

Committee Name: Block 2 Block Party (Legislation, Finance, Legal, Planning and Convention Committees-joint session).

Minutes recorded by Sarah Welch. September 10, 2003, 7:30-9:00 pm

Actions Taken: NONE

The Block Meeting was called to order by Doug Church, Executive Committee Liaison at 7:32 pm. Doug Church introduced the purpose of the Block session. These block parties are the organizational attempt to move out of our silos and share information across committees for the benefit of the organization and to meet Core Objectives that guide the organization and this Convention.

Rob Copeland then lead a discussion for delegates to provide input on four agenda topics as follows:

I. Support for LMSC's

Delegates held a lively discussion on what the National organization can do to help LMSC's key points of which were:

- Try to improve communication, with LMSC's and clubs.
- Implement the new Zone Rep Job description that is designed to improve communication.
- Develop model bylaws with a basic structure for what an LMSC should include with opportunities to tailor to individual LMSC needs.
- Recognize that many/most LMSC's want to act independently but have a national office for help when needed. Need to get immediate and professional response from national office. When a local organization can't struggle through an issue or resolve a dispute they want an objective outside party to call on.
- Develop a national ombudsman role. This may come about through the revised dispute resolution process being discussed at this convention
- Encourage smaller LMSC's financially and personally to get them involved in convention so they can be more effective at home..
- Identify and share best practices shared across the entire organization. Sharing needs to go beyond each Zone. USMS could identify best practices and share the information. Doug Executive Committee sees new Zone job description as very important. We use the website to promote much about our organization and much of the tools are there and can be put there.
- Rely on the Zone rep to link to the national organization.
- Establish specific projects and proposals. For example, the NW Zone contributes funding for small LMSC's to attend convention.
- Recruiting and retaining coaches is critical to the health of the organization. Someone noted that ASCA has people who offer training for local clubs and perhaps the Planning Committee could develop training for LMSC treasurers, chairs and other officers in budget and planning and club development.
- Use the Planning Committee more effectively to develop projects and ideas to support LMSC's.
- Add more emphasis on mentoring people to go to convention and take roles in LMSC's. For example, Virginia Master's had a mentoring program that could be written up and sent out to other organizations.
- The National Office should focus on what makes swimmers successful—having a coach and a pool. Suggestions to look at how USA-S has struggled with these issues and see what models and answers they've come up with.

II. Facilities. Discussion focused on how to foster facilities for masters.

Key points included:

- The Planning Committee is working on materials to help develop local teams. They are looking for opportunities to address gatherings of Y's or Parks and Rec organizations to promote masters swimming. The 'display booth' and new brochure are valuable tools for promoting masters.
- Consider developing other media presentations that could be used by local organizations such as a CD rom presentation would show we're on top of present day media options.

- Remember that the relationship with local facility matters is a fundamentally local relationship. Work within your local community and pools. Understand the finances and local dynamics. For example, masters swimming is not financially lucrative as a water aerobics but both programs are important.
- Someone shared how the City of Atlanta built a new pool and masters got in from the ground up. The coaches started a kids program in exchange for free pool time, for example.
- Know what your local facility needs...know where to go for insurance certificates and get them faxed directly to the pool. The first thing a new facility wants to know is about insurance.
- Someone suggested that local work out groups work with local high schools--to negotiate 1-2 lanes and pretty soon you have a team!
- The group discussed some problems that are arising because of the new pool measurements standards. It's hurting some relationships with pool facilities.
- Work cooperatively within your aquatics organizations that are competing for pool time as is done internationally. Look at demand, ability to pay and demonstrate how to work together on the use and managing of the facility.

III. Governance (Can/Should we develop the policies, procedures and practices for the organization to function better?)The group had another lively discussion regarding governance—how far to go, how fast, how slow and to what end.

We defined Governance as: What our organization looks like, how it functions; defining and relationships Comments included:

- The USMS Organization is effective at working together but has some inefficiencies. We have lots of good teamwork but too many teams to realize the core objectives.
- Delegates expressed concern that officers have too much to do and some of it could be done differently. Too much of it is administrative and detailed. Paid staff could do it.
- Need to take the appropriate next steps and move strategically in the right direction to be more effective.
- The group discussed whether we were/weren't making adequate progress at the right rate. No consensus developed out of this discussion. Expressed concern that we never eliminate committees.
- The Planning Committee would be the right group to look at governance (it's in their purpose statement) and coordinate with the Legislation Committee.

IV. 2006 FINA Masters World Championship Bid

Tom Boak reviewed the work he'd presented to the Exec Committee on budget scenarios for the prospective bid based on research from the '92 meet and other resources noting that the proposed structure with Stanford's facility, Pacific's sponsorship and USMS' bid is very different from Indy in '92. These will be discussed later in the convention.

The discussion focused on responsibilities among the parties, who would bear the risk and who would get reward from various aspects of the meet. USAS member organizations have been involved in the planning.

- Involve the insurance committee. Tom got preliminary bids from insurance. May be able to buy other insurance such as for terrorism incidents or to insure for losses..

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm