

Kentucky Swimming Town Hall Zoom Meeting

Date: May 14, 2020

Time: 7:00 PM (EDT)

Amy Albiero, KYLSC General Chair: Welcome/Introductions:

LSC BOD and/or staff on the call

Administrative Vice-Chair - Chip Augustus, Rules Chair – Rules Chair, Finance Vice-Chair – Bobby Livesay, Program Development and Operations Vice-Chair – Brian Johnson, Senior Vice-Chair – Chrislyn Ruddy, Age Group Vice-Chair – Mike Essig, Safe Sport Chair – Kris Humphries, Coach Representative -Pedro Pereira, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Chair – Ruth Ann Bode, Athlete Representatives – Lily Jones, John Michael Hayes, Katie Bridwell and Hayes Varvel

Board Members are a diverse group, and all share your love for swimming. As we are thinking through all decisions, we are making are for you our hope is just like yours is to get back into swimming safely and responsibly.

General Chair, Amy Albiero – Amy is the Head Coach and Owner of Cardinal Aquatics and the owner of SafeSplash/SwimLabs Swim School. She is married to the UofL head Swim & Dive Coach, Arthur Albiero, and has 3 children that have all grown up in club swimming and starting in a few months...all will have been swimmers for UofL.

Town Hall Purpose

The aim of this Town Hall is to provide you with insight into KY swimming's focus during this pandemic and to share our path moving forward. This also gives us a chance to pause for a bit, give us a chance to hear from you and give an opportunity for you to ask any questions you may have. Although we may not have all the answers at this time, we want you to know we are WITH you and moving forward with cautious optimism as we work to get our athletes back into the pool!

USA Swimming Support Highlights

Jane Grosser – USA Swimming LSC Services Senior Manager

What has USA Swimming's role been in helping LSC, clubs, members?"

USA Swimming has been the hub of the wheel. What we have tried to figure out, day by day, minute by minute with the constantly changing landscape in how the Corona Virus how it relates to us in swimming. Jane is so proud to be a part of the USAS staff working to help USAS members. The first charge was to postpone Olympics. USAS led that charge. The feeling comes down all the way to our grass roots connecting to every member of KY Swimming starting with new swimmers and go all the way up.

USA Swimming has been collecting resources to share with LSCs. USA Swimming has a web page, Covid-19 resources page. It is a clearing house organized into different areas. There are webinars and recordings in various areas. There are Safe Sport trainings. This is a great time to complete the Safe Sport Club Recognition program. There are athlete clinics and talks by Olympians. There are links to help teams navigate the PPP program and CARES act. They are trying to find the best information to support members and trying to get it out as quickly as possible.

The 1st round of USAS Foundation support is ending. There were 318 applications. One million dollars will be distributed to teams that qualify. USAS is guiding teams and LSCs and coaches back through the process to find best practices. We continue to be a landing spot for everyone to look to.

This time to connect with each other is invaluable. USAS is trying to take an approach as an NGB, a leading national governing body. USAS wants to be the leaders to go at this in a safe systematic way.

The USAS Board of Directors is voting tomorrow for sanction suspensions and will likely be suspended through June.

May and June is a time to reconnect with the team working in the guidelines of your local and state entities.

USAS is taking crawl, walk and race perspective. May - Don't worry about training right now

June – CRAWL: Athletes are significantly detrained right now. Taking a logical approach back to practice is important.

July – WALK: There will be low numbers at the meets. USAS is looking for teams to host some formative meets. You need to throw out everything we know about meets. Meets with large numbers are not realistic. How can we best meet the needs of 10, 20 swimmers at a time.

Officials committee is working to modify officials certification. We will have more micro meets.

August – RACE: 17 regional meets planned throughout the country. Celebration and return gateway to competition. Could all change tomorrow and will update us if it does.

Overview of the Kentucky Swimming LSC, and /what resources are provided for our coaches/athletes/parents, etc.?

USA Swimming is our National Governing body. USA Swimming has 3,000 clubs with 350,000 swimmers.

The nation is divided into 4 zones, Western, Central, Eastern and Southern.

Kentucky Swimming is part of the Southern Zone.

The Southern Zone consists of WV, NC, SC, GA, FL, Mississippi, Louisiana, SE (TN and AL), and Texas which has 5 LSCs.

What is an LSC? Local Swim Committee - An LSC is the local level of USA Swimming.

We are one of 59 LSCs. Kentucky Swimming's territory covers the state of Kentucky excluding Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties.

