



## General Chair Report

2018 Fall House of Delegates Meeting

September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018

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### Year in Review

At the conclusion of my first year as General Chair, looking back, my first impression is that it doesn't seem like we accomplished much. It wasn't until I went back and reviewed the Board of Director and House of Delegates Meeting Minutes that I realized that, in fact, much \*was\* accomplished. Some major highlights include:

- Empowering the Athlete Committee
- Implementation and emphasis on Safe Sport initiatives
- Updates to Championship level meet time standards
- Continued growth in number of certified Officials
- Design and implementation of
- Implementation of electronic payment option
- Began to budget for administrative employee
- Review and update of travel reimbursement criteria
- Developed and preparing to implement a financial strategy for the LSC
- Upgrade to the LSC website
- Identified and implemented a tool to elicit feedback from our various constituencies
- Numerous updates, both new and housekeeping, to Niagara Policies and Procedures

I would like to thank all members of the Niagara Board of Directors for their efforts over the past year!

### Coming Challenges

There are three major challenges that the LSC faces in the coming year. They are the introduction of the Flex Membership category, a review of the LSC's fee structure, and, if [R-19](#) is passed at the coming US Aquatic Sports Convention, a complete overhaul of Niagara's By Laws and Policies & Procedures documents.

Because the Flex Membership category is brand new this year, the Budget Committee could only guess as to what the utilization of the category might be and what budgetary impact that would have. Our working,

*Our Mission: Supporting strong clubs, building stronger swimmers by providing opportunities from novice to elite.*

*Our Vision: Inspiring swimming for generations.*

best educated guess is that fully 1/3 of our current membership may convert to Flex Membership and the 2018 – 2019 Proposed Budget reflects that level of utilization. The fact is, however, that we just don't know what's going to happen and what the ultimate effects the LSC might feel will be.

The current LSC fee structure has been in place for many years and is in need of refreshing, having only been band-aided as needed. Times have changed and clubs are trying new things to keep the sport exciting and increase retention for our youngest athletes, costs for everything keep going up, etc. As such, a task force is in its beginning stages to review and make recommendations on the LSC's entire fee structure. The goal is to have recommendations for consideration at the 2019 Spring House of Delegates meeting.

The other challenge we face is if, as mentioned, proposition R-19 is passed at convention. Essentially, the purpose of R-19 is to create a framework that minimizes required LSC By Laws so that the LSC can respond to conditions or situations more efficiently and timely. Currently, any change to our By Laws must be approved by USA Swimming prior to the change going into effect. With the introduction of the By Laws template, however, many of the things that are currently in our By Laws could/would be moved into Niagara's Policy & Procedure document where changes can be made by vote of Niagara's House of Delegates. In the end, this will give the LSC a lot of flexibility in how we conduct our business, but it's going to require a lot of work by a lot of different people for us to get there.

## **The Big Question**

Going through the budgeting process this year was challenging given the unknowns introduced by the addition of the Flex Membership category. A lot of scrutiny was given to the LSC's expenses and hard questions were asked about the areas and levels of funding. We, as a Board, believe in the programs that the LSC provides funds for, such as Athlete travel reimbursements, Coach training, Officials travel, and others. There, too, have been a lot of good ideas brought up in regards to increasing growth and performance within the LSC, but those ideas do require further funding. So, the Big Question is:

### ***What do you want Niagara LSC to be?***

Being content with the current LSC structure, programs, and funding is fine if that's what our constituency desires. If, however, you want an LSC that supports its athletes in their efforts to be the best that they can possibly be, offers training and mentoring opportunities to its coaches so that they can help athletes to be their best, shows appreciation to the volunteers who give countless hours of their time and efforts to the sport, and recognizes individual and club accomplishments, then we need to start having the conversation on how we get there.