



**ZONE
DIRECTORS'
COUNCIL**

Zone Directors' Council Meeting

May 21st, 2023 - Notes

7:00-8:30 (CT)

"Serving as a connecting link in the USA Swimming Community to build awareness and trust through shared communication and education."

Present: Zach Toothman, Nicole Caruso, Melissa Hellervik-Bing, Mitch Gold, Keith Moore, Mike Dilli, Jack Swanson, Kathleen Prindle, TJ Walsh, Bruno Darzi, Tim Husson, Michael White, Simran Jayasignhe, Megan Braman

Absent: Jay Chambers, Ellery Parish, Savannah Gurley, Gavin Formon, Nate Chessey, Pam Lowenthal, Ryan Gibbons, Dana Skelton, Terry Jones, Beth Winkowski, Jackson Fouras, Jane Grosser, Jerry Adams

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 CT by Zach Toothman and the agenda was approved as submitted.

1. USA-S Workshop Debrief

This point on the agenda was a discussion of a "full picture view" of how the workshop was for all groups. Many said they enjoyed meeting people and connecting within and out of individual LSCs. Jack Swanson included some constructive feedback, saying that we should make the workshop less track focused. He feels that the workshop created very limited movement between the tracks, and that it would be beneficial to allow the freedom for individuals to move between tracks. Many on the call also agreed that Sunday needs to be more engaging. A tip was made to allow two separate Zone meetings (one hour each), due to many agendas not being fulfilled. This would allow more flexibility for the Zone leaders to have more time for collaboration and discussion within their Zone. From a logistics standpoint, the agenda needs to be put out sooner for people to have ample time to make plans. A tip was also made for the need for USAS to expand to allow more stakeholders to be there to make more decisions and get more accomplished. LSCs should let as many people as possible to attend the workshop. Kathleen Prindle requested feedback on the timeliness of the agenda being sent out, and feedback on content of each of the tracks. Mitch Gold says that it is a goal to get the agenda and tracks sent out earlier so that people can make arrangements, which would help to get more people from each Zone in attendance. This would allow Zones have more time to meet, collaborate, and plan for the workshop. It was agreed that one of the biggest uses of the workshop is to have an opportunity to get together early for discussion and planning for legislation in HOD. Zach Toothman recommended that Zone meetings be held with LSCs to better prepare for ABM. Mike Dilli and Zach will work on putting out a survey for workshop so each Zone can distribute to their LSCs.

2. Zone Manuals to P&P

a. Junior Athlete Representative Term Adjustment

This point on the agenda was made to discuss the conversion of Zone Bylaws to Policies and Procedures (formally known as Zone Administrative Policy Manuals). It was determined that the Central and Southern Zones' manuals are fully converted, and Eastern and Western Zones' manuals are partially converted (Western Zone will be voting on it in September). Zach Toothman requested that all changes need to be made by ABM across all four zones (it was mentioned that Eastern may not be finished converting by ABM). Zach made September a "soft" deadline, and January 1 will be a hard deadline.

Zach introduced the change in legislation for the Junior Athlete Representative term length. It was argued that there is a need to align the Athlete Director and Junior Rep. term. The main goal is to have legislation aligned across all four zones and update language for the Junior Zone Athlete Rep. to have a two-year term with no reelection. It was also discussed that there needs to be a staggering effect with the Zones, so that all 8 Zone Athlete members do not term out all at once (Which Zones will have elections in odd and in even years?). Zach ends by mentioning that this legislation is still a work in progress.

3. ZDC/CAC ABM House of Delegates Project

This point on the agenda was to discuss a project with an aim for getting full 100% participation in HOD. Zach introduced this project, mentioning that the task force would work to make sure all LSCs have 100% participation from all voting members. He asked for help from the ZDC for this project in collaboration with the CAC. Kathleen Prindle voiced her disappointment due to the subpar participation seen at HOD (mostly coming from coaches who were unable to attend ABM being held on a Saturday morning). Membership and staff worked hard for HOD, and all votes were carefully negotiated and placed. She says that we can't lose any more votes, and everyone who has a designated vote needs to be participating. Another concern is getting enough 10-year athletes in attendance (90 couldn't vote; didn't have APT finished, which is one of many reasons; AAC is making sure this isn't an issue in the future). Zach says that July 15th is the date that names need to be reported for voting in HOD (48 hours until HOD, names can be changed). Michael White requested a more detailed "autopsy" as to "why" major stakeholders were not in attendance (we can't accept the "I had a meet, I had practice" excuse; if we can hold national elections on a Tuesday, we can do this; a "get out the vote" kind of thing with a few big points is essential; thinks the single biggest booster may be establishing "voting parties" by LSCs; have the GC rent a place and get everyone in a room together).

4. Sectional Manual Next Steps

Zach, Pam, and Tristian would appreciate distribution of sectional manual on zone websites (get it out!). The final sectional manual will be sent out in a post-meeting email from Zach.

5. ZDC Manual

This point on the agenda was made to discuss the ambiguity in the terms for Zone Director. There is nothing specific Zones can hand over to new Zone Directors as to "what is my role/responsibility?" There will be a task force led by Zach and Pam to provide standardization for incoming zone directors. The main goal is to create an onboarding experience for incoming zone directors (collectively as a ZDC). Tim and Keith voiced their

wanting to help in the task force. Ryan Gibbons, Michael White, and Sean Redmond will round out the task force.

6. Junior Officials Project Task Force

This point on the agenda was made to discuss the Junior Officials Membership Project. Zach expresses the need to create a task force for this project. After asking for initial feedback, Zach heard support from Melissa, who said that this would be very beneficial for small teams hosting small developmental meets, in which it may be difficult to attain the needed number of officials to run a USAS sanctioned meet. This Junior Official position would allow more flexibility for bringing in officials, as senior athletes (possibly members of these teams) can easily officiate for a meet. This position would also create opportunities and pathways for junior officials to gain experience for officiating, or other USAS positions. Jack mentions that coaches would be heavily in favor of this new membership and advises that we need to use “cautious optimism” (What and what not are junior officials allowed to do in regards to competition?). TJ Walsh mentions that junior officials would not need to complete a background check, but they would need to complete the APT course. Simran reiterates Melissa’s point that junior officials would be extremely beneficial for smaller teams hosting meets. Zach mentions that Registration and Leadership, Officials, ZDC, and AEC will be collaborating on this project.

The meeting was adjourned by Zach Toothman at 8:20 CT.