

NEW ENGLAND SWIMMING BOARD OF DIRECTORS Minutes

Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at 7 PM via ZOOM

Approved by the NE Board of Directors on July 13, 2021

Board Member Present (14): Matt Soska (UN), Bill Glass (BGSC), Gretchen Turner (USC), Scott Ellis (UVAC), Sam Brabeck (SOLO), Ray Grant (BGSC), Ellie Soska (CRIM), Lauren Riedel (PHX) Brian Crawford (ESC), Issy Hiller (UVAC), Rhi Jeffrey (ATLA), Nadine Johnson-Jesionek (UN), Betsy Russell (UN), Anne Kaufman (UN)

Non-Board Members Present (13): Alessandro Eramo (BYB), Carol Healy, Moriah Tyrrel, Jenelle Dolan, Lisa Black-Sholudko, Patrick Hunter, Noam Reinhorn, Patrick Johnstone, Kenzie Driscoll, Ken Galica, Meg Feran, Peter Liu (MWYS), Jon Castaldo (CRA), Kenzie Driscoll (CS)

2. Consent Agendas

Treasurer's report

Carol shared Treasurer's report: We are up about \$8,000 this month which is mostly due to registrations. So we are starting to see a slow uptick.

Secretary report

Senior Chair

Age Group Chair

Officials Chair

Safe Sport Chair

Operational Risk Chair

- Lisa and Ken looked at all incident reports and found that most injuries happened during warm ups with kids getting in and out of the pool. The OR committee will submit a formal proposal to change the guidelines for entering and exiting the pool during warmups.
- The number of drownings in the news seems like a lot lately. Can we help send out info about lessons? Where can kids get lessons?
- Scott Ellis- could we put something on our website about where to find swim lessons
- Matt S- this will tie in with DEI, but I think swim lessons and learn to swim is a very important aspect of NE Swimming and we can do more as an LSC.

Diversity & Inclusion Chair

- The athlete committee posted the APPI video and it is on social media
- TruClusion workshop did not have as much participation as hoped, but the people that did attend found it very helpful and informative. Reflection surveys will go out this week. Anyone in the LSC can fill out the survey. We hope to have another workshop in a year or two to assess our progress as an LSC.
 - Matt S- as part of TruClusion there would be in-person interviews- when will those take place? Lauren will reach out to TruClusion to set those up.
- DEI committee is talking about how to be more effective as a committee and discussing strategic plans for the committee. The Athlete DEI committee will have more of a role with the larger DEI committee.
 - Matt S- we would need to work with Governance Committee about change of committee status. It needs to be something that goes through the Board of Directors. It would need to be done formally.
- Applications will go out soon for athletes to join the committees.

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Coach's Report

Rhi welcomed Alessandro as the new Jr Coach Rep. She will stay on as Sr Coach Rep

Calendar Report

Athlete Report

- 15 athletes have been selected to the Athlete committee. They will begin their terms on 9/1.
 - Matt S. - We will take the Athlete subcommittee list and vote them in at the September Board meeting.
- Kenzie Driscoll is on the call and is the new Jr Athlete Rep. She won by two votes in a run-off election.

Zones Report: None

Governance Task Force: None

3. Appointments to Board and Governance Committee

Matt S would like to appoint Gretchen Turner to serve Rick O's remaining term as an At-Large member. No objections: Beginning now Gretchen has a vote. He would like to appoint Patrick Hunter to the Governance Committee. No objections. Patrick Hunter is now an official member of the Governance Committee.

4. Committee on Boarding Part 1

Noam Reinhorn-

- Each board meeting we are going to spend about 15 minutes on On-Boarding as a Board. Three main duties of a Board Member: Duty of Care, Duty of Loyalty, the Duty of Obedience.
- Next meeting we will talk about Committees and the roles of committee chairs. Please invite your committee members to the next board meeting so that all can be involved and included.
- We will attach the document to the minutes of this meeting.
- Matt S? Any topics you would like governance to address at the next meeting?
- Nadine- This is a great start. Thanks Noam. Can you give examples of each of the three duties of the Board as listed above?
- Matt S- I think we need to have our committee meetings become more transparent- agendas and announcements ahead of time, formal minutes, publicly announced, etc. We can all do better in making meetings more accessible to all.

5. Election of Junior Athlete Reps and Selection of Athlete Executive Committee

Sam's mention of the athletes above covers this.

6. Eastern Zone Meeting Report

- Carol- Zones: The Eastern Zone is going forward with hosting Zones. We are working on logistics of selecting the zone team and keeping it all under budget.

