

U.S. Masters Swimming

Committee Name:	Recognition & Awards	Session #:	1
Committee Chair:	Charis Anderson McCarthy		
Minutes recorded by:	Sally Dillon	Date/time of meeting:	8/1/2021 7 pm EDT

Actions Taken: None

Number of committee members present: 10	Absent: 5	Guests: 6
Committee members present: Committee members: Charis Anderson McCarthy (South Texas), Nadine Day (Indiana), Sally Dillon (Pacific Northwest), Mike Hillegonds (Illinois), Michael Moore (Pacific), Ray Novitske (Potomac Valley), Beth Nymeyer (Minnesota), Ginger Pierson (Oregon), and Nancy Ridout (Pacific). Ed Coates (ex officio/VPLO)		
Not present: Marcia Benjamin (Pacific), Richard Burns (Pacific), Barbara Deshler (New Mexico), Jack Groselle (Florida), and Laura Val (Pacific)		

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm EDT.

1. Chair's Report: Charis thanked the committee for their contributions this past year. A lot of work was accomplished during and between our five meetings. She noted that a new timeline has been established regarding budget submissions, so there is not a budget to review at this time.
2. Updates on annual awards: The R&A Committee is directly involved in the selection process for five USMS awards.
 - a. Captain Ransom J. Arthur M.D. Award: Nadine reported that this year's recipient was Bob Bruce, from the Oregon LMSC. The announcement was made during an Oregon LMSC Zoom meeting and Bob was very surprised. A second presentation was made at the USMS National Cable Championship event, which took place in Oregon and was directed by Bob. Bob and Skip Thompson (2020 honoree) were honored at the Spring National Championship meet, which was held recently in Greensboro, NC. The news writeup about the award promptly appeared on the USMS website. Some committee members noted that it never appeared on the USMS home page; hopefully that will happen in the future. It also needs to be on social media platforms. Both would provide more awareness of USMS awards. In addition to Bob, there were nine other worthy nominees: Dan Cox, Ralph Davis, Barbara Dunbar, John King, Mark Moore, Anna Lea & Jim Matysek, Chris McGiffin, and Ed Saltzman. Ray noted that the bios for the 2020 and 2021 recipients need to be posted on the website. Peter Guadagni has provided both speeches.
 - b. Dorothy Donnelly Service Award: Charis reported that 24 nominations were received, which is a significant increase from last year. Our outreach efforts appeared to have worked. She also contacted recipients and encouraged them to nominate others. The subcommittee has not completed the selection process but will complete that during the coming week.
 - c. June Krauser Communications Award: Nancy reported that four nominations were received. Her subcommittee contacted representatives from all LMSCs and last year's nominators. The subcommittee changed a bit because some members had a conflict of interest. The group will meet via Zoom within the next week to ten days to make their selection. Nancy thanked everyone for their efforts to promote the USMS awards this year. Charis suggested we look at the geographic diversity of nominations and do a better job in the future of targeting regions that are unrepresented.
 - d. Club of the Year Award: Rich Burns reported via email that five excellent nominations for the "Local" club of the year have been received. There were no nominations for a "Regional" club. The committee is reviewing the nominations and will rank their choices 1-5 and then speak in a call.
 - e. Masters International Swimming Hall of Fame Award: The R&A Committee can nominate individuals to the Hall of Fame in the Contributor and Coach categories. Kerry O'Brien was nominated last year for Honor Coach recognition. The Hall of Fame did not recognize any Masters that year, so his nomination was carried over to 2021. The committee is thrilled to report that Kerry was selected, and he will be honored in October at a ceremony in Florida at the Hall of Fame. Ray noted that the MISHOF has considered some other categories, but this is the only category that has been added.
3. Other Committee Reports
 - a. Zone and LMSC Communication: Beth noted that Nancy's subcommittee did an excellent job in the project to reach out to individuals at the club, LMSC, and Zone levels. The DDSA, COTY, and JKC awards received more nominations than last year. Beth said that Instagram stories she did yielded some nominations. She'd like to see us seek more ways to express thanks to our volunteers.

