



**Gulf Swimming Board Meeting
Marriott Westchase, Houston TX
January 7th, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 7:30pm by General Chair Paige Sikkema. Jennie Shamburger took the roll call. Attending the meeting were BOD members and LSC office staff and Coordinators:

Paige Sikkema	Clayton Cagle	Julie Bachman (LSC)
Travis Sandifer	Ben Pulskamp	Tom Hasz (LSC)
Jennie Shamburger	Brandon Trittipio	Loren Fischbach (LSC)
Henry Clark	Courtney Scott	Natalie Melenric (LSC)
Jarrold Murphy		Fred Bogar (Officials)
John Burke		Davis Peden (TPC)
Tanya Avant		

MISSION MOMENT: Paige Sikkema read the Gulf Mission Statement: Gulf Swimming provides opportunities to learn, grow, and strive for excellence, developing leaders through competitive swimming.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: Motion was made and seconded to approve the BOD minutes from October 10th, 2025. No discussion. Motion to approve minutes passed.

General Chair Paige Sikkema noted the pamphlets presented on Parliamentary Procedure that were distributed to all attending. Julie Bachman spoke to this information being beneficial for all BOD meetings and the rights to a voice at meetings.

CONSENT AGENDA: Paige read list of reports submitted. All reports from the meet packet were pulled, no vote to approve consent agenda.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

GENERAL CHAIR: Paige announced the Zone Open Water dates April 24-26. It will be an all hands on deck event and volunteer sign ups will be open shortly.

Duel in the Pool will be in Chicago May 29-31st. Coach applications will be sent out soon.

Sr Zones at U of H July 29 - Aug. 1st. This is an LSC hosted meet and will need help from BOD members and clubs. Henry Clark will be Meet Director for this meet. Time standards will be the same as last year: One (1) hard cut you get two (2) bonus events. Two (2) hard cuts earns four (4) bonus events. Total of six (6) events max. Jr National times are the cut off by event. OME will need to be used for meet entries for this meet. Meet hasn't been capped historically, however out of zone teams would need a cap number.

December Champs Meets - Paige asked everyone to send TPC comments about the Champs meets. Ideas, observations, feedback etc would be helpful in planning future meets.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Julie spoke to specific information will be shared at BOD/HOD meetings going forward. This was discussed at Strategic Planning meeting. Budget and raw data will be helpful in future decisions. She presented membership data current vs Sept. 1st - Dec. 31st 2025 vs last year. We are slightly ahead of previous year. Across USA Swimming, clubs trending down around 5% this year vs last.

Staff will be looking at LSC capacity with pools, resources and other metrics to make sure LSC is supporting Gulf clubs.

Gulf University is new name for the Coaches Clinic. We now have tracks for meet refs and club BOD members, so new name is more inclusive. Focus will remain on coaching education. Dates for 2026 are March 27th-29th at the San Luis in Galveston TX.

ATHLETES COMMITTEE: Brendan Tritipo discussed the information table at Gulf Southern Sr Champs. Much was learned about how to improve communications and table location at next round of Champs meets.

The athlete BOD report was highlighted for athlete ideas and on what incentive money could be spent on at the Champs meets including theme nights, trivia, engaging parents, etc. Report is on website as well.

TECHNICAL PLANNING COMMITTEE: Davis Peden presented report with recommendations for summer Champs 2026 series. He started with the reminder that the first weekend in July is the 4th holiday weekend. Second weekend Gulf AG Champs and Gulf Sr Champs. Weekend of 17th-19th Summer Champs. Last weekend in July: B & Under Champs same weekend as TAGS. LC Sectionals July 15-18th at UT.

TPC Bid recommendations were reviewed. Their goal with format recommendations is that all swimmers must attend only ONE Gulf Championship meet.

LC Sr Champs. One facility needed. Prelim/Finals. Main change in formatting is designed for swimmers to only attend one of meets. Becoming a 3.5 day meet with distance on Thurs night. TPC Rec is KATY/SSAN hosting at U of H.