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- Matt- We voted on where the next EZ meeting will be. The next meeting would be virtual or in-person in FL with virtual option. NE all voted for virtual in order to save LSC money to use on athletes, etc. We lost. There will be an in-person meeting in Ft. Lauderdale but NE Swimming will most likely be all virtual.
- No date of Eastern Zone meeting as of yet.

7. Office Report

Carol: The Marriott is reserved for Sept 26 for the top 10 banquet. Hotel is still having functions now that all restrictions have been lifted. Can we get Board opinion on what to do as an LSC? We are unable to change the date to April because of the many weddings that have been pushed back a year. Given that we did not have a banquet last year, it would be good to have it but should we limit guests?

Matt S: We need to make a formal decision tonight.

Do we want to hold it in Sept and if yes, is there a format for it?

Bill Glass- we have \$15,000 in the budget for it.

Carol- That is a lot lower than what we net as an expense. We would have to do some significant planning and less of a subsidy.

Sam B- As an athlete, I think we should move forward with hosting the banquet. It can be a personal decision as to if athletes and families want to attend. It would be disappointing to miss it for another year in a row.

Ray: Made a motion that NES host a Top 10 Banquet in person in September with amendments to budget. Seconded. Discussion open:

Ray: State of MA has lifted restrictions. It is time for us to get back to normal and provide opportunities to our swimmers and families. I am not in favor of limiting. We should go with facility limits.

Jon C: I agree with Ray and everything he said.

Lisa: I agree. I think it should be held and two guests should be allowed. If we change pricing we need to make sure to include subsidies for outreach swimmers.

Matt S: Motion to cut off debate.

Matt S: Motion has been made and seconded. Passed Unanimously

Carol: Summer Championship Meets are just about all posted. Waiting for some safety protocols from SSA for 11/12 meet. Coaches please check out the information. We sent out a survey to teams today to gauge how many 10 and under swimmers will attend the 10 and under meet.

8. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Strategic Discussion

Matt S: Want to make sure the LSC is alighted and cohesive. At the National DEI committee meeting Lauren made a comment about how the DEI budget had been cut and that the committee was not involved. This was tough for me, as the whole budget process was thorough and previewed by the committee and voted on by the board. This was hard for me to hear at this meeting, as my feeling was that the budget process was extremely thorough. Do other people feel the same way about the budget process? Do we need to change it up?

Lauren: My concern was more about the strategic plan. And I wrote the strategic plan in line with the budget. We were one of the first LSC's to submit LEAP goals and we did not have clear DEI guidelines from USA Swimming yet. When the budget was not approved the way I wrote it, it makes it hard to complete the

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strategic plan without the funds. So my concern is that we cannot accomplish the LEAP goals now that the budget has been cut. In regards to the budget I did have a long discussion with Bill Glass about the budget. In the future could we do budget requests a bit differently. Each chair should discuss the budget with the finance committee before the finance committee votes on it all.

Matt S: The part that I had a problem with is that everyone from USA Swimming was under the impression that you were not included in the process when in fact the budget was voted on twice by the board, including you, and that the finance committee had an open meeting which you did not attend and FC only made a recommendation. I thought that the way it was presented it made the LSC look inefficient.

Nadine: As a formal DEI chair there was a time when the committee chairs did meet with the finance committee about budgets. I remember meeting with the Finance committee to talk through the budget process which was helpful. This would be helpful before budget goes to the board for approval. We could do better with onboarding for new members to the board.

Matt S: I want this to be something we can use to move forward and create new systems if needed.

Ray: To speak- Bill, Carol and I did meet with Lauren before the budget was presented to the Board. We gathered information from Lauren. We went over the items she was presenting. When we did have the finance meeting we were able share. Once the FC made the decisions, I emailed each committee chair under my organization to notify them that their budgets were being presented in a different form than they were submitted. There was time to submit questions and concerns. Committee Chairs were not blindsided by the budget at the Board Meeting.

Jon C: To clarify the budget was modified at the BOD meeting and then the BOD presents it to the HOD meeting for approval. Anyone can raise a concern to submit to the board. The committee chairs are the operational arm, they don't set strategies. That is the job of the BOD. The BOD was designed this way.

Nadine: Strategic Plan should have been done through the board. Not on their own. If no strategic plan done by the board how does it fit?

Matt S: I can't say that it does. When LEAP objectives and process are not wrapped around achievement. This is about thinking about what we want to get accomplished. We do the best we can with the resources we have.

