

## OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Conference Call January 15, 2024

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Coleman. He read the Mission and Vision statements.

**PRESENT:** Coleman Bye, Mary Poletto, Gwenn Lochstet, Rick Carson, Mike Wigginton, Jamie Platt, Mike Seip, Tiffany Epoca, John Nelson, Kylie McMurray, Larry Schwarz

**ABSENT:** Jack Behm, Allie DeFrehn, Mike Petrakis, Rob Jorgensen, Tom Estep, Carlos Inacio

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The December 2023 minutes were approved.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT:** Coleman does not have this statement but intends to get it for the next meet.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### Open Water Official's Clinic

- Nominations for Open Water Official's Clinic, which will be held in conjunction with Open Water Nations, are due by March 1<sup>st</sup>. Clinic nominees must also submit an application to officiate. Those interested can look at the website or contact Coleman.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Staff Report – Mike Seip

- There are 182 Sanctioned meets, 32 Approved meets, and 10 Observed meets. More are coming. We may get over 200 sanctioned meets this year.
- Observed meets will now be posted on the website on a separate tab.
- Many AO's are requesting recertification.
- There are 39 meet directors and 71 ORD's.
- He is working with Jamie and Mary to get the meet announcements for championships ready. It should be done within the week as soon as officials for top positions are named.

#### OC Chair - Coleman

- As the General Policies for Committee Administration & Operations are now in effect, he will use them to work toward OC goals for 2024.
- He will form a working group to work on securing officials to work championship meets well in advance.
- Another goal is to clean up the website, clearing up discrepancies and removing redundancies.
- He also intends to improve communications with clubs concerning officiating. He will try to reach out to every club.
- He has been told not to worry about R9. Guidelines are expected to come out by the end of the month. Coaches are working with officials to determine national guidelines.

#### Training & OTS – Rick and Tiffany

- Rick contacted the trainers to ask them to pick a time that works for them for January and February. Many slots still need to be filled. He is also looking for more people to become trainers. There was discussion on recommending and inviting officials to train, as well as coming up with standards qualifications for trainers.
- There was conversation on whether R9 would change training or even eliminate it on the LSC level. Jamie assured that we will never lose the opportunity to have training groups but will be given more options, such as online training from the national level.

- Rick said that he had training classes for every position every month from August to December in 2023. He is working on January and February classes.

#### **Advancement – Mike Wigginton**

- One candidate recommended unanimously to be certified as a deck referee: Mary Poletto. She was voted in.

#### **Secretary - Gwenn**

- Gwenn's position has changed to that of secretary.
- Jamie has been working with using AI with Zoom meetings to capture transcripts and to provide summaries. He expects this technology will be used for future meetings. A recording of transactions will be available with the minutes. Instead of scribing fine details, the secretary will make sure summaries are lined up with appropriate points in the recorded transcript. Jamie will show Gwenn how this works soon.

#### **Meet Management**

- A working group will be created to secure officials for championship meets. They will reach out to others beyond the committee to find MR's and AR's for champs.
- Rick noted that invites to MR's will be different this year. They will be told that they must work as MR in a meet or lose the certification.
- Coleman will be MR at seniors. Tim Husson will be invited as National Evaluator. Greg Spica will be invited to be AR because they believe an AR N2 is needed for an OQM meet. Mike W. found that an N2 certification is only needed for the MR of an OQM meet. In response to Jamie's inquiry, Tiffany responded that we are reimbursing the invited officials for hotel, mileage, and supplies.

#### **Certification - Rick**

- He shared a spreadsheet with certification numbers. There are 574 officials in the LSC; 310 of them are in good standing. Of the 264 officials who are not current, 253 of them expired at the end of 2023. When officials were admonished to recertify, many did not see which credentials were expiring.
- Concerning apprentices, the numbers are: 15 referee, 37 starter, 94 stroke & turn, 40 AO, 15 CJ.
- For those who want to retake the test but do not have enough sessions, Rick has given them until March 31, 2024 to meet the criteria.
- Jamie has a report that shows information on officials participation. Rick expects it will be very helpful for him.
- According to Rob, the wallet app should be up to date.

#### **Athlete Representatives - Kylie**

- Things are going well. She recently swam at the TYR Pro series and had no issues.

#### **Coach Representative - John**

- John was also at the TYR Pro series and was surprised that they were not putting the counters in the water for the mile. Apparently, they were conforming to World Aquatic standards. They would have made exceptions for those who asked for them but did not inform coaches and athletes of this in advance.

#### **Web Advisor**

- None.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

**A Systematic Approach to Officials Acquisition and Training - Larry.**

- He proposed that we develop a systematic program to fill the ranks of officials based on analytic data and considered targets.
- There was discussion on how to be more proactive in encouraging people to be officials and officials to seek advancement. Another suggestion was to make the information on the website more transparent. Mike S. says that perhaps we need to connect to those not affiliated with the 37 clubs that are actively hosting meets.
- Jamie pointed out that what hooks one person to volunteer does not necessarily work for another. Volunteerism has changed and is unpredictable. He urged us to build with what we have and leave a model and inspiration for those who come after.
- An action item was identified to get the list of officials coordinators from the 37 hosting clubs from Mike S. and to form a working group to start working with them. Jamie reminded Coleman that, as the chair, he would have to establish the working group with written guidelines.

**NEXT MEETING:** Monday, February 5, 2024

**ADJOURN:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 pm.

Minutes Submitted by Gwenn Lochstet