US), she recognizes the lack of Black/African American swimmers in masters despite their presence in communities throughout the South. LeAnn is currently the Diversity and Inclusion Chair with Georgia LMSC.

Vicki Shu, a community organizer for low income housing advocacy. She swam age-group and joined Masters. She enjoys Masters far more than she did age group

swimming. During the pandemic it's been a considerable mental health....She wants to help contribute to diversity in swimming where it's very obvious . Many reasons for diversity—diversity makes all aspects of Masters swimming more interesting in the pool and through social activities. The other reason is for the longevity of Masters. The fact is that the country is becoming increasingly more diverse and for the future sustainability of Masters we need to be more diverse welcoming. Is currently serving as a Diversity and Inclusion Chair with Pacific LMSC.

Jeff gave an introduction for the returning members: Tom Moore, Megan Johnston, Ally Segal (former Vice-Chair and now newly appointed Vice-Chair). Sarah Welch, Virgil Chancy, Diana Triana, and Ex-Officio Chris Campbell and Daniel Paulling .

- 3. Mission statement:** In preparing for the meeting new members had asked for a copy of the committee mission statement. Jeff shared it and the committee discussed where it's located and how people can access it.

Mission Statement: The USMS Diversity and Inclusion Committee shall help create a culture of inclusion and opportunity in USMS for people of diverse backgrounds by developing resources and engaging coaches, LMSCs, and local volunteers.

Jeff asked Daniel how to get the mission statement posted on the D&I website tab.

Daniel agreed to make this happen.

- 4. Work group assignments:** This is the focus for the meeting. Jeff introduced the work groups and his goal: that each committee members is on at least one work group/initiative and that people limit their commitment to what is doable for each person. Jeff presented a draft set of assignments. The resulting list of small groups, leads and members is:

Work Group Membership (Leads highlighted)

Best Practices:	Coach Survey	LMSC Initiative (LMSC D&I Coordinators)	Education and Training (including Volunteer Relay)
Sarah Welch	Jeff Comings	Ally Segal	Tom Moore
Megan Johnston	Conner Bailey	Tom Moore	Leann Rossi
Vicki Shu	Diana Triana	Leann Rossi	Rook Campbell
Wilson Josephson*	Virgil Chancy	Virgil Chancy	Vicki Shu

Legislation	Recognition Program	Holiday Guidance - 2023
Ally Segal	Diana Triana	Sarah Welch
Rook Campbell		TBD
Leo Letendre	Ally Segal	
Conner Bailey	Rook Campbell	
Vicki Shu		

- 5. Volunteer Relay** – How does D&I Committee contribute? Jeff introduced this event which is scheduled for March 2022 in Denver. It is an educational/networking conference to include both new and experienced members and focusing on developing local programs at the club level. Chris Campbell, Tom Moore and Daniel Paulling outlined the approach and who is invited to participate. There’s not a specific opportunity for D&I presentation, but it’s an opportunity to network and carry the D&I message throughout the conference. The final plans and agenda are still being worked out. Planning is being done through LMSC Development Committee. Jeff entertained ideas for what to present: an overview of our main training curriculum on D&I webinar, introducing the LMSC role description and facilitate discussion on how that might play out at many LMSC’s for a broad audience. The work group will take these ideas and work ‘offline’ on what to present, diving deeper into how everyone at the LMSC/club level can ground in the D&I principles—think incorporating D&I in events, meetings—asking people to look through a D&I lens in all aspects of their volunteer work. Daniel reminded the group that the focus is creating and supporting the masters community and how clubs create a positive experience for everyone. LeAnn asked about the target participation. Tom clarified that they are encouraging 1 experienced volunteer, 1 new volunteer and a coach. The Training/Education subgroup will work on how to communicate the D&I messages and what form it should take.
- 6. Awards and recognition update.** Jeff shared the history of the award proposal. The Committee has a new Chair. She’ll ask her committee to approve the proposal in January. This will allow us to advertise and begin accepting proposals early in 2022.
- 7. LMSC Development Committee Draft D&I Coordinator Role Description** – Jeff introduced this document -- the role description for the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator at the LMSC level. The LMSC Development Committee had reviewed our submission and provided this committee with their edits which Jeff presented. The discussion offered committee members an opportunity to comment. Ally suggested adding other religious groups in the areas for emphasis. Vicki suggested including the D&I mission statement in all our documents. Tom noted that this role description is ‘owned’ by a different committee—LMSC development. The Committee acknowledged Vicki’s suggestion to include for documents that we originate. Conner mentioned his clubs ability to attract swimmers 40+ ages who are new to the sport. Rook encouraged us to help the local D&I Coordinator evaluate barrier at the local level (evaluating facilities, policies, requirements). Rook inquired whether we have a best practice to conduct such assessments. Sarah acknowledged that we don’t currently and said her group would check in with Rook to help out in developing such a best practice. The LMSC Development Committee will post the description on their page when it’s complete. Tom offered that this role description is a high-level overview leaving the ‘how to’ up to the coordinators as they evolve their particular roles. Committee members offered several other edits—the final document is provided at the end of these minutes as an Attachment.
- 8. D&I webinar on January 11** – spreading the word. Jeff reminded the committee that we are presenting the final/wrap up session for our webinar series for LMSC Board members