Jon C: I agree with everything Matt said. I think we can use this as a learning experience for moving forward. How can we learn from this and move on so that this feeling does not happen again.

Matt S: Agreed. I think the Governance Committee plays a role in this. We are taking small steps along the way.

Lauren: I did not ask for it because I did not feel like it would get supported. I would like more feedback as to what my role is as the DEI chair and what my job is. I feel like the things I think this position is is different from what you think it is.

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Matt S: It is important to hear your words that you don't think you are supported. We have to understand and find common ground. We may not all agree to the same DEI programs but we need to continue with. And we need to work together to find the common ground. For instance, I did not think the Tru Clusion was a great return on the money we spent and that was my opinion after attending, so we need to move on and learn from it and decide on programs for all.

Bill G: The budget process was quick. Moving forward we could spread the process out to give more time. My sincere hope is that we have opened the door to budget adjustments as we move through the year and more income comes in.

Rhi: I did receive an email from Ray a few days before my budget and I was told there would be lots of cuts. I am new to the process as well. That is what I asked a lot of questions about the BOD meeting. I feel a bit insulted on being told that I don't follow up my words with actions. I would rather have spent the \$7200 one bringing an athlete in and doing clinics. I feel like the DEI budget was much bigger than other departments. Can we do other activities that don't cost money. Let's bring the DEI committee into some of the athlete committees. I think we can be smarter about how we are planning and programming.

Patrick Hunter: To echo Matt and Rhi: Support takes a lot of forms. I have a lot of respect for what Lauren has done to create initiatives for the DEI committee. There are a lot of things that go into a budget. We are a competitive swimming organization. We need to look at our mission and spend money based on that. We have to remember who is giving us the money (registrations, etc) and the money needs to go back to our members. Just because there is not a line item in the budget it does not mean that it is not supported by the BOD.

Nadine: Rhi- I hear you. You have always been there and supportive. What folks need to hear is what Lauren feels. It is not at anyone. We need to ask ourselves how am I contributing? Her frustration is with not know how to move and then being told no. Matt - thanks for this discussion. This is helpful. We can move forward from this and we need to expect to disagree. At the end of the day is about the bigger picture of NE Swimming.

Matt S: Thank you all for participating. This is a good use of our time and I would like to have the initial discussion about what we would like DEI to be so that we can all participate in its future. Two things on my mind are: The idea of water safety in general and swim lessons more specifically. Secondly: Sport expanding. I would like to see NE Swimming thrive into the future. We need to buck the trend of athletes leaving the sport. We need to expand the populations we recruit into the sport. How do we lead by example? I would like to open the floor to more ideas and comments.

Rhi: I think the water safety thing is important. Portsmouth, NH opening pools but not offering lessons. Why? Other areas near us have been holding lessons all year. Why aren't cities offering lessons? My city is doing nothing to help. Maybe a letter from the Board to cities about the dangers of this? Supporting lessons?

Jon C: We do have a swim lesson program. We are about to start an outreach to get more kids into our lessons. We need to get out and educate more. Getting lifeguards right now is really hard as well. This is a big issue everywhere. To find people to staff these pools and keep everyone staff is getting very hard.

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Jenelle: Should we expand on Water Safety Days? Could we encourage more coaches to get involved and help out with that? If we could just include one person in a water safety day it would make a difference.

Carol: Are there days for Water Safety Days so that we can plan?

Sam B: A Saturday in August for Water Safety Day. Any help we can get would be awesome. Once we have days set up. It would be important to have that support.

Nadine: Water Safety Day is a day we invite kids/families from committees in to a pool in which we have stations set up. The kids move through the stations such as bobbing, floating, boats, etc. The challenge is the weather. Last time we did it it rained so people did not show up. It needs to be moveable. The purpose is to ideally understand not to fight the water. How to float and survive.

Jenelle: Nadine- since you have held these before do you have a checklist? Maybe some local clubs could run their own water safety days all on the same day?

Nadine: I want to be sympathetic to the families that have just lost a loved one because of a drowning/ water. So I want us to be careful and strategic about how we are planning and reaching out.

Matt: I want this to be the beginning of the discussion. Lauren, please think on this and bring it back to the next meeting about more clarity to these and the role. Thanks Lauren and Nadine.

9. Other

Matt- Any other business? No.

Next meeting:

July 13th 7:00 Pm

Matt Soska: Motion To adjourn

Scott Ellis: Second

Meeting adjourned 8:51pm.