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OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Conference Call March 3, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:02pm by Coleman. He read the USA Swimming Mission, Officials Committee Mission, and Conflict of Interest statements. Gwenn took the roll call.

PRESENT COMMITTEE: Coleman Bye, Gwenn Lochstet, Mary Poletto, Rick Carson, Tiffany Epoca, Mike Wigginton, Nick Furia

PRESENT STAFF: Mike Seip, Jamie Platt

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Kylie McMurray

GUESTS: Rob Jorgensen

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The February 2025 minutes were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Staff Liaison - Mike Seip

- There are 188 Sanctioned meets, 38 Approved meets, and 36 Observed meets so far. There will not be any more Observed meets because the high school season is over.
- OME process for Senior Champs and Junior Champs has been running smoothly.
- 10&U Champs start this weekend with very robust entries.
- Silver Champs entries opened last week, and entries are filling up quickly.

OC Chair - Coleman

- He discussed the Officials portion of the HOD Meeting on April 26th in New Business below.
- The RRA Committee will meet on Wednesday, March 5. They will begin to look at the whole officials process from recruiting new parents to retention and advancement. They would like to give some kind of guide to the coaches to start recruiting after the summer break.

Training

- Tiffany reported that two officials have requested a Referee clinic.
- It is unlikely that they could hold the clinics before the NOC rolls out the Referee clinics on April 1st. Everyone will be busy with SC Champs.

OTS

- Mary reported that it had been another quiet month. The recent release had no new changes.

Advancement

- Mike Wigginton wanted to know where we stood on SOPs for Meet Directors. Coleman pointed out that Meet Directors are outside the scope of the OC.

Secretary

- Gwenn has begun working with Coleman and Mary on the OC newsletter. It will come out every other month, the odd months, in contrast to the NOC newsletter which comes out on the even months. The first introductory issue will be in March. Contact us for topic suggestions. Nick suggested that questions should be submitted anonymously to be answered on the newsletter.
- Coleman will forward the subgroup reports to Gwenn. It helps her expedite the minutes.

Certification

- Rick reported that officials continue to be certified.
- He is working on a special project with certification data and have identified officials who are working uncertified. He talked more about that in New Business below.

Athlete Representative

- Nothing to report.

Coach Representative

- Coleman is still working on identifying a new coach representative.

Old BUSINESS

Updates on Championship Series

- There will be an SC Champs Leadership meeting tomorrow.
- Links to SOPs were included in the email sent to the leadership teams.
- There was a suggestion that token recognition awards be given out at Champs.
- Leadership should communicate concerning the HOD meeting at Champs and take pictures.

NEW BUSINESS

Topics for Officials at the HOD Meeting

- Coleman opened the discussion on which officials to invite to the HOD meeting in April and what to present.
- After much discussion, it was agreed that all officials should be invited. It is expected that no more than 20% would come, but it is a good opportunity for communication and camaraderie. Coleman will talk to Jamie about the budget and facilities.
- The following topics were suggested for presentation:
 - How to mentor new officials
 - A culture shift of official training
 - The certification and recertification process
 - Checking certifications at meets
 - Educate referees on certification and rules
 - Bringing back appreciation awards
 - Enhancing communications
 - What to put on the website
 - Introduce the OC newsletter and ask for feedback
- Coleman will send out information and keep the discussion open. He hopes to decide on the topics, divide them among teams, and have the contents developed after SC Champs. Perhaps we should ask officials to send in questions anonymously that could be answered at the meeting.
- The meeting should be livestreamed for those who cannot attend. Additional topics could be discussed online in post-HOD sessions or in the newsletter.

Training vs. Apprenticing

- Rick would like to change the culture of evaluating apprentices to one of deep training and mentoring instead of just checking boxes.
- He suggested that perhaps only experienced officials should mentor the final evaluation and be honest in their assessment and feedback.

- Mary suggested customizing the evaluation form to make it easier to make comments and provide an action plan.
- This was suggested as a topic at the HOD meeting.

List of Expiring Certification

- Rob has been automatically generating a report of all officials with expiring certifications and membership every month.
- Rick was not sure what to do with these reports.
- Coleman suggested they could be filtered and parsed out with standing emails sent to the relevant groups of officials every month.
- There was discussion on whether this report was still necessary if SWMMs will send out automatic notices again. Mike Seip will check with the SWMMs representative on whether the automatic notices are back. Coleman suggested we keep Rob's reports for now.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is on Monday, April 7, 2025.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 8:09pm.

Minutes Submitted by Secretary, Gwenn Lochstet