

Gulf LMSC Meeting
Wednesday, July 22, 2020
Virtual Meeting via Zoom Conference

Attendance:

Officers and Committee Chairs:

Kris Wingenroth (Chair), Mark Hahn (Treasurer), Karlene Denby (Secretary, Newsletter, Long Distance), Bruce Williams (Membership Coordinator), Stacey Eicks (Top Ten Recorder), Nicole Christensen (Webmaster, Zone Chair), Bruce Rollins (Coaches), Herb Schwab (Officials)

Team Representatives: Linda Visser (COOG), John Keen (COOGS)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m.

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes from the Gulf LMSC meeting of June 17, 2020 were approved by an email vote and have been posted to the Gulf LMSC website.

Officers' Reports

- Chairwoman (Kris Wingenroth) – no report
- Vice Chair (Kevin Lunsford) – not present, no report
- Secretary (Karlene Denby) – no report
- Treasurer (Mark Hahn) – Mark reported that there has been very little financial activity over the past several months. Total income for June was \$302.98 (May registrations of \$238.00, CD interest of \$61.48, and 1 transfer fee of \$3.50). There have been no expenses incurred in May or June.
- Membership Coordinator/Registrar (Bruce Williams) – Bruce provided a registration report through July 22, 2020. A copy is attached to the minutes of this meeting. Bruce advised that he doesn't charge a transfer fee when swimmers have registered with the wrong team by mistake.

Committee Reports

- Sanction Chair (Kevin Lunsford) – Not present, no report
- Top Ten Recorder (Stacey Eicks) – no report
- Communications (Karlene Denby) – no report
- Webmaster (Nicole Christensen) – no report.
- Coaches (Bruce Rollins) – no report
- Fitness (Rebecca Tompkins) – not present, no report
- Officials (Herb Schwab) – no report
- Open Water (Karlene Denby) – no report

South Central Zone Report

- South Central Zone (Nicole Christensen) – Nicole advised that the South Central Zone Championship Meet is officially canceled and is listed as canceled on the USMS website. Meet director, Susan Ingraham, and Northeast ISD representatives agreed that, in the interest of safety, the cancellation was the prudent action. Nicole also reported on the July 21st Zoom meeting of the USMS LMSC Development Committee. The committee passed two motions: (1) a name change for the former Dixie Zone to the Southeast Zone, and (2) the inclusion of three Missouri counties (Jasper, McDonald, and Newton counties) in the Arkansas LMSC. These three counties were previously part of the Missouri Valley LMSC. Missouri Valley LMSC was on board with the change.

Old Business

- Virtual Fitness Activities (Bruce Rollins) – Bruce reported that 28 swimmers had signed up for the Gulf Fitness Fanatics virtual fitness challenge. While Bruce was a bit disappointed with the participation level, he said that many of those that did sign up expressed appreciation of and enthusiasm for the Gulf LMSC sponsored event. Bruce estimated that the cost of putting on the event would be under \$200. The bulk of the participants were unattached swimmers, and members of Katy Aquatics and Woodlands Masters.
- Kris provided an update on the activities of the USMS Legislation Committee. Three significant motions were passed by the committee: (1) acceptance of the \$60 universal registration fee for 2021, (2) exclusion of past presidents, with the exception of the immediate past president, from the USMS Board of Directors, and (3) reduction of the club transfer time to 35 days from 60 days with a limitation of two transfers per year and a case-by-case hardship exemption for an additional transfer.

New Business

- USMS COVID-19 Relief Fund – Kris provided a brief overview of the fund and how it will be administered. The fund is for clubs, not individual swimmers, who have financial need due to the COVID-19 pandemic. USMS has provided a form to request funds. These would be matching funds, meaning that the LMSC would need to provide club funding which the National Office would then match. As the Gulf LMSC opted in for the \$60 universal registration fee in 2020, USMS would match up to \$10/swimmer for Gold Level clubs and \$6/swimmer for all other clubs. In order for a club to qualify for funding, the club must have a tax ID number. Funds can be requested until December 31, 2020. There need not be a rush to request funds as there is a grant pool available for each LMSC. USMS provided several examples of additional expenses that clubs may incur during the pandemic such as: shortfalls in cash and reserves due to pool closures, funds needed to rent additional lane space or a different facility, funds to hire additional coaches, and funds to covered associated additional costs like lifeguards and insurance.

USMS does not have an avenue to assist individual members in need. Kris has sent an email to the National Office about assistance for individual swimmers, but has not yet received a response.

Nicole has administered a survey to coaches and team reps to establish the status of Gulf clubs and their needs during the pandemic. The survey was sent to 38 individuals. To date, Nicole has received 15 responses. The survey results currently do not indicate a significant need for financial relief for Gulf clubs. Of the respondents, only two indicated financial difficulty and only one indicated a need for assistance. Those respondents would need to be contacted to get more clarification regarding their situations and needs. Nicole will attempt to get more responses to the survey.

It was brought up that there is no idea how long the pandemic will last or, in a worst-case scenario, that the region could go on another lockdown, closing all pools and clubs. While clubs may not need assistance now, that could change by year's end.

Bruce Rollins noted that while many swimmers had already registered for 2020 prior to the start of the pandemic, the real impact may be on 2021 registration. As USMS has offered registration for the remainder of 2020 and all of 2021 for \$60, Nicole suggested sending an email to all of those 2019 Gulf registrants who have not yet registered for 2020, and make them aware of this offer and also possibly offer financial assistance if they cannot afford to register.

Karlene stated that, in addition to USMS registration fees, there may be members who cannot afford the costs associated with club dues. A discussion ensued on how to identify and attempt to assist these individuals, while at the same time not being overly invasive about their financial situation. One suggestion was to ask coaches if they had swimmers in financial distress who could no longer pay dues. Another suggestion was to have the swimmer fill out a request form and supply verification on their company's letterhead that they had been furloughed or laid off due to the pandemic. Kris said that

if individual requests are granted, the dues would be paid directly to the club and no funds would go directly to the swimmer.

It was agreed that no action needed to be taken at the present time on the USMS COVID-19 relief funds. All were asked to continue thinking about ways in which we could assist our clubs and swimmers during the pandemic. Kris volunteered to work on a request form for clubs, and Karlene volunteered to work on a request form for individual swimmers.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. (virtually).

The meeting was adjourned at 6:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karlene Denby, Secretary