There are 26 teams in our LSC with approximately 2,500 athletes, 120 coaches and 215 officials.

Kentucky Swimming has been communicating to its members in several different ways.

Emails are sent out regularly to clubs usually through the coaches

USA Swimming has a fabulous group of people who regularly send information beneficial to coaches, athletes and clubs.

That information is passed along in several ways: Through the KYLSC website, there is a COVID-19 Information and updates page under EVENTS. It is updated as information is received. We also have a KY Swimming FaceBook page and Instagram account. FaceBook – kentucky swimming & Instagram – ky swimming

The Board of Directors has been meeting every two weeks.

The meeting minutes are posted on the LSC website under Governance – BOD minutes

Athlete communication has been every two weeks through the KY LEADS Athlete club representative program.

Approximately 25 club Athlete Representatives attended a zoom meeting last week where they networked and discussed current events. Some of these athletes will discuss this later.

Amy Albiero - General Chair Opening Comments

KYLSC role, decision making, process to get back to practice and competition

USA Swimming's and Kentucky Swimming's priority is the health and safety of our members. We are looking to the CDC and local health organizations to lead the way for appropriate return to operations. We are eager as you are to get back to the pool. Our board represents coaches, athletes, parents, officials who serve out of the general love of this support. Our goal has been to provide as much information, direction and support to coaches on how to communicate with athletes and how to stay connected to their teams. As we move closer to reopening the economy, we are working hard to educate the government about what USA Swimming is. If you did not grow up as a swimmer, you do not understand the sport of swimming. KY Swimming has been trying to reach out in several ways, Healthy at Work proposals, reaching out to government officials to educate them on how training can be done safely and within the guidelines.

We are also working with teams to help them submit proposals as well.

Kentucky Swimming's top priority is to return to practice safely and responsibly and then think about how to return to competition.

The quick cancellation of our short course championship meets was quite devastating. It was not a decision the board took lightly. As information started coming in, the board had four emergency meetings trying to figure out ways to keep the meet in place until there was no option but to cancel.

Goal is to return to practice as safely as we can with a safe return to competition

Kentucky Swimming Support Highlights and BOD actions

Brian Johnson – Program Development and Operations

What is the process that Kentucky Swimming is doing to get back to the pool?

The Board established a sub-committee to develop a protocol for safely returning to practice. The sub-committee met via Zoom conferences, evaluated materials from various sources, and developed a written protocol that we believe provides a safe way of resuming practices. We thought it would be important to have a step-by-step process from the moment a swimmer arrives at a facility to the moment she leaves practice, and our written protocol, which is available on the KY Swimming website, lists those steps. In addition to the main objective of protecting the health of our swimmers, we also wanted to develop a protocol that teams could use to submit their own plans to the state. By using a common protocol, which would be tweaked to meet the specific conditions of each facility, we would be presenting a consistent plan and message to the Governor's office. For teams that have not yet submitted a Healthy at Work proposal, you should do so right away. You can use the protocol we developed and modify it to meet the specifics of your facility. For those of you who do not own your facility, you should also work with your facility to see if they will also submit a proposal based on your plans.

The Board is also working through various sources to try to get a meeting with the Governor's staff to explain why competitive swimming can resume safely. When government officials think about closing pools for the summer, they are most likely thinking about large groups of people congregating on the pool deck, or kids clustered close together in the water. They are probably not thinking about swimmers who are breathing into chlorinated water, spaced across lanes, and maintaining a safe distance even when they are not swimming. Our protocol and the USA Swimming illustrations that are contained in it describe how we can safely resume competitive swimming. We want to be able to explain to the Governor's office that swimming is different than other sports. Basketball players can still shoot in their driveways or parks; football players can still lift weights; track athletes can still go outside and run. But swimmers need water. We also need them to understand that our swimmers don't just compete against other swimmers in Kentucky, and other states have already started opening pools for competitive teams. We have a good message but getting in front of the right people is difficult because so many other groups are also trying to get the same types of meetings.

With regard to Lexington area teams, we are also working to meet with the mayor in the hope of having at least one 50-meter pool opened this summer for competitive teams. For coaches of teams in the central KY area who are interested in having that kind of pool access, I'd appreciate your e-mailing me to let me know your thoughts on how much pool time you would like. The teams will probably have to pay to open and maintain the pool, so we need to keep the costs in mind, too.