Recommendation for AG Champs to be hosted by TWST at the CISD Nat. Prelim/Finals meet. Format changes - extending to 3.5 days. Adding 50s of stroke for 13-14. Proposed three (3) event rule would shift approx 150-180 swimmers out of this meet. Three cuts would allow swimmers to enter any events up to 3 per day. Hard cuts would be required for 10U 400 FR and hard cuts for 800 or 1500 also. If you have one (the 800 or 1500), you can swim both. Moving to scratch box. Indoor facility and no weather restrictions were a factor.

Question about 13-14 50s qualifying/cut off times was clarified. Sr Champs will be an OQM Meet.

Summer Champs format change will be cut off of Sectionals for 15 Over and TAGS for 14 Under. Weekend of 17th-19th. Circle in only for distance events. Pre-seeding 200s and below at this meet. CFSC, KATY/PACE and PEAK recommended as meet host.

B Under Champs Sat/Sun mornings only. Recommendation is SHAC, MAC, SHRK, LONE. Meet will have an SCY format.

Davis asked for a motion to recommend the TPC recommendations by BOD. The report will be presented at January HOD for final approval. Dec 2026 Champs meet series bids will open end of this month. ***Motion to approve TPC recommendations for 2026 Summer Champs series made and seconded. Motion passed.***

FINANCE: Henry Clark presented reports. 2025 year end budget performance beat budgeted by \$100,000. Balance sheet shows assets and investments strong. P/L report including Edward Jones accounts. Main drivers of expenses are Gulf team meets, coach clinic and reimbursements. Henry gave kudos to LSC for fiscal responsibility and being able to offer so much to athletes, coaches, and clubs.

2026 budget presented. Increased budget numbers for some line items decreased budget numbers in other line items were explained. Question if splash fees and

reimbursements for Dec meets were included in final 2025 numbers. Final number for collected splash fees in 2025 includes the reduced splash fees for Dec Champs series.

Henry made motion to approve 2026 proposed budget. Motion seconded. Motion passed.

Information was then presented on Sr travel fund. Spring ISCA meet and Summer Southern Sr Zones meets are missing. Some venues aren't known at this time for Futures. Question if reimbursements for this year will be by site vs set amount. Tom spoke to difference in reimbursements and that one or two of closest hosts should be considered. This will be discussed once sites are chosen.

He presented schedules for reimbursements for athletes, coaches and officials for 2026. ***Henry made motion to approve reimbursement proposals. Motion seconded.*** Travel requests for meets not on schedule still need to go through Tom Hasz. Requests are now submitted to Gulf Office. Schedules have cut off dates for reimbursement submissions. **Motion passes.**

OFFICIALS: Fred Bogar presented report. 34 new officials with 387 total officials. This year, 31 new AO. 99 new S&T. (See report).

National Evaluator came to Southern Sr Champs. New national certifications were awarded. At the OQM meets - proper deck manning is difficult when competing with AG Champs. It significantly decreases officials base when having to run as national meet deck.

Dana Covington (former national Officials Chair) from NC will be attending Gulf University in the spring. Recommendations are being made for Head Ref and AO Ref for Southern Zones. Fred encouraged all attending to keep recruiting officials from their teams. The Officials on boarding experience is much improved.

SAFE SPORT REPORT: Tanja Avant presented her report. There hasn't been much info coming from USA Swimming since Sept. Currently, 23% of Gulf clubs are Safe Sport certified. Gulf Swimming is now ranked 26 in nation. South Texas and North Texas are still in the top 10 in country.

Updated Zoom trainings are on the Safe Sport page on Gulf website. Annual virtual training was Nov. 8th for Safe Sport club chairs. Great info was presented. Recording is pending to be posted.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

Motion to adjourn meeting was made and seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.

Minutes posted by Gulf Secretary Jennie Shamburger.