

Meeting of 11/1/09
Niagara Leagues' Leadership

BOD Present: General Chair M. Callan, Admin. Vice Chair R. Wisniewski, Senior Chair: Marty Keating, Age Group Chair D. Burke, Treasurer S. Snyder, Secretary M. Keating, Junior Athlete A. Keech, Senior Coach Representative L. McManus, Registration/Webmaster J. Bowen, The. Planning Chair T. Dubois, Finance Chair J. Kingston, Safety Chair B. Paradis

BOD Excused: Appointees: B. Matlack, E. Stimson, L. Powalski, & D. O'Connor & Junior Coach Representative

League Representatives: R. Champagne from Genesee Valley; Jerry Roberts from Southern Tier; P. Zegrobely and M. Atendido from Niagara

Sub-Committee Chair B. Paradis called the meeting to order at 10:55 am. She sought clarification from each of the leagues as to the purpose of their organization. The **Niagara League** has 14 teams from the Greater Buffalo area. They hold 10 league meets. Their focus is on serving Slower than B swimmers and also underserved areas. The **Genesee Valley League** has 11 teams. It concentrates on younger swimmers, however, even senior swimmer can compete. The teams hold dual meets and there is a championship meet. The **Southern Tier League** has 20 teams (21 in the summer). Its meets resemble invitational meets. All ages, including senior swimmers are eligible. It has a developmental focus. The League has two divisions and hold 6 Fall/Winter meets and 4 during the summer. Each league is open to any club that wishes to join. The leagues each have USA Swimmers only. There are unique entry limitations for each league (e.g. 2 individual events and one relay, etc.) There is no league in the Syracuse area.

Paradis stated that 40% of Niagara clubs belong to a league. The attendees reviewed Appendix A "Niagara financial review for League activities."

The Board emphasized that the leagues are important to the Niagara LSC.

It was noted that Genesee Valley and Southern Tier Leagues have both voluntarily contributed to the LSC.

It was asked if Niagara LSC has financial problems now. The Board explained that several programs have been eliminated or reduced: Olympian visits, Athlete's Travel and Zone Team. Also there has been a drop in surcharge income from \$68,000 to \$35,000. This occurred even though the following have remained stable:

- The number of athletes at around 6,000;
- Income from sanction fees of approximately \$3,000

- The number of swims

Per Niagara financial review for League activities.” almost 18,000 swims occurred in leagues during 08/09. That represents 15% of all swims for that year.

The Board reemphasized the value of having leagues while simultaneously addressing the LSC’s financial needs. It was noted that there are very few leagues outside the Niagara LSC. Leagues started out holding dual meets and have morphed into a more invitational format.

It is the perception among some member clubs that the LSC is catering more to upper level swimmers. As illustrated on the Niagara financial review for League activities” the LSC has actually subsidized developmental swimming in the leagues by more than \$10,000. An example of the impact on the LSC was given: twelve teams in the leagues collectively reported 6,500 swims and paid a surcharge to the District of \$295.00. A club unaffiliated with any league had 5,050 and paid a surcharge to the District of \$3482.00.

R. Champagne discussed how the Genesee Valley League developed its donation. The league levied a surcharge of \$1.25 per swimmer to each member club. J. Roberts shared that the Southern Tier League charged each member club a flat fee. He also noted that there is on-going discussion about the matter.

The possibility of changing the Annual Organization fee for the leagues was mentioned.

The Board also reminded the Leagues of several benefits/resources/programs that the LSC has been able to offer to clubs: High Tech rebates, Clinic sponsorship of \$50.00, subsidy of \$400.00 for hosting a super circuit meet, the Club Recognition program, etc.

The Leagues were urged to take proactive steps before the Board considers other fees.

The matter of inter-League championship meet was raised and feedback was generally positive.

Another question concerning a maximum per family fee was also raised. That concern should be address within the club and/or with any host club.

Feedback from the Leagues was requested by January.

The meeting adjourned at Noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Keating, Secretary

