



NEW
ENGLAND
SWIMMING

NEW ENGLAND SWIMMING BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 14, 2021 via hybrid

Minutes, approved by the Board of Directors on October 19, 2021

Board Members Present (12): Betsy Russell (UN), Matt Soska (UN), Ellie Soska (CRA), Nadine Johnson (UN), Samantha Brabrack (SOLO), Chris Sheppard (CS), Scott Ellis (UVAC), Gretchen Turner (USC), Brian Crawford (ESC), Anne Kaufman (UN), Kenzie Driscoll (CS), Bill Glass (BGSC)
Ex-Officio: Alessandro Eramo (BYB)
Board Members Absent: Ray Grant (BGSC)

Non Board Members Present (10): Carol Healey (UN), Lisa Black-Sholduko (UN), Ken Galica (UN), Jenelle Dolan (UN), Eva Frazier, Kitty Frazier, Jonathan Castaldo, Patrick Hunter (UN), Patrick Johnston, Meg Feran (SOLO),

1. Welcome - Matt-

There is a full meeting agenda today. If you have other business items that will take more than 5 minutes we will table them for next meeting agenda items.

3. Consent agenda

Secretary: Previous Meeting Minutes

Athletes

Treasurer

Registration

Senior Committee

Age Group Committee

Calendar

Officials Committee

Coach Committee

DEI

Safe Sport

Safety

Governance

Office

Consent agenda- Requests to pull reports:

Samantha - General Chair report

Nadine- Water Safety Day report

Matt- athlete report

Nadine- Registrations report and Treasurer's report

Sam- General Chair report: Please note that the Athlete Executive Committee (AEC) list in this report is incorrect and the corrected AEC list is in the athlete report. It is incorrect on the General Chair report.

Matt- Please note that Ellie Soska's team affiliation is now CRA, not CRIM.

Nadine- Water Safety Day report: To confirm that in the WSD report submitted by Carol it was noted that there were 7 volunteers in 2019 however the correct number of volunteers was 38. There is a peaked interest in volunteering for such events which will help us for future events.

Matt- it was a fantastic opportunity for the LSC to support underprivileged communities and it was a really positive event. It was a really rewarding experience and made the LSC look good to everyone involved. It was a very compelling event.

Matt- Athletes Report: What are the specific volunteer needs for the Athlete Summit and the Rise of Hunger segment.

November 6, 2021 1:45-2:45 Rise of Hunger set up (10 needed)

November 6 & 7, 2021 12:15 Board Meet and Greet (We hope you can all stop by!)

November 7, 2021 4:15 for 45 minutes to pack up Rise of Hunger supplies (10 needed)

Nadine- Treasurer Report Registration report: Inquired about what money came out of the Priscilla funds? Carol responded that it was money for the scholarships as well as the postage for shipping the Priscilla Project items to the recipients.

Nadine inquired about the timing of the office open house chats. Moriah responded that we have had success at 11am and so wanted to stick with that time. Adjustments may be made as needed.

4. Appointments to the Board and Committees

Matt appointed Jesse Ford WSY as the new DEI chair.

5. Governance Committee

Governance Committee Presentation to Board of Directors

Code of Conduct

- USA Swimming Article 304- Applies to all members of USA Swimming- High-level, serious matters
- New England Swimming- Applies to swimmers, coaches, officials, and clubs- About being a good citizen in the swimming world

Conflict of Interest Statement

- All NE Swimming board members must sign
- Must avoid conflicts of interest in fact and appearance
- Act without personal gain

- Must disclose- publicly, at time of discussion- a conflict of interest in fact or in appearance
- When a conflict of interest- in fact or in appearance- is present- may not participate in the evaluation or voting on the issue—i.e. may not participate in discussion or decision-making

Professional Email Conduct

- Communications to be professional and concise
- Avoid mass emails
- Email should be used for items of a simpler nature
- Difficult conversations/personal matters/items with the potential to be controversial should be discussed in-person or via phone- When in doubt, pick up the phone
- Inappropriate to dominate a discussion- role is to consider the issues at hand and make the decision best for the LSC