Finally, when we return to practice, we all need to be mindful that things are going to look different. We're not going to have multiple swimmers grouped together at the end of each lane after every set. We're not going to have groups of swimmers huddled together on deck to get instruction. We are going to have limited numbers of swimmers and very limited, if any, parents in the facility during practices. It will not be what we're all used to seeing, but we are focused on getting our kids back in the water, and that can't happen unless we're all willing to accept the changes that will need to be made.

Chip Augustus – Administrative Vice-Chair

How is Kentucky Swimming looking at scheduling meets once we are back in the water?

Will there be any long course meets posted? Will there be a long course championship meet?

As has been mentioned, our first priority has been getting back to training. Once we have a clearer picture for that, more definite decisions can be made in regard to meets, but we have still been discussing them.

Our technical planning committee has been looking at a few different options for meets:

Best case- if we are back to practice in June.

The goal is to provide a few meets to LSC-only swimmers, most likely in July/August. All dependent on facilities available and feasibility with guidelines. One meet for all ages, 1 for 12&U, 1 for 13&O.

These would not be championship meets.

We want to get back to training (and then competing) but don't need to add any extra pressure or expectations by having a championship meet.

We have been out of the water for over 2 months, so it will take some time to get back to swimming shape.

Likely scenario of virtual meets be creative and create some excitement. The board will be able to provide guidance to clubs on how to run these successfully.

Bobby Livesay – Finance Vice-Chair

Is Kentucky Swimming in a position to help the clubs financially during this time?

The LSC cannot provide as much monetary support as we would like. Given the size that we are, we need to be conservative with the use of funds and reserves that are available.

The LSC has been able to assist and provide guidance to clubs for the USAS grant.

Virtual Meet Series: This meet series is in planning stages – waiting on access to pools and USA Swimming Sanctioning. The board is looking at refunding splash fees back to the clubs for this series.

We are similar to our swim clubs in that virtually all of our revenue is derived from kids registering and swimming. Over the past several years, registrations have been declining and with COVID-19, we have to believe this trend will continue. To what level, we don't know.

With as many unknowns as we have right now, we need to be good stewards and need the reserves to cover any number of scenarios. That may change but there would have to be a lot of answered questions to get to that point. With the LSC's consistent decline in registrations over the last few years,(not steep but consistent) it is expected that will continue with the 2020-2021 season with fewer swimmers and fewer splashes.

Pedro Pereira - Coach Representative

How has KY swimming provided support to the LSC coaches

The LSC has done a great job offering the coaches a variety of resources such as continuing education webinars, mental health services, and how to keep athletes engaged during these trying times not only physically but engaged and well. We are also hosting a virtual coaches' meeting every 2 weeks where we share coaching ideas as well as having Jay Chambers (Performance Development Manager) helping us out with reopening ideas and stroke clinics. Several coaches have taken the opportunity to use the resources provided.

Athlete Representatives – John Michael Hayes, Katie Bridwell, Lily Jones and Varvel Hayes

How has Kentucky Swimming provided support to athletes during the shutdown

Katie Bridwell (PACK) reported that Athlete Club Representatives are having Zoom meetings every two weeks.

Discussions within the group consisted of ways athletes are staying in shape and ways to cope and stay sane. She explained it was also great to get together and talk to someone besides immediate family

Lily Jones (TS) explained the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion "I am Kentucky" Video Challenge

Mrs. Bode and Coach Ruddy helped the group get started. A video collage is being developed showcasing Kentucky Swimming's members. We are of different abilities and faces but have one thing in common, KY Swimming. Coaches, officials and athletes are invited to create a 3-5 second video saying "I am Kentucky Swimming", or "We are Kentucky Swimming" in which a collage will be created and used at swim meets and other places. You can also create a poster or postcard to submit.

John Michael Hayes (CARD) described an advocating initiative started by the KYLSC athletes. At the last KY LEADS meeting, they discussed how to write letters to the governor and other state officials. The letter would inform the governor and others that KY Swimming has created a plan to practice safely in keeping in line with COVID-19 guidelines. John Michael felt it was important that the governor hear from the athletes; they are able, ready and deemed to have

plan set in place where they can get back in the water safely. With other states opening their pools, the athletes feel they need to get to the governor as quickly as possible. Athletes have a voice as parents, and coaches do.

Hayes Varvel (PST) described what the KY LEADS Athlete Representative program means to him. Varvel is thankful for all the information that is distributed during the meetings. Having this meeting every two weeks has kept him informed, and it has not felt like it was a wait and see environment which he appreciates.

