

Connecticut LMSC Meeting
Sunday April 25th, 2021

Board Members present at today's meeting: Rob Duguay, Janit Romayko, Tommy St. Vincent, Jeff Sargent, Pam Moss, Tait Michael, Ally Sega, Paul Epstein, Ben Wyckoff, and Sarah King.

Board Members absent from today's meeting: Bill Geoghegan, Sian Nimkoff, Cheryl Edison, Melissa Duguay, and Barb Baker.

Meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. via Zoom.

I. Discussion on Masters Swimming Program Restart throughout the Connecticut LMSC

- ❖ Why have many of our members not renewed their membership? Based on the results of the Connecticut LMSC survey, many members stated that because their masters swimming coached practices and masters swimming programs at the facilities they swam at were discontinued due to the ongoing pandemic and availability for practices and even lap swimming highly restricted at the facilities they practiced at, they had chosen to not renew their membership. We discussed that our LMSC cannot run a program without members. Our LMSC needs to provide opportunities for members to return to coached practices and opportunities for masters swimming programming and meets at their respective facilities. If a financial payment to local facilities will offset this ability to return to practices and coached workouts, we should be prioritizing the restart of those programs. Connecticut LMSC is looking to immediately financially assist the masters swimming club and workout groups within our LMSC to get programs restarted and give our members an access to coached practices and group workouts.
- ❖ How to advocate for the return of coached practices? It was stated that this had to be a grassroots movement in which coaches and program participants went to the facility director and advocated for the return of their masters swimming practices. It was discussed that masters swimming is a competitive swim program and should be labeled as such at the facilities we practice at, as this gives us more flexibility and freedom within the current facility, local, and state guidelines for aquatics facilities within Connecticut.
- ❖ We can't recruit swimmers without a place for them to swim. In the short term we need to get clubs and workout groups restarted. In the long term, we would like to partner with clubs and workout groups to offer a scholarship program that specifically targets the 18-24 age group and those swimmers coming out of high school and/or collegiate programs. That potential scholarship process, that would involve a stipend to the facility program, would tie into the thirty-day USMS trial membership and allow for evaluation of how to financially assist that swimmer moving forward after their thirty-day trial membership.
- ❖ Would a tier system of financial assistance best serve our facilities looking to restart masters' programs? Facilities would receive \$500, \$1000, or \$1500 based on economic income and financial need of the facility looking to restart their masters swim program.

A facility could get a one-time maximum payment of \$1500, but there would be stipulations regarding the finances allocated from Connecticut LMSC to that individual facility. Geographic locations and facilities to target in this allocation included: Cheshire Community Pool, Waterbury YMCA, Northwest/ Torrington, Middletown H.K, West Hartford, Orange, and Putnam.

- ❖ Where do we go from here? How do we eliminate a conflict of interest within in our board in relation to targeting specific facilities? How do we advocate for a return to the water? It was upon this discussion that we arrived at the decision to give financial assistance to clubs and workout groups within the Connecticut LMSC regardless of whether they had been prioritized in the Connecticut LMSC survey or represented by members of our board. Opening assistance to all based on application eliminates the conflict of interest for our board members.

II. Board Motion for Financial Assistance to Connecticut LMSC Club and Workout Groups.

Our LMSC board unanimously passed a motion to financially assist Connecticut LMSC clubs and workout groups with a return to coached practices at facilities throughout our LMSC. We would allocate \$15,000 from our current LMSC budget for this task.

The participating facility would receive a maximum one-time payment of \$1500.

All facilities within the Connecticut LMSC are eligible for this potential one-time payment. The only stipulation is that they meet and fulfill the following requirements:

- ❖ A minimum of three practice times per week.
- ❖ A minimum of one hour for each of the three practice times. Three practice times= at least three hours per week.
- ❖ All practices would meet USMS criteria for USMS insurance.
- ❖ All participants must be registered Connecticut LMSC USMS members.
- ❖ If the facility allows drop in membership: all drop in member participants must be USMS registered members.
- ❖ Program will run for three months. At the end of the three months, a financial report and program evaluation will be sent to the Connecticut LMSC board to reaffirm that the financial assistance was used as stated in the initial facility application.

May 15th would be the first application deadline. June 15th would be the second application deadline. Any unused funds from the \$15,000 financial payout would revert back into the Connecticut LMSC budget after June 30th, 2021.

This application process is open to all Connecticut LMSC clubs and workout groups. An email will be sent out to the fifteen coaches listed on our records in the hopes of these coaches reaching out to their individual facilities and applying for the financial assistance. It is our hope to get masters swimming coached practices going at facilities throughout the state of Connecticut.

III. Other LMSC Discussion and Business

❖ **2021 U.S. Masters Swimming 1-Hour ePostal National Championship:**

Orange Town Pool held time slots for Connecticut LMSC members to complete their one- hour swim. It was stated that all participants gave at least a \$5 donation to the Orange Town Pool in addition to the payment needed to submit the individual swimmer's results to USMS. There was only one participant that paid by check, all other payments were by cash. There were ten total Connecticut LMSC members that participated in this event, one of, if not our largest ever participation in the event. Ning Wei completed her swim out of the country. Sarah King completed her swim in Ohio. Sarah Perkins and Rob Duguay completed their swim at Cheshire. Melissa Duguay, Jeremy Virgil, Ann Onton, Ally Sega, Ben Wyckoff, and Jerry Burbank completed their swim at Orange. Results of the event are posted on the USMS national website and can be found via the following link: <https://www.usms.org/events/national-championships/epostal-national-championships/2021-epostal-national-championships> Congrats to all of our swimmers who participated in this event!!

- #### ❖ **2021 U.S. Masters Swimming Ultra-Marathon Distance Open Water National Championship:**
- We discussed that this event had been pulled as a national championship event this year. Members expressed disappointment with the cancellation of this event and how the cancellation came about, however we must support the decisions made by USMS in relation to event sanctions and cancellations. The 10- Mile open water swim at Lake Memphremagog will still take place; however, it will not be a national championship event and will not have sanction from USMS as a USMS open water event.
- #### ❖ **Connecticut Masters Games:**
- We are still looking for a facility to hold this event at. The event is slated to be held in September, and we are hopeful that Wesleyan would be a potential option for this event.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.