



**ZONE  
DIRECTORS'  
COUNCIL**

## **Zone Directors' Council Meeting**

**September 28th, 2024 - Minutes**

**8:30 AM MT- Denver, Colorado at ABM/Workshop**

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

Attendance:

ZDC Members: Keith Moore (Co-Chair), Zach Toothman (Co-Chair), Gavin Formon, Simran Jayasinghe, Nicole Caruso, Jerry Adams, Melissa Hellervik-Bing, Mitch Gold (USA Swimming Liaison), TJ Walsh, Bob Staab, Jamie Platt, Megan Braman

Guests: Nicole Zhang, Brianna Elliott, Tristan Formon, Steve Roush, Kyle Sobon, Jody Broyles, Joshua Johnson, Mike Wardwell, Jennifer LaMont, Paul Stockett, Tony Young, Lisa Montplaisir, Betty Kooy, Brian Toay, William Bayer, Dominick Ducato, Matthew Baumann, Violet Schwartz, Andrew Gundrum, Sandra Franc, Tom Ugast

1. Call To Order 8:32AM MT
2. Additions to Agenda **NONE**
3. Approval of Agenda **APPROVED**
4. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest **NONE**
5. Approval of [August Minutes](#) **APPROVED**
6. State of the Zone Directors' Council Presentation
  - a. Zach discussed the goals and mission of the Zone Directors Council and how the council is looking to act as a conduit for information between the Local and National levels.
7. “Boots on The Ground” Roundtable Reports
  - a. All reports were submitted ahead of time and will be posted along with the Minutes.
  - b. [Member Requirements – Jack Swanson](#)
    - i Key Takeaways: Membership understands the key requirements that come with being a member including the various trainings/courses involved. SWIMS3.0 did not roll out smoothly and several areas are still not functional at this time nearly 2 years later. Further, the group

looked at what services USA Swimming provides with a Premium Membership and how this makes it the “premium” option compared with other options such as AAU.

- ii Solutions: Organize all membership requirements into one course, To market the value of a premium membership, Conduct more extensive testing and piloting before future large scale rollouts like a SWIMS3.0.

c. [Swimmer Attrition – Zach Toothman](#)

- i Three main aspects were looked at: How do we make swimming fun, how are we doing well and how we can improve overall retention.
- ii Conclusions: Create more fun meet atmospheres to engage the athletes and their families who are attending the event too. Build a sense of community to build long term friendships between athletes and families. Conduct an exit survey from swimmers leaving the sport that could provide crucial metrics on how to improve. The group has previously worked with ASCA and their survey showed coaching quality to be most direct factor in retaining athletes.
- iii Attendees of the ZDC Meeting recommended to the group that next steps could look like interacting with clubs and including small, medium and large clubs to see what is going well and what’s not.

d. [Zone/Sectional Meets & Operations – Bob Staab](#)

- i This group reviewed Zone Meets and Sectional Meets across all 4 Zones. There were productive cross-zone discussions to see what goes well and what does not. A few common difficulties experienced by all Zones are getting bidders, scheduling dates and getting volunteers. There is no recommendation at this time.

e. [Communication Conduits – Melissa Hellervik-Bing](#)

- i Conclusions: Improving the USA Swimming website search feature would allow for easier access to ZDC Minutes/Agenda and improve overall functionality too. Creating newsletters offer a great opportunity to connect with your constituents and let them know of key events so they can plan ahead. Finally, Zone Directors are looking for more information from their LSCs in terms of contact info and what their needs are.

## 8. Ongoing Business

a. Junior Officials Membership 1-Month Launch

- i Junior Officials is a new officiating program to allow 16/17 year olds to become an official. They undergo all the same trainings and allows them to work on deck at meets with 12&U Athletes. There is legislation already being passed in many LSCs and more to come

soon. Overall, this program will offer a new pipeline to get officials for USA Swimming Meets.

- b. ZDC Meet the Candidates Session Review
  - i The unique aspect of the ZDC Meet the Candidates Session was that the ZDC asked the candidates questions tailored towards the LSCs needs and from their point of view. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive as delegates felt that the event was beneficial to increasing their knowledge of the candidates and how they would play a role for the LSCs.
- c. ZDC Onboarding Leaders Update
  - i Current veteran Zone Directors will help the incoming Zone Directors by providing them with valuable advice and knowledge to best set them up for success on the Zone Director's Council.

## 9. Zone & Staff Updates

- a. Eastern Zone: At today's Zone Meeting, the Eastern Zone will be delivering reports and voting on 2026 meet bids, the Administrative Procedures Manual and Zone Elections.
- b. Western Zone: At today's Zone Meeting, the Western Zone will be doing some housekeeping regarding their policy manual, delivering reports and conducting Zone Elections.
- c. Southern Zone: SZ had a very successful Athlete Summit in Louisville, KY and was a hugely beneficial event for all the athletes who attended. At today's Zone Meeting, the Southern Zone is bidding for 2026 meets and has Zone Elections.
- d. Central Zone: CZ had a very successful Athlete Summit in coordination with Olympic Trials in Indianapolis. Also, they held a multicultural meet in the Indianapolis area and attendees of this event were able to attend Olympic Trials as well. CZ is striving to improve communication and conversation with the LSCs and trying to build better connections with meet hosts/directors. At today's Zone Meeting, the Central Zone will be doing meet bids, elections and reports.
- e. USA Swimming Staff (Mitch Gold): Staff has been working to rotate advisors through the ZDC Meetings to offer a Staff perspective to answer questions and overall support the ZDC.
- f. ZARC Update: Zach offered an update on results of the Zone Athlete Elections and thanked all athletes for their service.

## 10. Questions & Discussion from Attendees

- a. No questions at this time.

## 11. Adjournment 9:12 AM MT