

Committee Name:	Board of Directors	Session #:	1
Committee Chair:	Ed Coates		
Minutes recorded by:	Carrie Stolar	Date/time of meeting:	8/18/25 8:00 PM ET

Actions Taken:

1. Ratified: The submission of emergency legislation to the Legislation Committee (online vote started on Aug. 1).
2. Ratified: Deeming the proposal approved by the Legislation Committee an emergency (online vote started on Aug. 5).
3. Ratified: The approval of emergency legislation on the advice of legal counsel (online vote started on Aug. 6).
4. Ratified: The concurrence with legal counsel's recommendation to the Rules Committee (online vote started on Aug. 6).

Number of committee members present:	17	Absent:	1	Guests:	0
Committee members present/virtual (list all, including chair and vice chair): Ed Coates – President; Julie Dussliere - VP of Administration; Kenny Brisbin - VP of Community Services; Crystie McGrail - VP of Local Operations; Robin Smith - VP of Programs; Carrie Stolar - Secretary; Katie Kenyon (Legal Counsel); Peter Guadagni (Immediate Past President); Dawson Hughes – CEO; At-Large Directors: Sam Kraft (Breadbasket); Guy Davis (Colonies); C.J. Rushman (Great Lakes); Rob Heath (Northwest); Phyllis Quinn (Oceana); Nicole Christensen (South Central); Trey Taylor (Southeast); Jeff Commings (Southwest).					
Not present: Teddy Decker – Treasurer.					
Guests: none.					

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 PM ET.

1. Agenda review and declarations of conflict of interest (Ed): The modifications to the agenda included items added under the legal update, and the date for the Sept BOD meeting was added. There were no conflicts of interest.
2. Approval of the minutes (Carrie): The approval of the minutes was postponed until the September board meeting as Carrie has been out of the country since the last meeting.
3. Ratification of online votes: The board ratified four online votes relating to emergency legislation. **(All MSA with no discussion and unanimous votes.)**
 - a **To submit emergency legislation to the Legislation Committee (online vote started on Aug. 1).**
 - b **To deem the proposal approved by the Legislation Committee an emergency (online vote started on Aug. 5).**
 - c **To approve the emergency legislation on the advice of legal counsel (online vote started on Aug. 6).**
 - d **To concur with legal counsel's recommendation to the Rules Committee (online vote started on Aug. 6).**
4. Minutes of good news (Ed): While in Federal Way for LC Nationals, Ed heard and felt support for USMS. He also shared a text he received about a former teammate who is now living in Seattle and helped him feel that he is living the mission of the organization and encouraging others to swim.
5. CEO Update (Dawson):
 - a CCS:
 - i General club registration typically starts on August 1 and registration for individuals starts on Aug. 15. It just kicked off on Friday for the 2025-26 school year.
 - ii The updated CCS website was launched and is now hosted by USMS.
 - iii CCS has adopted the NCAA's policy regarding eligibility.
 - iv Four regional championships sites for the fall will be announced soon: Florida State, University of California-Irvine, Ohio State and Liberty University.
 - b GUS: 3800 are registered. It should be about 4500 by the end of the year (4800 was budgeted). There are 28 leagues, 13 of which have over 100 participants, and 4 have over 200 participants.
 - c LC Nationals: Overall, a good experience and a smooth meet.
 - d Membership: Registration has slowed, but we are comparing it to an Olympic year. Marketing around registration has also slowed. This year's numbers are just ahead of last year.

- e Sanctioning: The communications and the launch strategy are built. Some tutorials and training sessions will take place between the annual meeting and Relay. Communications will start and a specific launch date will be announced in October. Both systems will run until the end of the year. For meets that need to be sanctioned soon (especially for meets in 2026), please contact Jessica or Dawson.
- f Dawson gave an update about the open letter received by the BOD and communications with clubs that signed onto the letter. We had a call with Team New York Aquatics representatives to clarify some issues raised in the letter. During the call we shared information with TNYA representatives about the addition of a "prefer not to answer" option for gender identification in the registration flow and provided clarity around sanctioning and non-conforming events vs. insurance coverage.
- g Registration process flow: An updated flow was launched on Thursday. There was an issue with the Club Assistant integration and membership verification that was resolved. The timing of this update is not ideal but is a response to the Texas lawsuit. Dawson explained that members need an event license for sanctioned events starting in 2026, though in 2025 members are grandfathered in. Dawson clarified that the changes are primarily a legal requirement, with the registration process being streamlined to direct members to provide additional information for their event license if needed. One key aspect of this new registration work flow is to protect the privacy of member information, therefore we want this new data to be maintained by USMS and not by third-party providers. The BOD discussed operational details including how coaches and meet directors will access member licensing information, with Dawson committing to develop appropriate systems for this purpose.

6. Legal update (Ed and Dawson):

- a Eligibility review update: The documentation for the eligibility review is in process. Ed shared that they are waiting for communication from World Aquatics, and this will help determine next steps.
- b Texas AG lawsuit: A response to the Texas AG is underway. It is due next week.
- c Florida AG letter and response: Ed noted we haven't received any response from Florida AG after their initial response at the end of last month.
- d Independent Council of Women's Sports: USMS received a point-by-point rebuttal from the Independent Council of Women's Sports in response to our cease-and-desist letter on Friday night. It has been sent to legal counsel for review.
- e Local non-discrimination rules: Ed shared the resolution of the situation with the county government in Federal Way/LC Nationals. Local non-discrimination rules differ all over the country. Ed informed the team about two new challenges, a complaint from New Jersey's Civil Rights Department and a potential protest situation in California involving a transgender individual. The letter from NJ asked for information about two canceled events in New Jersey, one of which was canceled due to insufficient officials. Dawson is waiting for more information about the canceled events. Dawson explained that he has been in touch with CEOs of other NGBs. USMS is working on how to continue the clear messaging of #swimsuitsnotlawsuits and pursue our mission - we just want people to swim. However, USMS is continuing to face pressure from both sides, with some accusing us of discrimination against transgender athletes while others claim we are discriminating against cis women. USMS is continuing to work with legal counsel to discuss these issues.

7. Legislation proposals (Ed): The legislative proposals for sunsetting the History and Archives Committee and making committee meetings in conjunction with the annual meeting optional are recommended by the Legislation Committee. Several BOD members volunteered to serve as advocates for these at the upcoming forums. The Legislation Committee's recommendation of the proposal to make committee meetings optional is based on a draft BOD policy that is posted in Community. Please review it prior to the next BOD meeting, where we will vote on whether to adopt it.

8. Annual meeting (Ed): This week is the new delegate orientation, the town hall, and the zone calls.

9. Upcoming elections: As of now, there are two floor nominations, one for Treasurer and one for Secretary.

10. The next BOD meeting will be held on Sept 8 and will be an open meeting. The annual BOD orientation/training will be on October 6th and be led by the Governance Committee. The regular October BOD meeting will be on Oct. 20.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 PM ET.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carrie Stolar, Secretary