Other Business

- Submit to General Chair, preferably week in advance
- Meeting agenda needs to accurately reflect discussion topics so that our membership may be aware and participate as desired
- Items not submitted in advance may be tabled until next meeting

Consent Agenda

- Submit in a timely manner- by secretary's deadline
- Even if no report, must confirm "no report" by deadline
- Consent agenda is public and a part of the agenda- transparency to our membership so that they may know what is being discussed and choose to attend if desired

Strategic Calendar

- To be included in agendas moving forward- summary of key action items
- Functioning as a strategic board at meetings is contingent upon work outside of meetings and meeting these key deadlines

Presented by Patrick Hunter, member of the Governance Committee

- Housekeeping items:
 1. All of us are held to the code of conduct. There is the USA Swimming code of conduct. Additionally we have an LSC code of conduct.
 2. Conflict of interest. All board members agreed to it. Anything we are doing is without personal gain. Being open about potential conflict of interest. Our professional email contact. Avoid mass emails. Harder conversations are done one on one face to face or on the phone. Making sure email communication that includes large amounts of people is always professional. We are here to have a

healthy discussion to benefit the LSC. When we are debating items we need to keep this in mind.

- Board Meeting Prep and Responsibilities:
 1. Business item requests for the agenda need to be sent to the Chair and Secretary at least a week before the meeting. Our membership should be able to look at our agenda to see what will be discussed and covered at the meeting. If a topic is not submitted in advance it may get tabled to the next meeting.
 2. Consent agendas also need to be submitted in advance so that members have time to read them and the BOD participants can have time to prepare themselves before the meeting.

- We will start including strategic plan items and actions on the board meeting minutes to ensure that committees, and the Board as a whole, are staying on track.

6. **Office**, presented by Carol Healey

USA Convention is no longer a term. It is called the Annual Business Meeting you must register ahead of time in order to gain access to meetings. Important to be on Eastern Zone meeting 6pm Sunday Sept 19.

Top Ten update/Awards Banquet - The banquet is currently closed with 450 people RSVP'd. People were asked to remove a guest to make room for more athletes. The hotel and the town of Needham do not have a mask policy but we will encourage participants to wear a mask. Refunds will not be given after Thursday 9/16 at noon. . There will be a BINGO table, certificates, etc. We could use help from Board Members and volunteers.

MISC: Yearly calendar- items to be done on time in the strategic calendar. Gives outlines for committees with timelines. September is a busy month and it is important to stay on track to ensure all items are completed.

7. Board Calendar: Carol showed a sample of the calendar for the Board to refer to with tasks due that month.

8. Water Safety Days Follow Up and Future

The 5 Water Safety Days were discussed. Turnout was excellent and volunteers were excited and engaged. Ideas were tossed around for next year such as holding some starting in the

spring, at inside locations and in all NE Swim states. Nadine mentioned there are state grants available up to \$475,000 to organizations associated with the Massachusetts alliance.

Sam suggested creating a working committee now to focus on Water Safety Days for 2022. Matt will speak with Ray and Jesse to get this started.

9. Technical

Patrick Johnstone mentioned that the Technical committee had been asked at the last meeting to start to build a social media policy. This has been passed along to the Governance Committee to be addressed at the next Board Meeting.

Patrick Johnstone- See attached policies presented

Proposal #1. Host teams must have completed the Safe Sport Recognition Program before submitting a bid or requesting a sanction for a New England Swimming meet. This policy will become effective on February 1st, 2022.

Patrick asked to propose this be approved. Matt seconded. Open for discussion. Lisa- how many meet hosts would this affect? If it were put into policy today. Carol's assessment is 4-5 teams. Anne said some are in process. Matt is asking if this time frame (Feb 2022) is too short to expect teams to complete the SSRP. Anne- there are resources available to all of these teams. This could be accomplished by the end of the year if the teams are motivated to do so. Chris agrees with Anne. Betsy- if our goal is to have everyone SSPP, and it is. The process is doable. 6 months is plenty of time. Carol- teams have been given a heads up. Patrick Hunter- to Anne- have other's LSC put this into place? It is under discussion but don't know who has committed. Matt- are there other points of view that are contrary to this proposal. Patrick Hunter- how does this impact some of our college teams that host meets at their college that does not have an athlete base but they host meets.

