

Parent meeting
March 11(Zoom and GIBB)

Attendance: Anne McCoy, Jack Zhang, Yi Gu, Jin Liu, Myers, Hongyan Sheng, Jessie Armstrong, Tim Smith, Ting Chi, Andrew Duff, Collette Edge, Rick Edge, Priscilla Schmidt, Hans Schmidt, Kelly Pollestad, Chris Lebens, Olivia Lebens, Andrew Duff, Tom Reese, Bernadette Reese, Abbey Shelton, Roseanne August, Xiao Fan, Puck Brecher, Jessica Cavagentto, Baoming Zhao, Rachel Madson, Nikos & Trang Voulgarakis, Anjali Sharma (apologies to anyone who arrived late on zoom not recognized)

Board Member attendance: Darcell Myers and David Leonard

Note: With issue with zoom and hybrid of zoom/in person, which impacted AI, and lack of Board members present to take minutes, these are very rough. Apologies if anyone's comments are missing or simplified.

Parent Meeting

David discussed the organization's budgeting process, which was based on historic data and previous expenditures. He highlighted the challenges faced, including inflation, uncertainty regarding month-to-month swimmers, and the fluctuation of revenue streams.

He discussed the balance the board must take between paying for core elements of Cougar Aquatics (maintaining the club we are) and allow for the club to be accessible 9and affordable) for as many athletes as possible.

David discussed the club's financial challenges due to irregular revenue streams and the impact of loss of B-champs, one less football game, and lost revenue streams. He mentioned that they ended the previous year with a reserve of \$10,000 to \$13,000 but the Board was hesitant to use it.

David emphasized that the Board was mindful of fee increases and how the club didn't want to price out potential swimmers. He outlined a strategy the board developed when it met over the summer: work with sponsors and the rest would be covered by swim-a-thon. David explained that the team had planned to make up for this shortfall by seeking sponsors along with swim-a-thon, managing to secure two. However, there was still a budget shortfall, estimated which would have resulted in swim-a-thon of \$450 and \$500 per athlete, which would have too much. Accordingly, David spent hours reviewing budget, reviewing data, reviewing projects, and look to additional cuts. He proposed to board additional cuts to budget to ensure swim-a-thon was not too much all while ensuring that we did not repeat what happened two years ago.

He also talked about future.

David shared that they were exploring different models to improve future projections and that the club would no longer rely on fundraising to cover core mission/activities. This will likely result in some changes, including increased monthly/yearly fees. That would ensure that club could fund itself from monthly/annual, football, and hosting meets. All additional money would be used to fund our priorities. Going forward he hoped fundraising could be used to support scholarships, offset meet fees for those who need, and to support club communal events. This will be discussed at April board meeting.

Rick shared support and thinking about using fundraising in other ways beyond paying for core activities.

He emphasized the importance of fundraising not just for essential costs but also for community building. David also discussed plans for future events, including a potential second meet in September and the possibility of a spring meet.

Anne noted that there is a need for more meets, especially in the fall.

Collette highlighted the importance of maximizing meet profits and not using catering for hospitality/officials. David highlight that approach for this year. David noted that those meets require a lot of work. And how future proposal will likely have volunteer hours as part of the model.

David also discussed the financial performance of the swim-a-thon last year, mentioning that it made around \$16,000 last year so simply charging everyone 200 hundred dollars would not result in same. We are hoping for more than 200 per athlete. And while some of the money goes back to USA swimming, it goes to support their programs that address equity and injustice.

He also noted the importance of swim-a-thon as a team event, as a team event and accomplishment. He suggested that the swim-a-thon should serve as an example of what a fundraiser should be, aiming to alleviate stress and difficulty.

Priscilla noted the importance of not having prizes this year to maximize money to club. David noted that was plan. Olivia asked for coaches to encourage participate and “pump” the kids up so they see the importance and value with respect to both Cougar Aquatics and swimming.

Budgeting Challenges and Strategies in Sports Organization

Collette discussed the challenges of coordinating multiple fundraising efforts (how many clubs are doing fundraising), such as selling donuts and scholarship fundraising, noting that people often lack the time for these activities. She suggested that if they develop a system where everyone has to contribute a certain number of hours, it encourages

individuals to take the lead on these initiatives. Collette also raised questions about the budget, such as the cost of coaches and other expenses, and compared their club's expenses to those of other similar organizations.

David noted how other clubs are able to host many more meets and also how those clubs have charges (pay to be a member of Kroc center, for example) on top of fees to club.

David reiterated the financial aspects of the organization, including budget cuts and the impact of the swim-a-thon event. He again mentioned that the original budget had been trimmed and that there would be a budget meeting in May where we will workshop and go through budget for next year.

For this year, the swim-a-thon will happen in May and all athletes must participate, raising 200 dollars.

He also highlighted a rebate program, where club reserves in September over 13,000 would be returned to those families who participated in swim-a-thon and raised 200 dollars. The whole proposal was sent to families after the meeting. Specifically, David discussed the organization's financial reserves, which stood around \$13,000,

David discussed the upcoming swim-a-thon and shared plans to create a short video about setting up page (please be patient as this will happen in April). He also mentioned the need for long-term fundraising strategies and the potential for a summer meet.

Rachel's, a new team member, shared her experiences with swim-a-thon, including the introduction of creative fundraising ideas. She discussed raising money as a family throughout the year (through athletes shoveling snow or garage sale and that money would then be donated as part of swim-a-thon).

Other suggestions made throughout the meeting:

- Investigating grant opportunities
- Other fundraising activities that include selling popcorn or other items
- More meets with expectation of volunteer hours
- Coaches encouraging and creating excitement surrounding swim-a-thon. Other things like 24-hour relay were also raised as a future fundraiser to bolster excitement.
- Call for increase recruitment events, such as an open house or a "Community Swim" day. This would allow our athletes to give back while providing space to see what we do. It could also address the issue of kids not being able to swim.
- Not discussed but added idea: Cougar Aquatics Master's to generate additional funds, further community, and provide space for parents (and others) to swim.

