



AGE GROUP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: December 3rd, 2024

Respectfully Submitted by Tristan Formon

CALL TO ORDER 12:03pm EST (Quorum)

NOVEMBER MINUTES MSA (Tris, David)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Liz Kershaw Committee Chair

Olga Espinosa Coach - Rep to SRDC

Tristan Formon Coach - Rep to DEI

Kevin Milak Coach

Alexis Mendenhall Coach

John Nelson Coach

David Orr Coach

Cammile Adams Athlete **(Absent)**

Tessa Bartlette Athlete **(Absent)**

Ally Dheeradhada Athlete

Aubrey Nelson Athlete **(Absent)**

Paul Donovan - SRDC Rep

Michael Lawrence - CAC Rep **(Absent)**

Dana Skelton Staff

Mariah Carnahan - Staff

Guests: Joel Shinofield

MISSION STATEMENT

To plan for the needs of the Age Group level of our sport. To generate, evaluate, and communicate ideas, which will assist USA Swimming in planning and developing quality age group swimming programs

RESPONSIBILITIES

To conduct an ongoing evaluation of the local and national age-group programs.

To develop and submit proposals to provide for the long-range planning of age-group swimming.

To encourage the development of programs that promote participation.

To oversee recognition for age group swimmers.

To communicate with and provide education and direction for the age group chairs in each LSC.

To develop programs to assist athletes in transitioning from Age Group to Senior.

To advise and consult with the Sports Development Division regarding camps, including open water.

To promote the inclusion of open water at all levels, including LSC competitions, LSC Championships, and Zone meets.

The committee observed a moment of silence for Mona, a long time active member of USA Swimming and a member of the Age Group Development Committee.

BLOCK PARTY DISCUSSION

Joel Shinofield clarified that Block Party is owned by USA Swimming. Reimagine Sports are running the pilot study. USA Swimming are seeking to solve issues via multiple avenues, national, committees, LSCs and in this case a 3rd party group. Goal to provide an easier process to sanction smaller meets to compete with other sports. The initial goal was a short, spring/summer pilot process to test out the technology etc. and streamlining processes. USA Swimming extended the pilot to a full membership year. This gave increased exposure to see how teams interacted with the pilot program.

Ultimate goals:

- to provide easy to sanction, low-cost sanctioning processes for member clubs. To onboard more teams to host competition.

- to increase the number of one day competition, adding to the existing competitive calendar.
- to provide avenues for new volunteers, officials etc.
- to increase retention of athletes and families.

The next step will be to measure metrics: do we have more members, have we retained more members, are there more meets etc. This will potentially provide an increased value to a flex membership with unlimited access to Block Party participation.

There was some discussion from the committee around the process.

- What are the intentions of reimagine sports? There could be a perception of other / additional intentions surrounding the pilot study. The initial thought was the Junior Swim League (JSL). There were concerns over other entities (AAU or otherwise) would potentially jump on this.
- Looking at now retention of a post-Olympic Year bump.
- Additional concerns revolved around the short, medium, long-term impacts to LSCs and the USA Swimming structure. Some parallels were drawn with the SWIMS roll out and the message that it would be seamless.
- 40 – 50 teams in Phase I now closer to 300 teams in Phase II.
- Who are the stakeholders that will produce and evaluate the data: LSC / AG / USA Swimming Staff / Reimagine Sports (producing not necessarily evaluating).
- Joel outlined some of the challenges faced by coaches and clubs in some LSCs. Many LSCs do an outstanding job of provided opportunities through existing processes to promote growth and retention. 1 team in NC and 1-2 interested in MA right now participating and or interested. Highly functioning, short/medium/long term range focused LSCs may well already be providing avenues for growth/retention.
- How could this impact the existing / current membership? The data should provide insight into intended and unintended consequences to the sport as a whole.
- Status Quo is not acceptable – we need to continue to strive to find new tools.
- USA Swimming is built around clubs not LSCs.
- Concerns were raised over the perception of conflicts of interest and how this all unfolded.
- USA Swimming uses many 3rd party groups / contractors to perform specific tasks and create solutions and ubiquitous tools for clubs.
- What is “the ask” of the AGDC? To endorse the pilot or to engage and become part of the process in exploring new solutions? USA Swimming would love to have the AGDC be a part of reviewing the feedback and content derived from this pilot study and determine those next steps.
- The AGDC would like to be kept fully abreast of all steps moving forward with the Block Party Pilot Process.
- Joel shared his mobile number to the committee to get additional informational flow in either direction.

UPDATE FROM DEI, CAC AND SRDC

Reports tabled until the next meeting.

SUCCESSION PLANNING UPDATE

Tabled until the next meeting.

NAG RECORDS UPDATE

Tabled until the next meeting.

AGE GROUP CHAIR MEETINGS - Tentative schedule for AGDC to attend. Do you have an area of expertise? Interest? Want more knowledge

Competitive Intro Group 2: December 3rd at 1:00 PM Eastern ([Zoom Registration](#))

Meet / Club Experience Group 3: January 8th at 1:00 PM Eastern ([Zoom Registration](#))

Club Growth Group 4: January 23rd at 1:00 PM Eastern ([Zoom Registration](#))

OPEN FLOOR

TENTATIVE MEETING SCHEDULE

- Jan 14, either 12 or 8 TBD

ADJOURNMENT 1:22pm MSA (Tris, David)