Gulf Swimming Board Meeting 1/8/25

Marriott Westchase, Houston TX

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 7:30pm by General Chair Charlie Fry. Jennie Shamburger took the roll call. Attending the meeting were BOD members and LSC office staff and Coordinators:

Charlie Fry	MaryAnne Svoboda	Lisa Blok	Herb Schwab (Governance)
Paige Sikkema	John Burke	Julie Bachman (LSC)	Natalie Melenric (Sanctions)
Jennie Shamburger	Lauren Fuller	Tom Hasz (LSC)	
Travis Sandifer	Brandon Trittipo	Loren Fischbach (LSC)	
Tom Hasz	Courtney Scott	Matt Sale (Officials)	
Henry Clark	Jake Camp	Davis Peden (TPC)	

MISSION MOMENT: Charlie read the Gulf Mission Statement: *Gulf Swimming provides opportunities to learn, grow, and strive for excellence, developing leaders through competitive swimming.*

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: Motion was made and seconded to approve the BOD minutes from October 2nd, 2024. No changes or edits. ***Motion to approve minutes passed.***

COMMITEE REPORTS:

GENERAL CHAIR: 2025 Gulf Open Water Champs will be weekend of April 13th. Southern Zones Open Water meet will be April 26th in Ft. Meyers and meet will be swum in the Gulf of Mexico. We have the bid for 2026 Zones Open Water - will be held at Lake Longhorn. Committee will be put together to create and build meet. Charlie would like to see some changes at this meet to prepare them for Nationals. Open Water Qualifier meet will be up for bid very soon.

Nominating Committee will need to be created for new BOD positions in Sept. 2025. Committee will be seated at the January HOD meeting. Charlie will not run for another BOD position and will focus on Open Water Swimming. He wanted to thank everyone on the multiple Boards he was worked with for their hard work and dedication to the Gulf LSC.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Julie Bachman confirmed with Herb Schwab (Governance) the timeline from Election Committee seating to publishing slate of candidates and elections will be at the April HOD meeting.

Duel in the Pool will happen at SMU. Pool, aquatic center and lodging are all within walking distance. Applications for coaching staffs for the two events - 25 applicants already. Deadline to apply is Friday 1/10. Dual in the Pool will be 16-18th of May. Format for Duel in the Pool qualification will be the same procedure. OME will be best resource for team selection. Julie and Henry Clark to discuss. More info will be presented at Coaches Meeting on January 21st.

Sponsors for Gulf Swimming have stepped up - Keifer and Fitter and Faster Clinics will both have a presence at the Gulf Coaching Clinic. Hoping to have more information on sponsorships at April meeting.

Julie thanked John Burke, Maryanne Svoboda and Jennie Shamburger for being on the committee to create job position for Gulf Director of Performance. Allison Beebe has accepted the position. Looking forward to cooperation of the clubs with the new director.

Open Water Zones is looking for a national level athlete to go with both travel teams. Connor Fry was mentioned as the athlete for Open Water Zones. Emma Sticklen will be athlete for Dual in the Pool. Discussions will continue. These athletes will share experiences from OTC, National teams, etc. Kyle Stockwell will also be involved with Dual in the pool.

USA Swimming is still in the middle of CEO search - they are down to final three candidates and hope to have someone in position by March 1st.

FINANCE: Travis Sandifer presented the proposed reimbursements for coaches/athletes/officials. Tom Hasz made percentage changes for budgets. Question about approval of Sectionals travel for officials. ***Motion to approve reimbursements for athletes and coaches made and seconded. No discussion. Motion passes.***

With regard to the officials reimbursements, Sectionals was not added to reimbursements prior to the meeting. Reimbursement for officials will be tabled until presentation later in the meeting.

Travis reviewed P&L statement from previous year comparison and balance sheet previous year comparison included in the packet and also available at the meeting. Revenues up slightly and expenses up greatly - ended the year over budget by $7000. This is due to payments made at the end of the year and items not budgeted but paid.

Investments and unrealized gains were up as they have been past three years.

ATHLETES: Four new athletes have been added to the committee as well as 2 new teams for a total of 26 teams represented. Working on increasing presence of committee on social media. Finalizing mental health presentation and location for Athlete Meeting. Athletes completed surveys of Champs experience to help the TPC and meet formatting. Idea to make Instagram reels that would follow Safe Sport with guidelines to be met and reviewed before posting. They think it would bring attention to the sport and show the fun side of the sport. Athletes working on guidelines and committee to create and publicize Gulf swimmers and swimming. Vice Chair Paige Sikkema asked for a meeting with the committee to review engagement reel guidelines.

SAFE SPORT REPORT: Travis Sandifer presented report. Tanja Avant not present. Mental health first aid certifications resulted in 15 coaches taking the course. MAAP 2.0 updates should have been presented to all clubs and pushed to members. Report reflected other Safe Sport updates and information.

OFFICIALS: Matt Sale presented his report. The end of 2024 roster was 456 officials - in the top 5 of country. Grown number of teams represented to 43 out of 59 teams. In terms of recruitment, interest remains high. He reviewed membership charts from 2022 to present that tracked recruitment and retention (moving to next level of officiating). I-9 has sped up retention but not recruitment. Lowered barrier for officials certification is not an issue for raw recruits. Initiative hasn't hit all rubrics of success.

Sign up Genius for officials at meets is having to be closed now - a good problem to have.

Officials travel policy proposal presentation given by Lisa Blok. This is an update to the current travel policy for officials designed to lower the star rating (national meet rating) to allow for more attendance and reimbursement opportunities for officials participation. Gulf officials only have 11% of national level certification. This proposal will create at least 4 new opportunities.

Two options laid out in proposal - one is a "not to exceed amount" and one is standard calculation amount created by Tom Hasz. To be in line with rest of reimbursements, Travis recommended presenting the A proposal with some changes to amounts. Futures at 70%, Juniors and Pro Series at 80% and Nationals/Trials at 95%. Sr Zones and previous Sectionals have been a flat rate. Budget increase could be requested to accommodate additional meets being put on reimbursement calendar. OQM National Evaluators travel costs already in budget - clarification needed by Tom Hasz. Question brought up about coaches/athletes not reimbursing for Sectionals vs Officials attending to qualify for higher level meets. Tom advised requesting a budget increase request to total $20,000. ***Lisa Blok made a motion to approve the Option A of the officials reimbursement proposal and an increase of $5000 to the budget for a $20,000 total budget line. Motion was seconded.*** Discussion about number of sessions per meet to be eligible for reimbursement. He asked about adding verbiage of working min of 4 sessions because that is what is required for evaluation testing. Matt Sale stated number of officials to qualify for reimbursement would be limited by budget. Tom had questions about two meets instead of three meets. Economy (car rental) needs to be same as current calculations. Clarification needs to be added to proposal minimum number of sessions to work meet for evaluation qualification No percentage for Sectionals has been added - has historically been and flat $400 rate for officials to be in line. Calculations need to based on mileage, travel, lodging and per diem. More work needed before bringing to a vote. ***Motion withdrawn.***

Motion to approve officials reimbursement as stated in the financial packet made seconded. Motion passes.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

Motion to adjourn made and seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:59pm.