



ZONE DIRECTORS' COUNCIL

Zone Directors' Council Meeting

October 14th, 2024 - *Minutes*

8:00 PM ET/5:00 PM PT- Zoom

"Serving as a connecting link in the USA Swimming Community to build awareness and trust through shared communication and education."

Present: Zach Toothman (Co-Chair), Nicole Caruso, Bruno Darzi, Mike Dilli, Brianna Elliott, Melissa Hellervik-Bing, Simran Jayasinghe, Jamie Platt, Bob Staab, Jack Swanson, Thomas Ugast, TJ Walsh, Nicole Zhang

Staff: Terry Jones, Ellery Parish, Joel Shinofield, Dana Skelton

Guests: Pamela Lowenthal

Absent: Lara Robertson, Scott Shea, Hadley Wartner

Mr. Toothman called the meeting to order at 8:02 pm EST.

1. Additions to Agenda
 - a. There were no additions to the agenda.
2. Approval of [Agenda](#)
 - a. The agenda was approved unanimously.
3. Approval of [September 28th Minutes](#)
 - a. The September 28th Minutes were approved unanimously without corrections.
4. Approval of [October 2nd Minutes](#)
 - a. The October 2nd Minutes were approved unanimously without corrections.
5. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest
 - a. Ms. Parish, Manager, Business Affairs and ZDC Staff Liaison reiterated the need for Council Members to complete their yearly conflict of interest form and declare any conflicts related to the agenda at the beginning of each meeting.
6. Ongoing Business
 - a. Junior Officials Communication and Marketing Update

- i. Mr. Toothman and Marco Grieco presented updates on the new Junior Officials membership category during the recent LSC Leaders call.
 - ii. Dr. Swanson suggested identifying athletes' motivations for becoming Junior Officials to enhance communication efforts.
 - iii. Mr. Dilli inquired about national trends, and Mr. Shinofield noted that new categories often take time to gain traction, with some restrictions (e.g., 12 & Under sessions) posing challenges for adoption.
- b. ZDC Fall Board of Directors Presentation Date
 - i. Mr. Toothman sought feedback on potential dates for the ZDC's presentation to the Board of Directors.
 - ii. Dr. Swanson recommended November, citing better timing within the season.
 - iii. Mr. Shinofield and Mr. Platt highlighted the Board's current workload and suggested October as more feasible.
 - iv. A motion to schedule the presentation for the October special meeting was made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Dilli, and approved 7-4.
- c. 2024-2025 Annual Calendar & Timeline Review
 - i. [2024-2025 Annual Calendar & Timeline Review](#)
 - ii. Mr. Toothman presented the proposed calendar and sought feedback.
 - iii. Mr. Platt recommended moving the LSC Leaders survey creation to October and forming a task force for distribution in November and December. He also suggested shifting this process to July/August in future years.
 - iv. Dr. Swanson questioned the appropriateness of sharing ZDC opinions on legislation and asked about plans for a legislative review at the Zone Workshop.
 - v. Mr. Shinofield stated that USA Swimming is transitioning to a unified fall event annually.
 - vi. Mr. Staab clarified that during the ZDC's August legislative review, the focus was on providing a forum for discussion rather than sharing individual opinions.

- vii. Mr. Toothman emphasized the importance of engaging stakeholders in ZDC activities.
 - viii. Mr. Staab expressed that internal discussions are valuable but not all should be shared externally.
 - ix. Mr. Platt noted the importance of sharing information as appropriate.
 - x. A motion was made by Mr. Walsh to move LSC Leaders survey distribution to August and collation to September, seconded by Ms. Caruso. The motion passed unanimously.
- d. LSC Leaders Survey
- i. Mr. Staab raised concerns about whether LSC opinions might change after workshops.
 - ii. Mr. Platt highlighted the importance of connecting new Zone Directors to LSCs.
 - iii. Mr. Shinofield suggested developing a policy to define collective input and determine how survey concerns are forwarded to the organization.
 - iv. Dr. Swanson estimated an 80% participation rate for surveys.
 - v. Ms. Caruso questioned whether the survey might resemble the ZARC survey.
 - vi. Mr. Toothman proposed a hybrid approach where a smaller group engages with LSCs to gather feedback and brings findings back to the council.
 - vii. Ms. Caruso volunteered to lead this effort.
 - viii. Mr. Staab noted that multiple committees, including the LSC Development Committee, are conducting similar outreach efforts and warned of potential survey fatigue.
 - ix. Mr. Toothman supported collaboration with LSC Development to streamline efforts and avoid duplicating questions.
- e. Programs and Discussions from ABM