on January 11. We will have conducted the main session with 5 follow up sessions. Jeff is the webinar moderator. He invited committee members to spread the word about the event locally and within their LMSC's, including coaches and volunteers. Daniel mentioned it will be in the Streamlines for Volunteers going out on Jan 11th.

- 9. Legislation/rules proposals** (Ally and Leo). Jeff opened a discussion on possible legislative proposals for 2022 Annual Meeting. Ally referenced the EEO section of the Rulebook and proposes adding Gender Expression as a protected class. Ally also suggested that the Committee make a recommendation that they modify the definition of 'over 65' warm up lanes to set aside the reserved lanes due to speed/ability (rather than an age-based definition). This would also offer an option for people with physical limitations.

Leo recalled a few years ago USMS removed the ability to deny a sanction prospectively and instead could only do so after the sanction is issued. Leo suggests legislation that would allow USMS to prospectively deny a sanction to organizations whose primary purpose is contrary to our values of diversity and inclusion as provided in our Rulebook. Or, stated differently, to deny a sanction when/if an organizations mission and values are contradictory to ours. Leo asked committee members to send him their thoughts on how to phrase this proposal. Vicki pointed out this concept is very common in grant guidelines. She offered to collect some information. Leo pointed out that if an organization does not serve our entire membership, such a Senior Games who spans a 25+ age group. Such events are 'recognized' rather than sanctioned under USMS rules. Conner also offered to work on this issue.

Jeff will send the roster to Committee members so we all have e/o contact information.

- 10. Diversity in Aquatics Conference** – budget, possible attendee(s). Jeff let the group know that the Committee budget had been approved with 1 slot for a committee member to attend the conference in February in Tampa/St. Pete. Virgil had expressed interest in attending. The National Office/Dawson Hughes requested that USMS instead send a staff person from the National Office attend and report back to the Committee since the NO is just a few miles from the conference. Jeff reported that he agreed to that approach and no committee member would be attending this year. This would also reserve funds for other initiatives if needed or add to budget savings for USMS.

- 11. Update from Coaches Committee** Wilson sent his apologies for not being able to attend.

- 12. Update from Chris Campbell:** Chris reminded us that he is the link between our committee and the EC and Board and will play that liaison role. The first meetings of the year for the Exec Committee and BOD are later this month.

- 13. Announcements:** Daniel mentioned the USA/NCAA discussions about Lia Thomas who is a transgender NCAA competitor. He shared the USMS Transgender Policy for the group. Rook referenced the updated IOC policy and sent the link out. Daniel was citing this as a heads up in case it becomes an issue with USMS in the future. Leo mentioned that, for several years, transgender and particularly male to female trans swimmers have

competed within USMS. Sarah suggested and Leo offered to have a separate session on the Transgender Policy, so all members are well-versed in what it says and its application. Megan asked for feedback on how to handle negative comments about including transgender swimmers in swimming and competition. LeAnn and Rook shared their approaches. Rook at asked them to look at the headlines-separate from the issues/statements. His observation was that ignoring the hate speech in the headlines allowed him to see the discussions that were actually more thoughtful than the headlines.

Jeff wrapped up the conversation by recalling the statement by his team that any defamatory statements of conversation are grounds for being asked to leave the club. We need to have civil conversations and listen to all sides.

The meeting adjourned at 10:09 pm Eastern Time