This would be the first step in passing other initiatives to encourage/require teams to become SSRP.

Matt - motion to cut off debate. All in favor.

Motion in favor of motion #1 - all in favor. 0 abstentions.

Proposal #2.

Chris- make a motion to scratch the end of the sentence "Until the end of the session." Betsy seconded. All in favor. Edit to meet announcement as well.

*Allow coaches or swimmers to request a Legal Split on an initial distance of an individual event after the race has been swum.
This proposal would remove the requirement for the coach to have a timer(s) present on the lane in advance of the swim to obtain a Legal Split for an initial distance when electronic timing is in use. The AO would have the discretion to confirm or deny the request if the available evidence suggests that the split provided by the timing system is invalid. Requests for backstroke Legal Split for backstroke would still require advance notice to ensure that a legal backstroke finish is performed. Coaches are encouraged to have a timer(s) in position to ensure a legal time in the event of a timing system failure.
Legal splits must be requested by the end of the session.*

Changes to Meet Announcement Template

LEGAL SPLITS – Individual Events: Preferably, legal splits should be requested before the event, by a coach, using a legal split form (available from the Control Table) and the requesting party should supply an additional timer(s) on the lane for the split, if necessary, to ensure an accurate time. (1 timer with touchpad timing, 3 timers without touchpad timing). Timers must be positioned over the lane at the end of the racing course. Optionally, a legal split may be requested after the event ~~but before the end of the session~~ using a legal split form when using a fully automatic timing system. The Admin Official has discretion to either grant or deny the request after reviewing the available evidence. Backstroke legal splits must be requested in advance to ensure a legal finish.

All those in favor of Proposal # 2 as amended. Proposal 2 carries unanimously.

Proposal #3 Calendar Protection:

This would go into effect 2022-2023 short course season.

Patrick: I make a motion that the board discuss proposal #3.

Chris- this would allow a 12 year old with a senior cut to decide which meet to attend. It is a coach decision. Jonathan- there is inconsistent information in our policies as to which kids are affected by protected weekends.

Matt- Chris what is your perspective as the Senior performance chair?

Brian- wasn't this the case years ago? Carol- yes we did allow some meets during the Dec seniors and it caused lots of problems so it went protected again. It has been going back and forth. Matt- it is not inconsistent - it is fluid.

Matt- does this undermine our Senior meet in any way? Chris S- no. What will the next discussion be- why can't I take my 13/14 year olds? Why can't I take other kids? I think it is important that our LSC maintain the integrity of our championship meets. We should not be giving a trophy at every meet our LSC holds. Coaches will do whatever they think is in the best interest of their whole team. We have teams that don't choose to participate in our championships/meets. Do we feel an obligation to provide for those teams? I don't- I think we as an LSC need to provide the best championship meets we can offer so that teams want to come to them. Why was the line at 12 drawn? And not at 10 or 14? I don't personally see an issue with this.

Patrick J- the 12 and under line was because there will not be many 12 year olds with senior cuts. Striking a balance. Why SCY meet and not LCM meet. Mostly because the requests have been in December for that meet weekend. It is a mid- season taper.

Betsy- the senior meet is usually the week before Christmas and then there is a two- week break. So it is a long time with no meet for younger kids. 300--500 kids make the senior meet. Out of 8000 athletes.

Brian- I agree with what Chris said. And if facilities have the opportunity to run a meet maybe they should be given the opportunity. I think there needs to be more clarity before we vote in it. - wording. I think for December it would work but not for other months.

Jonathan- is there a way we can offer meets to swimmers that don't qualify for Seniors?

Chris- no- we had that before and it was a nightmare and that is why we have such a hard and fast policy now. I think we should set up a committee to look at this further.

Matt- Let's finish the vote exactly as presented. If it passes it does. If it does not we will send it back to technical.

All in favor- 0

All opposed - all

Patrick J- what do we do now? This has already taken up a lot of time. So at what point do we stop? What is the philosophy?

