

## U.S. Masters Swimming

**Committee Name:** Recognition & Awards

**Committee Chair:** Elizabeth Nymeyer

**Minutes recorded by:** Sally Dillon

**Date/time of meeting:** May 5, 2024, 7 pm Central

**Actions taken: MSA (Sally/Hill):** “The RJA subcommittee will arrange for a surprise RJA award presentation in the recipient’s LMSC, and the National Office should arrange for the award plaque and pin to be sent to the recipient’s LMSC.”

**Number of committee members present:** 14

**Absent:** 1

**Guests:**

**Present:** Rich Burns, Hill Carrow, Sally Dillon, Sara Dunn, Teresa Frias, Caitlin Gagnon, Tara Mack, Ann Marshfield, Michael Moore, Nancy Nevid, Sonny Nguyen, Ray Novitske, Elizabeth Nymeyer, Nancy Ridout, Cristie McGrail (VPLO)

**Absent:** Jessie Feng

Beth called the meeting to order at 7:06 Central time and welcomed everyone.

### General Business

1. VPLO report: Cristie noted that there are many opportunities to volunteer within USAS and outside of USMS. She also said that the steps for filing a grievance with the Board of Review have been updated, which has created something that will be more accessible to the LMSCs. Cristie encouraged the committee to use the “R&A Community” online forum so there is a history of our communication. Beth asked everyone to acquaint themselves with the program, noting that only a few committee members have posted. Beth will create a “cheat sheet” with instructions.
2. Minutes approval: The minutes of the March 24, 2024 meeting were approved via email and are posted on the USMS website.
3. Next meeting date: Sunday, June 9 at 6 pm Central.
4. Subcommittee reports:
  - a. Ransom J. Arthur M.D. Award (RJA): Michael reported that the 2024 recipient has been selected. Questions –when to notify the recipient? Previously it was at nationals or within the recipient’s LMSC. If they don’t attend nationals, what do we do? Pre covid, the official “pinning” took place at the annual convention and the recipient spoke at the USAS banquet. More recently the recipient has not been at nationals and surprise presentations have taken place in the recipient’s LMSCs. An announcement (and use of video scoreboards) was made also made at nationals. The last time a USAS banquet took place was in 2019. Michael asked, “where do we go?”. If they are not at nationals, then he assumes we should arrange something else. Sally clarified that historically, the award has been presented or announced at spring nationals. She also noted that the R&A committee was informed in January that there would not be a presentation or public announcement at nationals. The recipient has been selected and Sally encouraged the R&A committee to approve a presentation within the recipient’s LMSC soon, as opposed to waiting until the fall to present at USMS Relay. Other comments included:
    - Nancy R – The nominator should be involved in organizing a local presentation, since they know best the contributions the recipient has made to the LMSC and USMS. RJA recipients have served for a long time, so they should be allowed to make the traditional acceptance speech at the Annual Meeting (as opposed to the Relay) because the audience that most appreciates the RJA awardee would be convention delegates. It’s OK to recognize them at the Relay event (assuming they are attending).
    - Nancy K – Agreed with Sally and Nancy and added that when the Matysecs were surprised with their award, a photographer was on hand to take photos. The plaque in the photos was Nadine Day’s because the award had not yet been prepared.
    - Beth – Summarized a plan for presentation: present the award first then plan for further acknowledgments.
    - Teresa – Suggested the recipient should decide about future recognition.
    - Caitlin – Thinks the presentation should be at nationals and featured IUPUI’s big scoreboard.
    - Sara – Noted that she has seen presentations at nationals and people cannot hear.

- Nancy R – Emphasized that RJA is USMS’s highest award and should be announced at Indy.
- It was MSA (Sally/Hill): “The RJA subcommittee will arrange for a surprise RJA award presentation in the recipient’s LMSC, and the National Office should arrange for the award plaque and pin to be sent to the recipient’s LMSC.”**
- Hill – Suggested the National Office send a news announcement immediately following the presentation. Beth said Daniel Paulling already has the information, and she will follow up with the National Office.
  - Beth - Wants to develop guidelines for award ceremonies and asked committee member’s input. She will forward it to the RJA subcommittee.
  - Nancy R – Asked who should be contacted to see if an announcement can be made at Indy and Ray suggested that Beth do this.
- b. Masters International Swimming Hall of Fame (MISHOF): Sally reported that Jim Matysek was nominated for the Pioneer Contributor Category on April 5. Rich offered to follow up with Meg Keller-Marvin at the Hall of Fame to be sure she received the paperwork.
  - c. Fitness Award (FIT): Ann thanked the subcommittee for their contributions in revising the award description and the nomination document. Rich revised the nomination form to make it easier for the person filling it out. (He shared a heartwarming story about an exceptional ALTS program, that can be seen on the Pacific Masters website.) Ann sent the revised paperwork to Jessica Reilly who posted it on the USMS website. She is hopeful the revised information will motivate more nominations. For the award. Other comments about the Fitness Award information were:
    - Tara - Uses Google Forms for NE LMSC; finds them easy to use, update, download and work with. The updated form is certainly better but not as easy to use as is.
    - Ray – Reviewed other award documents; 5 are Word, the rest are PDF, and some not fillable.
    - Sally – Need language to confirm the nominee is a USMS member.
    - Michael – Must print and then submit. That’s confusing and likely problematic.
    - Rich – Can they submit photos or videos?
    - Ann – A hyperlink might be needed; she’ll contact Jessica Reilly.
    - Beth – Will talk with Ed C. about other types of forms that can be used; he had a suggestion.
    - Ray – Previously there was talk with the National Office about an online form, but they didn’t have time to develop it.
  - d. June Krauser Communication Award (JKC): no report
  - e. Dorothy Donnelly Award (DDSA): no report
  - f. Club of the Year (COYA): Sara looking for help and Sally will provide historical list of nominees and the nominations from last year so she can make contact.
  - g. Award Bios: Ray said the stream of bios (stories) about award recipients has dried up. He continues to encourage the other award-giving committees to contribute. Long Distance has been a “bit helpful”. Ray suggested we consider taking the initiative by contacting the recipients themselves. He’d appreciate help from new committee members.
  - h. Creating a “Best Award Practices” document: Beth’s goal is to use it for R&A awards and also to share it with other award-giving committees. Progress has stalled and she will prioritize this for the next meeting.
  - i. Social Media and Direct Outreach: The subcommittee’s goal is to create posts promoting USMS awards and to personally reach out and share with the National Office. Caitlin has prepared an outline and posted it in Community. This month’s goal is to get the word out about each award and Caitlin’s plan is to have them created within 2 weeks. She will connect with the subcommittee. Comments:
    - Ray noted that he sent personal emails throughout the Colonies’ Zone last year, which yielded a great response, and 8 zone members were honored!
    - Nancy R recalled that past efforts to send USMS award reminders to LMSC VPs were foiled because the USMS VP aliases didn’t work. That needs to be resolved. We focused on VP’s because they typically have lighter workloads than the LMSC Presidents. She also said we need to promote the awards within our LMCS and Zones this month and not wait until June!
  - j. Award Video for Annual Meeting: Ray would like to mentor others to help prepare the annual video. He will resend to Beth so she can post it on the R&A Community Forum.

**MSA to adjourn at 9:37 pm Central time.**