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OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Conference Call September 3, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Coleman. He read the Mission and Conflict of Interest statements.

PRESENT: Coleman Bye*, Gwenn Lochstet*, Mary Poletto*, Rick Carson*, Tiffany Epoca*, John Nelson*, Mike Seip, Kylie McMurray*, Mike Wigginton* (*Denotes voting members)

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Jack Behm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The August 2024 minutes were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Staff Liaison – Mike Seip

- He has 156 sanctioned meets and 6 approved meets so far.
- Since GPAC is selling to Jersey Wahoos, they will likely take the GPAC meets.
- KA meets will likely go away because no team has picked them up.
- Central York Aquatics is considering hosting more meets.
- Transfers between teams in MA are robust.

OC Chair - Coleman

- Coleman plans to attend the Annual Business Meeting on September 26-28 in Colorado Springs. The attendees from MA Swimming are: Jamie Platt, Mike Seip, Andrew Austria, Coleman Bye, Tiffany Epoca, Amy Steeves, Greg Fastrich, Alexandra Scime, and Dan Clough.
- Coleman will be leading a discussion on recruitment and retention because MA is bucking the national trend by gaining officials rather than losing them. He will share some of the things that the RR&A Workgroup has done. The Workgroup will also discuss implementing Junior Official. He hopes to share conclusions from that also.

R9 – Rick and Mary

- Mary suggested changing the “R9” heading on the website to “Training and Certification” because there will be a new R9 this year
- There are two sections labelled “R9” on the website. Rick suggested removing the older one.

Training – Tiffany and Rick

- Rick will be able to list training dates once he finds a trainer for the Referee clinic.
- There was a discussion on where to post officials information. When will the old Officials webpage be retired, and when will the new site go live? Coleman will talk to Carlos and Rob about it.

- Rick continues to want better reports that would give accurate officials information.

OTS – Mary

- OTS may be showing clinics taken from USA Swimming University.
- OTS may also show national evaluation information that national evaluators can see.

Advancement – Tiffany and Mike Wigginton

- Rick got his first request for reciprocity—switching from a YMCA certification to a USAS certification. The official need to verify certain number of meets worked in a certain position.
- Mike reports that there are only 3 referees left who have been grandfathered into the position that needs to work out their remaining qualifications.
- A question was revisited: Can someone take the referee clinic without being a certified AO? Is is sufficient to just be an AO apprentice?

Secretary – Gwenn

- She changed the format of the minutes to include a header and to clarify the attendance of voting and non-voting members.

Meet Management

- Mary, Gwenn, and Mike Wigginton attended the Hot August Nights for AO training.
- They found the training to be helpful. Mary suggests that appropriate information from these sessions be used in forming training materials for MA. It would also be helpful to have links to the two general sessions on the MA website.

Certification – Rick

- Rick is working to ensure that officials are registered and are fulfilling their qualifications toward certification.
- A small group of referees will need to recertify before the NOC training clinics come out. It is suggested they meet together to discuss issues as their recertification “clinic”.
- Rick would still like a shared drive for MA documents. This is one of the IT issues he needs to discuss with Rob.

Athlete Representative – Kylie

- She expects a different year since GPAC is now Jersey Wahoos.

Coach Representative - John

- He is stalled on a SWIMS issue that he has been working on because a key collaborator is no longer with USAS.

OLD BUSINESS

Penalty Fines at Championship meets

- The OC does not come up with this policy. They only enforce it when it has been enacted and printed in meet announcements.
- Mike Seip has reviewed the LC Championship series with team leads and included the recommendation for penalty fines in his evaluation.

Processing New Official

- Rick would like a better process to track officials throughout the certification process. The new process that does not require the clinic first presents challenges in this.
- It was suggested that Coleman bring this up with colleagues at the Annual Business meeting in CO, to determine best practices.

NEW BUSINESS

Junior Officials

- Issues related to implementing Junior Officials in MA will be discussed in the RR&A Workgroup.
- Some issues and questions were discussed.

- A prominent question was: Must the Junior Official's parent be copied on all email communications?
- It was agreed that Coleman should ask for clarification on this issue.

AO Initiatives

- Mary and Gwenn have been working with another AO on coming up with an apprentice training guide. They intend to meet in September to complete a draft. They will make sure it is compatible with the NOC AO training, which will roll out on October 1, before making it available. It is to be a suggested, non-required guide.
- Mary suggested a monthly AO roundtable for officials to discuss questions and share expertise. The idea was so appreciated that it was suggested that referees also have such a roundtable and that the AO and Referee roundtable alternate every month.

Championship Selection Process

- The group working on determining an equitable and transparent process for determining championship MR's and AR's have been meeting. They have come up with initial criteria and will continue to finalize the process. They hope to present a working model in October, which can be applied to SC Championships.
- This may be a good topic for another Town Hall meeting.

Officiating Discussion at Swimposium

- It was determined that Alleghany Swimming is leading the officiating discussion at the Swimposium in September.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is on Monday, October 7, 2024.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Minutes Submitted by Gwenn Lochstet