Matt- the question that is on my mind is the number of athletes in age groups that would be affected. It would be helpful to understand how many 11, 12, 13, 14 year olds qualify for seniors over the past few years?

Patrick- on the topic of philosophy- as Chris said earlier- there are teams that do not come to our championship . It is not on the LSC to offer something for those teams. The championships are given lots of stipends, support, etc. If a team wants to seek a sanction or go off and do something else- how do we stop them? What is our philosophy?

Any additional guidance we have for Patrick?

Proposal #4:

Patrick- I move that the board take up proposal #4. Betsy 2nd. Open for discussion.

This would go into effect immediately.

Discussion about the rise in COVID cases and what message does this proposal send. Are we back to normal?

Patrick H- This proposal says that a team can ask for a waiver. I think that this proposal covers us in larger meets that we are offering but there is the option to ask for a waiver.

Betsy- I am concerned when the Meet Director and the AO are the same person. They are two very different and big jobs.

Matt- any other perspectives?

Matt- everyone in favor of the proposal say I.

In favor - 2

Opposed - 7

Abstain- 3

The proposal has been defeated. Matt- advice to technical is that it is a little premature. I think it should be reconsidered once we have more data on the Delta Variant.

10. Meet Mask Policy Discussion

Chris S: The delta variant is around and it is unfair to ask meet hosts to pull out under 12 swimmers. I think we should instate a mask policy at all of our meets. Instead of leaving it up to facilities to mandate. I think that is in our best interest to get ahead of this and in the best interest so that we are protecting our kids and families.

Alessandro- I like this idea. It protects all of our members. What details- anyone allowed in facility wear maks and swimmers wear mass when not swimmer.

Betsy- who will regulate this and monitor this?

Chris- coaches would be responsible for their teams.

Matt - the concern I have is the reinforcement and repercussions. We as an LSC- who is the mask police? These meets will be on zoom. We are not in any position to enforce it.

Jonathan- I think that it does take a village to enforce this. We have these policies in our facility and it is hard to regulate.

Matt- at meets meet directors will need to regulate the policy.

Carol- Different meets have different policies about masks. It will be stated at the beginning of the meet announcement if it is required.

Matt- I would like to make an amendment that the enforcement falls on the meet director.

Betsy- seconded. Chris- aye. Opposed- 0

Motion amendment. Require masks at all NE swimming meets at all indoor meets. No time limit because we can revisit as needed. In effect for SCY season.

Jenelle- the AO and the meet director are allowed to be the same person but now you are adding a mask policy onto the meet director is one person. Chris- use the language Meet Host- and not Meet Director.

What type of language is in this- do they take them off at the blocks. On the bleachers? What is the language?

Patrick Hunter- The information is all in the meet announcement. And it should be clearly disclosed in the meet announcement. What good does it do to come up with an unenforceable policy when we already have meets that are approved for the season.

Matt- I think we need to table this to the next meeting. We don't have the language in line now.

Betsy- instead of having it be a policy can we just make a statement? NE Swimming strongly encourages all participants to wear masks at all times.

Sam- Athlete perspective- I agree with Chris. It is important to err on the side of caution. To protect our younger swimmers that are not vaccinated.

Matt- in the interest of time- I think that a strong statement encouraging meet hosts to require masks for all participants and spectators. We could put together a strong statement and send it out in a day or two. A policy will take a lot longer. The world could change a lot in 4 weeks. But let's revisit at the next meeting. Matt will take the action of drafting a statement. Please let me know if you want to be part of that process.

11. DIA Convention

Sam asked for funding to attend the Diversity in Aquatics convention. I asked Sam to put together a proposal that will go forward to the finance committee. Diya and I are both athlete fellows with DIA- we work with TruClusion and DIA. We were asked to attend this convention to present some workshops. TruClusion asked us to ask our LSC's if there was any funding to send the athletes to this convention.

[DIA National Convention Presentation to NES BoD](#)

Matt- Sam- you answered any questions we would have had. We will move this to the finance committee. The finance committee will make a recommendation back to the board.

12. Other Business: none

Motion to adjourn - 9:49pm.

Matt-

Seconded Betsy- all in favor