

### **USMS Annual Meeting**

The USMS annual meeting, held annually in September, is where much of the business of Masters swimming takes place. Delegates come from all across the nation and from many backgrounds, and include swim coaches, aquatic administrators, and swimmers of all ages, abilities, and vocations.

Each LMSC is entitled to send one delegate. LMSCs having more than 300 members can send a second delegate and are entitled to an additional delegate for each additional 500 registered members. The number of members from either the current or immediately previous year, whichever is larger, is used to determine this delegate allotment. In addition, members of the USMS Executive Committee receive automatic delegate status, as do the chairs of each USMS standing, board, and ad hoc committees, past presidents, zone chairs, and all members of selected standing committees.

Around 250 Masters swimmers from throughout the country are given official delegate status, collectively forming the House of Delegates. The House of Delegates is charged with maintaining the competition rules and the bylaws, electing the Executive Committee, and adopting the annual budget. Delegates assist the Executive Committee in carrying out the work of USMS, both during the annual meeting and throughout the year, through their service in the various standing and ad hoc committees.

### **Annual Meeting Delegates: Selection, Term, and Reimbursement**

Selecting delegates to attend the annual meeting is the responsibility of each LMSC. Selection procedures vary, perhaps done by the general membership or by an executive board, at a specially convened meeting or at a regular meeting. Specific guidelines may be incorporated into LMSC policies, or candidates may be selected by affirmative response to a simple motion. Sometimes, assembling a qualified delegation is challenging because of LMSC size and available funding (LMSC and personal). More often, however, the challenge is in narrowing the field from many qualified volunteers. In this case, one technique is to draft an application form on which candidates itemize their service to the LMSC, service to USMS, and reasons for wanting to attend the annual meeting. The electorate can then use these forms as a guide in choosing the best-qualified delegates.

A delegate serves no set term. Some delegates attend one annual meeting and others serve for years. Committee memberships coincide with the Executive Committee's biennial term of office (which begins in every odd-numbered year). Delegates indicate to the USMS president which committees they are interested in joining, and the president appoints committee chairs and works with them to make committee assignments. Determining factors include members' interests and strengths, number of committees one could actively serve, geographic dispersion, and any limitations imposed by code requirements. LMSCs typically ask their delegates who have no committee memberships to observe those committee meetings not otherwise attended by delegates who do have committee responsibilities.

## ***U.S. Masters Swimming***

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Annual meeting expenses include the annual meeting registration fee, transportation, and meals to and from the annual meeting. Personal ground transport during the annual meeting is seldom needed, as the business at hand fairly well consumes the available time (hence the convenience of a hotel with convention facilities). Discounted bus or taxi connections are usually available for arrival and departure. Buses are typically provided for the early morning workouts! Pre- and post-annual meeting side trips are the responsibility of those delegates who choose to take them.

Delegates who receive automatic delegate status by virtue of serving in USMS leadership positions get a portion of their expenses reimbursed by USMS (per the [\*Financial Operating Guidelines\*](#), these are the Members of the Board, Chairs of Standing, Board, and Ad Hoc Committees, Zone Chairs (or approved replacements)). LMSCs typically subsidize the annual meeting costs for their remaining delegates. Again, standing policy may dictate the exact process and proportion, or the LMSC board may determine specifics each year by motion. Smaller LMSCs may be subsidized by their zone to promote better representation among all 52 LMSCs. Out-of-pocket expenses not reimbursed may be tax deductible since USMS and the LMSC are registered as non-profit organizations (but consult IRS Publication 526 and your tax advisor).