



**ZONE  
DIRECTORS'  
COUNCIL**

## **Zone Directors' Council Meeting**

**November 19th, 2024 - Minutes**

**7:00 PM ET/4:00 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), Jamie Platt (Co-Chair), Mike Dilli, Melissa Hellervik-Bing, Simran Jayasinghe, Bob Staab, Jack Swanson, Thomas Ugast, TJ Walsh, Hadley Wartner

Staff: Bernardine Dickman, Mitch Gold, Joel Shinofield

Guests: Pamela Lowenthal

Absent: Nicole Caruso, Bruno Darzi, Brianna Elliott, Lara Robertson, Scott Shea, Nicole Zhang

Mr. Toothman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM ET.

1. Additions to Agenda
  - a. There were no additions to the agenda.
2. Approval of Agenda
  - a. Dr. Swanson motioned to approve the agenda as presented and Mr. Ugast seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Approval of [October 14th Minutes](#)
  - a. Mr. Ugast motioned to approve the agenda as presented and Dr. Swanson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
4. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest
  - a. No conflicts of interest were declared.
5. Announcements
  - a. Mr. Toothman announced that there will now be an announcements section during meetings. He provided a brief report on the Ohio and Lake Erie LSC merger, which ended in a tie vote on Sunday, November 17.
6. Ongoing Business

- a. [Junior Officials Communication and Marketing Update](#)
  - i. Mr. Toothman reported that the Junior Officials article was published in *Lane Lines* earlier this month.
  - ii. Discussion on the progression of the Junior Coach program:
    - 1. Current participation stands at ~20 coaches, compared to ~40 at the end of the previous year.
    - 2. Mr. Shinofield shared participation trends: 106 first-year coaches initially, 93 last year, and 163 this year.
    - 3. Data tracking efforts for junior officials and transitions to coaching roles were noted.
- b. CEO Search Task Force Update
  - i. Mr. Platt reported that progress is on track, with group efforts following the stakeholder meeting timeline.
- c. [ZDC Fall Board of Directors Presentation Recap](#)
  - i. Mr. Toothman and Mr. Platt highlighted that the Board presentation, attached to the agenda, was well-received.
  - ii. Additional discussions with Chris and Natalie following the presentation were noted, with further updates to come.
- d. LSC Leaders Survey Finalizing
  - i. Survey questions were reviewed to assess:
    - 1. Frequency of LSC Board of Directors meetings to gauge engagement.
    - 2. Championship-level meet support to determine if athlete needs are met.
    - 3. Pain points within LSCs to identify synergies across zones.
  - ii. Suggestions:
    - 1. Mr. Platt emphasized the survey's collaborative potential and sought input from USA Swimming staff (Jane and Karen).
    - 2. Dr. Swanson proposed refining the terminology around "support" to provide clarity.

3. Mr. Shinofield suggested engaging a survey expert for format optimization.

## 7. New Business

- a. Quarterly ZDC & USA Swimming Leadership Meetings
  - i. Discussions included establishing quarterly meetings and topics for updates to USA Swimming leadership.
  - ii. Proposed timeline: April, June, September, December.
  - iii. Noted emphasis on LSC Leaders Survey as a critical component of these updates.
- b. [Information Flow Channel Graphic](#)
  - i. The graphic presented in the previous meeting is now linked on the website.
- c. [ZDC Operating Policy Fall Updates](#)- Zone Athlete Edits
  - i. Draft updates discussed to clarify the role of Zone Athlete Representatives Committee (ZARC) under the ZDC umbrella.
  - ii. Key points:
    1. Concerns raised by Mr. Swanson and Mr. Staab regarding potential duplication or fragmentation.
    2. Mr. Walsh emphasized ZARC's importance as a bridge for athlete representation without undermining broader cohesion.
    3. Agreement to finalize updates by December 19 with an email vote.

## 8. Zone Updates

- a. Mr. Shinofield reported increased participation in the Scholastic All-American program across all zones due to an increased number of applications.

## 9. Staff Updates

- a. There were no staff updates.

## 10. Adjournment

- a. A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Ugast and seconded by Mr. Staab. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM ET.