4. Progress reports on 2021 projects

- a. Bios and stories for USMS award recipients: Sally reported that stories for all DDSA award recipients (since 1997) have been completed since the last annual meeting. She and Ray will next be writing stories for the JKC award recipients. They could use a couple more volunteers to help with this ongoing project.
- b. Review and update of award forms: In November, the R&A Committee approved amendments to its policies. Since then, committee members (Nancy, Barb, and Sally) reviewed the nomination information and forms for the USMS awards listed above in #2 and made changes, when necessary, to assure they conformed to the policies.
- c. Increasing nominations for USMS Awards: As mentioned above in 2.c. and 3, the committee looked beyond *Streamlines* and *USMS Swimmer* to reach out to LMSC, club, and zone leaders on a more personal level to spread the word about award nominations. It was great to see the increase in nominations this year.

5. New Business

- a. Award presentation for the Annual Meeting: Charis noted that last year's award program worked very well (thank you Ray!). Peter Guadagni has indicated that he would be comfortable presenting the Ransom Arthur and Coach of the Year awards "live". Committee members supported the idea, but there will be technological issues to address. It was suggested that we could do a "back-up" video in case the plan does not work. Ray is willing to prepare this year's award presentation again this year. He may make a few changes but with experience from last year, he believes the project will go more quickly than last year. Ed noted that it is a great way to promote the awards and that the National Office managed the recordings last year. We will leave it up to Peter and the NO to determine if the two top awards can be done live.
- b. Post-convention project to create web-based nomination forms for USMS awards: The topic has been discussed often and makes sense to the committee. The NO has said that their capacity to build something is not possible now. It was suggested that we could use Google forms or other platforms. There will be advantages for the nominators as well as for us. Charis noted that some nominations landed in her junk folder. Fortunately, she checked it regularly. There has been negative feedback on the fillable form used for the RJA award because it was hard to complete in one sitting and data would be lost if not completed. This project will be focused on this fall so the forms can be ready to go around the first of the year. Nadine volunteered to work on a Google form for the RJA award. Members should contact Charis if they'd like to take part in a subcommittee to build the web-based nomination forms.
- c. Creating a USMS webinar or Peer-to-Peer event to raise awareness of USMS awards: Charis would like volunteers to participate in the planning of these events. Ed said the LMSC Development Committee is looking for topics like this.
- d. Brainstorming ideas for future committee projects: Let Charis know if you want to work on topics below.
 - a. A nominee can be handicapped by the person writing the nomination letter. Poor writing and/or organizational skills can hamper a nomination. When a nomination is not clear or inadequate, we should ask for more.
 - b. Charis suggested we discuss this in the fall; this tactic needs to be equitable. If the same type of information is being missed, it may need to be explicitly called out on the nomination form. We might not be asking the right questions.
 - c. The volunteer vs compensation issue needs to be clear.
 - d. Recognize volunteers who are being honored at the local level by elevating the information regionally or nationally.
 - e. Review the award nominations as soon as they are received; ask for additional information if needed.
 - f. Let nominators know if their nominee didn't get selected and encourage them to nominate the following year. Constructive feedback on the nomination would be appropriate.
 - g. Follow up on this year's award presentation with a Peer-2-Peer event that emphasizes the nomination process.
 - h. Review the forms to be sure we are being specific enough; encourage more information.
 - i. Consider having an anonymous nomination as a template for "how to" during the P-2-P call.
 - j. Ray and Sally previously participated in a P-2-P teleconference about recognition and awards (July 2018). The focus then was on the recognition of volunteers at the LMSC and club level. It was suggested that our event should focus on the application process and how to write a successful nomination.
 - k. Audience member, Nancy Kryka, said it is easier to get good information from the nominee.
 - l. Audience member, Mike Whaley, submitted a DDSA nomination but did not use the form. More information and framework about what are expected would have been helpful.
 - m. Our committee's awareness of the awards likely exceeds the layman's awareness.

6. Other business

- a. Awards for RJA and DDSA: Sally suggested we budget for more pins in 2021. We ordered redesigned pins for both awards in 2013 and our stock should be running low. Nadine said the NO is now ordering the RJA plaque and can order the pins as well. Charis should follow up with the NO about the bidding process. Sally has already sent her the information from the last order.

- b. Upcoming meetings: Ed reminded all that there will be a very short meeting on September 2 so we can approve this meeting's minutes. Committee members need to register for that meeting. It was agreed to meet next in late October. Charis will send a Doodle poll with date options.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 pm EDT.