



**MINNESOTA  
SWIMMING**

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To: Minnesota Swimming House of Delegates

Subj: Executive Director's Report: Annual Meeting of the MSI House of Delegates

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Welcome to all attending this year's House of Delegates or reading this message online. For this year's report I want to focus on strategic planning and results.

As of March 31<sup>st</sup> athlete membership in Minnesota Swimming is 11% greater than a year ago; from 7,300 to over 8,100 swimmers. Only 2 LSC's in USA Swimming's Central Zone are larger.

It is tremendous to have such interest in the sport in our area. It means many more athletes are involved; having fun and reaching higher to do their best in competitive swimming.

Then again, with growth comes the challenge of foreseeing all the long-range needs of an expanding organization. Every day the staff and volunteer leaders prioritize what we need to do to serve a greater number of members, while at the same time, keeping an eye on the bigger picture.

The bigger picture, what does that mean?

Back in 2010 the MSI Board of Directors adopted a strategic plan that set out a series of priorities for our local swimming community. The platform included the core objectives of USA Swimming – to promote the sport, build the base, and sustain competitive success. As a Local Swim Committee (LSC) of USA Swimming, MSI was challenged to become more professional and complete the Level 1 LSC Excellence and Achievement Program (LEAP). We earned that certification in 2011, but there was more work ahead.

MSI is now on the threshold of updating the plan this spring. Here is where I believe we stand on the key parts from the current plan and the important findings that will affect the view forward.

- We have *documented* many processes and updated procedures for continuity, however, with many large clubs at record enrollment and larger meets it has kept everyone on their toes to adapt procedures or consider legislation to stay in front of the huge change curve.
- *Business and marketing plans* were created. Part of the thinking on marketing was MSI promoting the sport at the LSC level and referring new folks to clubs in the region. Instead, USA Swimming and the success of Team USA at the London Games were quite effective in getting more kids involved in the sport, especially for many clubs in the Twin Cities. Greater Minnesota has capacity to fill. For the business plan portion we adopted a "Sport Investment" strategy to allocate over \$100K annually toward meets, increasing diversity and inclusion, training/education, and promotion of competitive swimming to new audiences in our region. A terrific start but the view forward must consider opportunities for both our large and small club member segments and how these investment ideas get launched and sustained.

- MSI has developed as a local point of contact for those pursuing pool projects in our region. MSI group members are now engaging those that have capital resources to build or renovate pools, and reaching out for MSI and USA Swimming for help, too. We have learned a lot about prioritizing viable, sustainable projects that have a broad benefit to our LSC members. The House of Delegates adopted an ongoing multi-year fund designated to supplement the bigger pie. And while it will not build or renovate a pool, it will ensure the needs of the competitive swimming community are heard, and best case, represented in the planning process or final product. The vision to have more pools capable of 50-meter training and competitions remains unrealized, thus, it remains a big priority.
- We continue to cultivate our complementary relationship with the high school swimming community. We have had conversations with the MN High School League, collaborated with MN High School Swimming Coaches Association, and the Minnesota Swimming Officials Association. Whereas, MSI is working at the state level there are still more ideas out there for collaboration including those at the club-level. For instance, an “Approved” meet with a Y program in the local area or a “pack the pool” night for a high school dual meet. The key is continuing to network at all levels to improve these relationships.

To conclude my comments on strategic planning, I have spent many hours looking at the minutes of past MSI meetings. I have true respect for decisions made in the past. But as things change so fast we must remain flexible for the ever-shifting needs of our members. At the same time, leadership must be clear (as they can) about the philosophy of MSI competitions. One that not only builds the base but drives sustained competitive success.

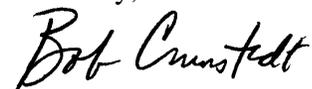
I would like to welcome the new and continuing members of the MSI Board, and recognize those who are stepping down from active board involvement. To all of you --- it is not easy to be a volunteer, but I want you to know I see the wonderful gifts you provide to our members – your time and service. Thank you.

Lastly, I would like to publicly acknowledge Cassy, Sheryl, Sandra, and Becky for their hard work behind the scenes. I see so many little things they do to help our members and hope you join me in thanking them for all they do.

It continues to be a privilege to serve as Executive Director. I share a passion for my work and this sport that is makes it satisfying even when things are chaotic, but especially when we solve problems. So in that spirit, I invite you to let me know when things are going well or, if not, how we can improve next time.

As always, please contact me or a member of the staff if we can be of help, and I will look forward to seeing you on deck.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Crumstedt". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.