- i. Mr. Swanson suggested revisiting the structure of the ABM schedule, citing positive reception of outside-the-box panel discussions and keynote speakers.
- ii. Mr. Platt emphasized the value of in-person meetings.
- iii. Ms. Caruso recommended adjusting the timeline to allow more organizational flexibility.
- iv. Staff acknowledged receiving similar feedback and are exploring solutions such as hotel availability adjustments.

7. New Business

a. Zone Meets Funding Allocation

- i. Mr. Dilli and Mr. Shinofield discussed concerns about Zone Meet funding allocations.
- ii. Mr. Shinofield noted that other Zones are using similar systems effectively and suggested further review.

b. CEO Search Taskforce ZDC Input

- i. Mr. Toothman asked for input on what feedback to send with Mr. Platt and the CEO Task Force.
- ii. Mr. Platt reported that the task force is focused on ensuring diverse voices are heard and encouraged Zones to connect with LSCs for input.
- iii. Ms. Hellervik-Bing asked about the deadline for feedback; Mr. Platt noted it should be submitted as soon as possible, with a tentative deadline of one week from the meeting.

8. ZDC Co-Chair Elections

- a. A motion was made by Mr. Toothman to elect Ms. Parish as Election Chair, seconded by Ms. Caruso. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. Ms. Parish facilitated the election process, outlining the rules:
 - i. Voting members of the ZDC were eligible to nominate themselves or be nominated by others.
 - ii. Nominations were called for three times.
 - iii. Candidates presented three-minute speeches in alphabetical order.

- iv. Voting was conducted via email.
- v. If only two candidates were nominated, a motion by acclamation was allowed.
- c. First Co-Chair
 - i. Nominations were received for Mr. Zach Toothman, Mr. Mike Dilli, Dr. Jack Swanson, and Mr. Bob Staab. Each candidate delivered a speech outlining their qualifications and vision for the role. After voting, Mr. Toothman was re-elected as Co-Chair.
- d. Second Co-Chair
 - i. Following the conclusion of the first election, nominations were reopened for the second Co-Chair position. Mr. Dilli and Mr. Jamie Platt were nominated. Both candidates presented their speeches, after which a second round of email voting took place. The results showed that Mr. Platt was elected as the new Co-Chair.
 - ii. Ms. Parish called for a motion to destroy the ballots. Mr. Staab motioned and Dr. Swanson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Zone Updates

- a. Mr. Toothman asked for Zone updates.
- b. Mr. Dilli inquired if all Zones had completed their Administrative Procedures. All Zones confirmed in the affirmative.

10. Staff Updates

- a. Mr. Shinofield reported on hurricane relief grant applications. Applications have been extended to include those affected by Hurricane Milton in addition to Hurricane Helene. Some West Coast clubs have offered to contribute to the relief fund. A three-person task force is reviewing applications.

11. Adjournment

- a. Mr. Toothman proposed scheduling the next meeting during the third week of November, with a poll to determine the date.
 - i. Mr. Staab suggested alternating meeting times to ensure inclusivity.

- ii. Mr. Dilli noted challenges due to time zone differences for the West Coast.
 - iii. Dr. Swanson recommended returning to Sunday evening meetings, citing only minor conflicts during March and August due to LSC championship meets.
 - iv. Mr. Dilli asked about polling options to indicate times that participants cannot attend.
 - v. Mr. Toothman noted limitations with DoodlePoll but committed to exploring other options.
- b. Ms. Hellervik-Bing inquired about December dates.
- i. Mr. Toothman confirmed there was a December meeting last year but not a November one. He emphasized that meetings should not be skipped if there are agenda items to discuss.
- c. A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Caruso and seconded by Ms. Jayasinghe. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Toothman adjourned the meeting at 9:43 pm EST.