Call to Action: Parents contact their state representatives

Q&A:

Talking Points for Letter to the Governor: Ruth Ann (DE&I Chair) shared her letter to the governor. Has been writing daily to the governor. Attached the documents from USA Swimming how to return safely to the pool and added her personal connection to swimming, why it is important, benefits, why you are missing it, clarify the difference from training and summer fun swim.

Encourage all teams and facilities to share the Kentucky Swimming Reopen Protocol Proposal – Health at Work web site.

Trying to connect to get a sit-down meeting.

Mike DeBoor (Lakeside) it seems that once the governor approves pools, there will still be a week out to get guidelines. Seasonal pools need to get health inspection now. He explained that clubs need to work with their facility and local health departments. Even if the club has a practice plan, if the facility is not on board and ready to go with trained lifeguards, passed inspections, etc. practice will not resume. More hurdles than you think. Even if the governor says June 1 is opening date, it doesn't mean that practice will begin at that time.

Teams need to submit Healthy at Work reopening proposal now and work very closely with their facility and even have several facility option.

Dr. Stack is a person that needs to be contacted.

The more we say the same thing and educate the better the chance we have to open.

PPE items. Ordered on Amazon. Allied tools in Louisville have PPE. Parents donated masks. Check with facility to see if they

Can we be considered as a fitness facility? As governor is being educated, things may change. Some gyms are hopeful that they will be able to open their pools as part of their fitness facility. Pools' permits could be pulled if their pool was not approved to open. Athletes would be swimming illegally if the permit was pulled.

Medical Professional: Dr. Mark Gordy infectious disease in Lexington. Dave Doolin will reach out to access support and advocacy.

Greater Louisville YMCA may have a schedule for lap swim, but the pool will still need to be approved by the health department before they can.

Clark Burkle (Blairwood Tennis, Fitness and Swimming) protected somewhat under fitness center when gyms reopen. Advocating to reopen as a fitness center. Clark contacted Daniel Camron, Attorney General, who passed his letter on to the decision makers. He recommends that parents write to him as well.

June 1 has the most responsibility to do it right as they are the example and doing it under the guidelines set for fitness programs.

Jane Grosser closing words: Jane thanked everyone for letting her attend the meeting. She wished everyone good luck with efforts at state level to get things open.

Keep in mind as you go forward. It is a hard thing. This is uncharted area. Let us all try to work together and be grateful when we are back in the water. If it's 10, 20, or 100, spend the time looking forward to the opportunity versus looking back at say what if. Let's not make an 8 week or 10 weeks out of water roll over to the fall.

Notes from CHAT:

Contacting Governor Beshear: main line is 502-564-2611. To email, go to governor.ky.gov and click on "send an email".

Never hurts to post on social media platforms too! Instagram: [govandybeshear](https://www.instagram.com/govandybeshear). Facebook: GovernorAndy Beshear (@govandybeshear). Twitter: @GovAndyBeshear

I think it should also be called to the Governor's attention that people will travel to surrounding states to find swim teams. Not summer, but USA. I've already been looking in Alabama to send my daughter to. Just a thought to include in letters to him. People will find a way if needed.

Kate Wood Hall is a democratic lobbyist who has worked closely with Governor's family.
Lobbyist Kate Wood Hall - (270) 791 - 1208 email: Kate@commonwealthalliances.com

I spoke to my representative and she said to have each of us contact our state representatives and explain to them why we need their support. I spoke at length about the difference between athlete swim training and recreational swimming

Letters can go to Dr Stack, the Governor, the state representative and now it sounds like the local health department should be in the loop as well - his Facebook page was open for messages. Address for Department for Public Health (DPH) 275 E. Main St. Frankfort, KY 40621

Political leaders want to have relationships with swim team leaders. They admire swimmers so it would be helpful to invite them to come to a practice and see what a practice it is like. Can we offer them to visit a "test" practice so he or she can visit in person and ask questions? If they are not swimmers this will accelerate their learning about swimming.

Is there not still a youth sports ban until June 15?

Youth sports ban applies to kids swimming high school level. I heard it was extended out to June 30. Is that true?

According to the protocol, kids cannot congregate, but we have a couple of siblings on our team. Are the siblings, that live together of course, allowed to be in the same lane or stay together?

You would need to check the guideline of your local area, but I have heard from a few teams that are able to have siblings count as "one" swimmer as long as they stayed together in the pool diagram.

USAS COVID-19 Resources: <https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/community-quarantine-resources>

Closing: Bombard the governor's office with letters. Provide any contacts to the KY Swimming office. Know we are working on behalf of all the swimmers and coaches to get back to the pool.

Thanks to all that attended.