

USMS Convention — Jacksonville, FL 2014

Committee Name: Open Water	Session #: 1	Report #:
Committee Chair: Lynn Hazlewood	Vice Chair: Rob Copeland	
Minutes recorded by: Lynn Hazlewood	Date/time of meeting: 9/18/2014, 3:30-4:15 pm	

Actions Requiring Approval by the HOD:

1. N/A

Motions Passed:

1. N/A

Number of committee members present: 11	Absent: 5	Number of other delegates present: 46
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Committee members present (list all, including chair and vice chair): Lynn Hazlewood (Chair), Rob Copeland (Vice Chair), Bob Bruce, John Carlson, Sandra Frimerman-Bergquist, Donn Livoni (ex-officio), Chris McGiffin (ex-officio), Sue Nutty, Rendy-Lynn Opdyke, Bill Roach (ex-officio), Jim Wheeler.

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 pm

1. Actions taken between meetings:
 - a. Approval of minutes for 6/8/2014, 7/13/2014, 8/3/2014: The committee unanimously approved the minutes for the June 8, July 13 and August 3 minutes by discussion forum vote. Minutes have been posted on the Minutes database.
 - b. Report from OWCC: Bill Roach stated He had not reviewed an open water safety plan in several weeks. We may be finished for open water sanctions approved for 2014. I have attached the sanctioned events for 2013 and 2014, including a comparison of the events in 2013 and 2014 and separated the events by LMSC. At the request of the Open Water Committee, I am contacting the 2013 events that did not request a sanction for 2014 as to why they did not renew. I have also been asked to contact all 2014 events for final results and exact number of participants (see *owSanctions2013-2014.xls* posted in Minutes database).
 - c. Report from Rebate Panel Chair: Rob Copeland reported that the application for Insurance Surcharge Rebates was posted on usms.org in January 2014. The Rebate Panel met from February to August as applications came in. There were 11 applications for rebates. Six were approved (one approved event did not apply for sanction), four were declined and one was deferred (remains unresolved). Rebates ranged from \$400 to \$1,000 and money still remains in the fund for 2014.
2. Report from the Chair: Lynn Hazlewood noted that the theme of this year's meeting is "Things to Think About." To start the process, she read a short story by Mark Nepo titled *Life in the Tank* from Nepo's *Book of Awakening*.
3. Discussion of Critical Rules Proposals: Bob Bruce discussed LD 40 (303.8.3 Independent Safety Monitor proposal). The committee and delegates from the audience held a vigorous discussion about the safety monitors, what value they will bring to our events and how this program might be implemented.
4. Open Water Task Force: Chris McGiffin went over the recommendations made by the BOD Open Water Task Force. In an effort to deal with the \$1,000 insurance surcharge the Task Force has suggested we consider either assessing an equitable national sanction fee spread between pool and open water events or assess a surcharge fee for each USMS member during the registration process. An open water membership was rejected as not practical. The decision will be made in the House of Delegates.
5. The future of USMS Open Water Swimming: Rob Copeland led a discussion to explore the future of USMS open water swimming. He noted that "in the past 2 years we have seen a 50%+ drop in the number of USMS sanctioned events, while during this same period other organizations have seen moderate to significant growth in the sport. Are we comfortable with

this trend?" The committee and the delegates from the audience held a lengthy discussion about our future. Additional comments or questions can be sent to the Open Water Chair at openwater@usms.org. Discussion topics are below:

- a. Open Water Safety Education for members, event management, coaches, LMSC's, non-members
 - i. We have made progress in producing content in this area. Has it been enough?
 - ii. What else needs to be done?
 - iii. Do we as volunteers have the necessary skills and time to accomplish what we plan?
- b. Event Development for new/veteran event management, coaches, LMSC's
 - i. How do we deliver event development content that is helpful without being perceived as additional rules and overhead?
 - ii. What services can we provide as a "value add" to event hosts?
- c. Open Water Training for novice to expert swimmers and coaches
 - i. What can we do to provide swimmers and coaches with the tools to safely become better open water swimmers?
 - ii. Can we develop a clearinghouse of certified Open Water coaches and clinicians?
- d. Open Water partnerships
 - i. There are a number of organizations that serve the open water community, are there some that we should reach out to develop a partnership for co-branded events and other services?
 - ii. How do we do this while ensuring the USMS brand?
- e. Infrastructure and Communication (Web site, OW Guide to Operations, Swimmer, social media, webinars)
 - i. We currently have a lot of available material on open water swimming, how do we effectively make this readily accessible by our members?
 - ii. How do we need to work with staff regarding open water information and publications?
- f. Definition of success for USMS open water and set any long term goals for achieving that success
 - i. How do we define success for USMS open water activities?
 - ii. How do we see the USMS Open Water product in 3-5 years?
 - iii. How do we define success for the Open Water Committee?
 - iv. How do we define success for us individually as committee members? Water Safety Education for members, event management, coaches, LMSC's, non-members

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm
