



Illinois Swimming Inc. Board of Directors Meeting May 5, 2021 via Zoom



General Chair Jeff Arce called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

1. Roll Call

PRESENT: Jeff Arce, Jack Yetter, Todd Capen, Will Barker, Brian Brown, Jayne Spittler, TJ Moran, Amanda Schleede, Amie Adams, Rob Emary, Pam Lowenthal, Carlos Ceja, Annabel Oliva, Jenna Krull, Aidan Puk, Savanna Huang, Michael Lawrence (observer).

ABSENT: Mark Tucci, Casey Hnatiuk.

2. Adoption of April 2021 BOD Minutes

- a. Motioner –Capen, Second – Schleede.
- b. Approved unanimously with no additional discussion.

3. Current Business & Strategic Discussion

a. Action Item from Officials Committee

Schleede updated the committee about officials participating in Wave I of Olympic Trials. Because Jack Yetter's daughter secured an OT cut, he has withdrawn his request for scholarship. She also noted that officials are being required to spend two additional days in Omaha prior to the start of Trials.

Motion: that the \$1500 originally budgeted in 2021 for our one Trials official be split between the two officials who are going Wave I to use toward their hotel room and expenses. Second Yetter. No further discussion. **Passed unanimously.**

b. Summer 2021 Championship Meets

Age Group Championships – July 22-25, 2021

Arce reported that only one bid had been received for this meet from Academy Bullets at FMC Natatorium. To date, only he, Lowenthal, Brown and Barker have seen the bid. Capen noted that Academy also will have a bid submitted Wednesday evening for Seniors at FMC that will be very similar.

Schalz reviewed the key assumptions in the proposal: maximum of 700 swimmers, no spectators, pool rental of \$26,000, facility surcharge of \$15 per athlete, plus a \$2 ISI surcharge. Previous Board discussion had suggested that ISI would provide a grant of \$20,000 to each Championship meet host to help with facility rental, and also provide the webcast.

He continued with several variance requests: a flat entry fee of \$90 per athlete for the meet (which includes the \$15 facility surcharge); consideration of bonus events, with a minimum of four splashes per swimmer in events 200m and under. Meet structure priorities to start with timed finals with no prelims, providing prelims/finals for 13-14 only with no relays, then prelims/finals for 11-14 with no relays

Academy will provide essential meet workers and some timers, the thought being that opening up timing opportunities to parents from other clubs would let them see their athletes swim. Academy would donate 50% of any net income greater than \$35,000 back to ISI to offset the grant.

Motion: Arce moved that Illinois Swimming support the Age Group meet in the sum of \$20,000. Second: Barker.

Yetter asked if regionals would not be happening in the manner that had been talked about previously. Arce confirmed that we will not support traditional regionals with financial support at this time. More discussion later in the meeting.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: Arce moved to accept the Academy Bullets Age Group bid as presented – with a \$90 per athlete entry fee and the Age Group and Performance Committees designing a meet that will allow for minimum of four splashes per swimmer. Second Yetter.

Yetter had several questions, first to clarify timed finals that would include 10&U. Second, to ask if anyone had concerns about the minimum four splashes, if we had more than 700 swimmers enter. Capen said he would be shocked if we had that many, since we have a qualifying period for times, some athletes have aged up and out. He noted that based on our old numbers, the meet could be split into three sessions, and/or done as just timed finals. Yetter recommended that there be a plan in place in case we blow by the assumption for number of swimmers. Arce said that the committee should include build-outs in the packet so we can be creative. It also was recommended that the Age Group Committee have the discretion to set the minimum number of splashes at three or four.

Arce noted that depending on state decisions, we could possibly be in Phase 5 by July 4 and will this make things different. He said we at least would be in the bridge phase. But this might be too late for planning processes.

Motion passed unanimously for ACAD to host Age Group Championships at FMC.

Yetter noted a problem in accepting the proposal as written in that entry fees are specified in the ISI Rules and Regulations. Moving to a flat entry fee per athlete violates the per event fee in the rules. Yetter reminded the group that a change or variance to R&R requires HOD approval and was not certain that an interim interpretation of the rules by the Board would be possible. Lawrence did not think that either Roberts Rules, our bylaws or rules gives the Board authority to set aside rules that exist and are set by the House of Delegates. **Arce and Yetter will investigate whether there is a workaround or if we have to call a special House of Delegates to decide the issue.**

Seniors

Yetter asked to table the discussion about a Senior proposal, as St. Charles Swim Team was preparing a bid. Timing of Senior Committee reviewing the bids was discussed, with the need to finalize and report to the membership. Capen suggested that proposals be made to the Senior Committee by sometime on Thursday, May 6; information could be shared with the Senior Committee for a vote by Sunday evening, May 9, with a special board meeting or electronic vote to follow quickly.

Regionals

Capen and Arce gave a brief rundown of their efforts to find hosts for regional championships. While they started with a list of 15 potential team hosts, they only got eight solid responses and a couple of maybes. Arce said he didn't see how we could run regionals as championships talked about at HOD. It could be that the eight sites could accommodate swimmers, but not in a championship format. The Age Group Committee and the Board will encourage teams to host meets for this level of athlete and help publicize them, but without financial support. We can't guarantee space for everyone who qualifies for a championship meet. We cannot

guarantee that every swimmer with a cut would be able to be accommodated at the sites following our championship protocols.

Lowenthal asked if there could be time standard caps so the meets would be available to regional level athletes. Arce said it was possible, Capen said he didn't know if places would fill. Arce noted that if his club hosted a meet, he would want all of his athletes to swim at it, so caps might not work. Capen also suggested that there could be a virtual meet over the two week period of regionals to see who is on top of racing at that level.

Zone Open Water and IL/WI State Meets

Capen asked if the two meets were happening. Lowenthal said they were, and both are being worked on. Wisconsin LSC is working on the meet packet as they are the sanctioning body. Spittler said it will be a scramble, having Kevin Milak back as race director is key, and will set the model for the state meet.

c. **Discussion of USA Swimming Proposed Legislation**

The rest of the meeting was devoted to a free-ranging discussion of the proposed legislation put out by USA Swimming's working groups to address changes in governance required by the *Empowering Olympic, Paralympic and Amateur Athlete Act* signed into law October 30, 2020 and updated USOPC Bylaws. To remain compliant with the USOPC Bylaws and federal law, these changes involve the make-up of the national Board of Directors, National Committees and the national House of Delegates. USA Swimming stakeholders have been asked for feedback over the past few months and have been updating their proposals accordingly. Bill Schalz chaired the HOD Working Group and was able to present information and answer questions during the discussion.

The major impact of the updated Bylaws and the law is that Athlete Representation on NGB Boards and designated committees (Rules & Regulations and National Team Steering) must be 33.3% and those athletes must be 10 year or 10 year+ athletes.

- A 10-year Athlete Representative means an athlete who has represented the U.S. in the 10 years prior at a delegation event (Olympics, Pan Am Games, World Championships).
- A 10 Year + Athlete means an athlete who has, at any point but not within the 10 years prior to election/selection, met the definition of 10 Year Athlete representative.

To meet these new requirements, the size and make-up of the HOD and Committees must change. Under the most recent proposal, 330 HOD members will be displaced and not be voting delegates in September. Fifty percent of that number is coaches. The HOD is reduced by 1/3.

Key Concerns and Issues:

- Are there enough 10 year athletes to participate in governance and will they be interested?
 - Schalz shared there are about 215 10 year athletes
 - Some shared that they never knew they could get involved and are determined to reach out to grass roots athletes. Programs to do this have been discussed.
 - New proposals call for 130 athletes to the HOD
- Can the 10 Year Athlete Definition be changed?
 - Only the newly required Athlete Advisory Council (AAC) can make a request and is not inclined to do this right now. Suggestions to include more meets (like the old finishing in top 50% at Olympic Trials).
- Athlete Advisory Council (AAC) must be 10 year athletes. On the interim AAC, our three athlete Board members and two USOPC representatives sit on this Council.

- This makes our representation pro athlete focused, instead of grassroots.
 - Noted that USOPC cares about Olympic level and that is their focus.
- Athletes are feeling disenfranchised, that their voice is being taken away and given to 10 year athletes who may not be aware of or represent their grassroots issues and concerns.
 - Schalz said there has been a lot of athlete input in discussions, and that athlete leaders nationally and in LSCs are happy with the proposals.
 - AEC has all members of their committee at HOD to allow greater representation of 2 year athletes.
 - Proposed Zone athletes are selected by Zone athlete reps and presented to Zone Directors.
 - Two year athlete vote being exchanged for the 10 year athlete by law, with concern after the Larry Nassar incident in gymnastics. Law wants athletes to have a strong mature voice in their sport.
 - Arce commented that theoretically we could use one of our four HOD votes on an athlete.
- LSCs also feel disenfranchised as their representation decreases dramatically, especially larger LSCs.
 - LSCs should retain role in governance and determining the destiny of our membership.
- How do larger, more diverse LSCs get proper representation?
 - LSC votes assigned to a coach, General Chair (30 coaches/29 not).
 - 18 of largest LSCs get a second coach vote.
 - LSC coach directors must be on LSC BOD.
 - LSC Discretionary Appointment – anybody but coaches.
 - Illinois represents 7.5% of the membership but only has four votes.
- Coaches feel disenfranchised as well.
- Do all three areas (HOD, Committee Structure and Board of Directors) need to be resolved by June 30?
 - Process feels rushed, especially HOD structure, especially with attempting to get back into the water and Olympic Trials.
 - Lawrence stated that the only thing that needs to be done is to meet the 12 provisions of the law and USOPC bylaws. Nothing says we need to restrict coach representation or raise the profile of our elite athletes. The HOD determines the structure of the HOD. Wonders if something else is driving the rush and specificity.
- What's the consequence of non-compliance?
 - Decertified as NGB?
 - USOPC will make the NGB compliant.
 - They don't care, it's the law and needs to be followed. Federal government has stepped in.
- We are a unique NGB, with grass roots membership as opposed to others that only require their elite athletes to join.
 - Lawrence noted that other NGBs have smaller HODs and Boards so this is not as big an issue.
 - No one knew if other NGBs are already in compliance.
 - Arce asked if we lobbied as the bill was being discussed. Schalz said several members of USA staff spoke before Congress.
- Is the size of the HOD right?
 - To accommodate the requirement of one-third athletes, the Working Group arrived at a 240 member HOD.
 - Now also will be one-third coaches

Arce shared that Illinois Swimming led a group discussion of the five largest LSCs in regard to all of this. The group felt that there are certain things we need to be in compliance with by June and others that can be dealt with later. We have sent one correspondence to the working groups, as did Florida Gold Coast, with specific recommendations. Lawrence noted that the strength of FG's proposal was their recommendations and suggestions.

4. Next Meeting: **Monday, May 10 at 8pm** to discuss proposal for Senior Champs only. Regular BOD on Wednesday, June 9 at 7pm.
5. Adjournment: Motion–Capen, second–Barker. Unanimous approval at 8:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jayne Spittler
ISI Secretary

APPROVED