

Colonies Zone Annual Meeting

Date: August 27, 2026

Chair	Jeremy Gross, Chair, Colonies Zone and Chair, Delaware Valley LMSC
Facilitator	Jeremy Gross
Source	Colonies Zone Meeting's transcript - July BOD call.pdf
Meeting Purpose	Share LMSC updates, surface issues and opportunities for USMS National Office and Board consideration, review current USMS strategic priorities, and discuss upcoming annual meeting and volunteer activities.

Attendees

USMS / Zone	Position			
Guy Davis	NE / Colonies at-Large Director			
Ed Coates	USMS / President			
Tara "T" Mack	Recognition & Awards			
Denise Dombay	USMS and Potomac Valley Treasurer			
Adirondak	Position		Delaware Valley	Position
Kathleen Meany	Chair		Jeremy Gross	Zone & DV LMSC Chair
Marianne Hassan	Secretary			
Maryland	Position		New England	Position
Rand Vaillancourt	Chair		Jason Weis	Chair
Megan O'Connell	Treasurer		Douglas Sayles	Membership
Metropolitan	Position		Doug O'Brien	Vice Chair
Jayne Aaint-Amour	Treasurer		Potomac Valley	Position
Roberta Saint-Amour	Chair		Courtney Randolph	Communications
Robert Kolonkowski	Insurance & Safety		Mollie Grover	Top-10
New Jersey	Position		Jeff Strahota	Chair
Hetal Sampat	Secretary		Ray Novitske	Colonies Web Master
Chris McGiffin	Vice Chair & Membership		Brett Laplante	Secretary & Vice Chair
Hetal Sampat	Secretary		Virginia	Position
Connecticut	Position		Carl Ingebrretsen	Chair
Pam Moss	Chair		Chris Stevenson	Membership & Top-10

Minutes

1. Call to Order & Welcome

Jeremy Gross, Colonies Zone and Delaware Valley Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees to the Colonies Zone Annual Meeting. He reviewed the meeting agenda and introduced USMS guests, including Guy Davis, Denise Dombay, Tara "T" Mack, and later Ed Coates.

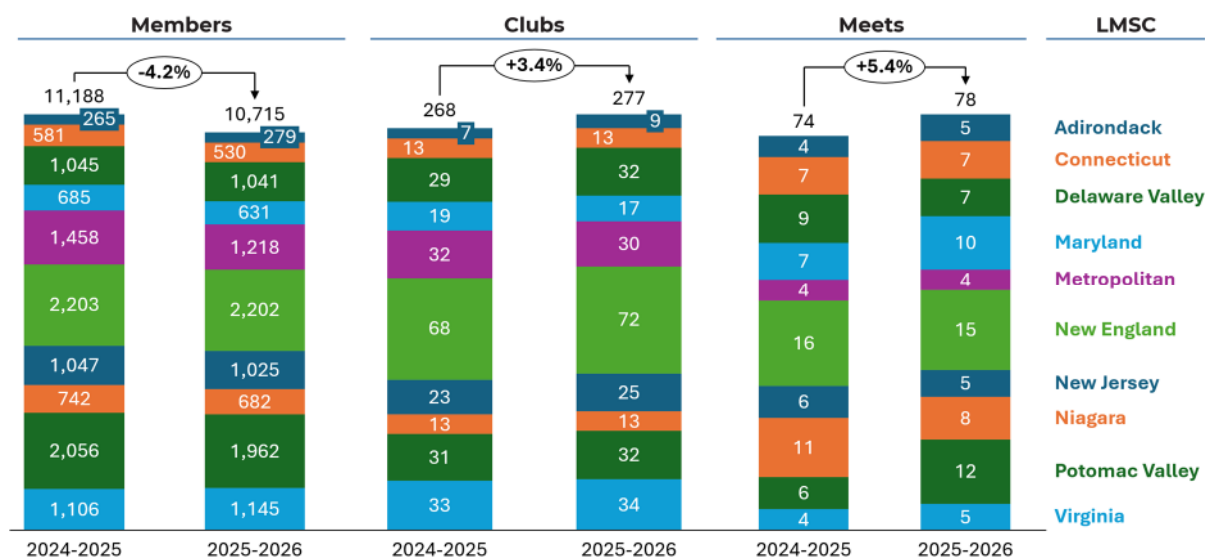
2. Reports

Chair Report

Jeremy reported that the Colonies Zone annual report had been submitted to USMS.

Key highlights included a summary of the table below which was included in the annual report:

- Zone membership declined approximately 4% year-over-year, half of which is attributed to the departure of a single large club from the Metropolitan LMSC.
- The number of registered clubs increased to approximately 3% to 277 across the Zone.
- Sanctioned meet activity increased approximately 5%, from 74 meets to 78 meets.



- The 2025 Short Course Meters Zone Championship at Boston University attracted 278 swimmers representing 43 teams.
- The 2025 Short Course Yards Championship at George Mason University attracted 370 swimmers, continuing strong participation trends.

Jeremy thanked all LMSCs and volunteers for supporting meet participation and membership engagement throughout the year.

Webmaster Report

Ray Novitske reported that the Colonies Zone website continues to provide valuable resources, including championship records, award histories, and meet information.

Ray noted:

- Website hosting and domain costs totaled approximately \$179 for the year.
- Potomac Valley has covered recent website expenses.
- Additional LMSC support will be needed for future website funding.
- New Jersey LMSC offered to discuss covering future website expenses with its board.

Ray also shared that personal health issues limited his activity earlier in the year but reported that website maintenance is now back on track.

USMS At-Large Director Report

Guy Davis provided a high-level update on USMS national initiatives.

Highlights included:

- USMS is continuing development of its Knowledge Network initiative, which is expected to include online training modules for coaches and Adult Learn-to-Swim (ALTS) instructors, supplemented by future in-person clinics.
- Feedback from previous Colonies Zone discussions has been shared with national leadership, and a follow-up summary document will be distributed.
- Ongoing discussions continue regarding improved access to LMSC records, results data, and potential technical solutions to support record management for LMSCs.
- USMS is exploring opportunities to increase funding available for Adult Learn-to-Swim grants in future years.
- National efforts continue to modernize volunteer communication platforms, including expanded use of Slack.

Questions were discussed regarding coach education, ALTS instructor development, LMSC records access, and technology priorities.

3. Zone Service Award

Jeremy announced that **LaTanya Moyer (Virginia LMSC)** was selected as the recipient of the **Dot Donnelly Colonies Zone Service Award**.

Highlights from the nomination included:

- LaTanya learned to swim as an adult after overcoming a lifelong fear of water.
- She now serves as CEO of *Black Girls Do Swim* and has become a strong advocate for swimming access and inclusion.
- She serves as Virginia LMSC's DEI Chair and has been an active volunteer since 2022.
- She has taught more than 100 adults to swim, focusing on women and swimmers of color.
- She has expanded Adult Learn-to-Swim programming, instructor development, and Grown-Up Swimming participation in Virginia.

The Zone congratulated LaTanya and thanked Carl Ingebrigtsen for submitting the nomination.

4. Zone Championships

Short Course Meters Championship

Douglas Sayles reported:

- Boston University will continue to host the Short Course Meters Zone Championship.
- While scheduling challenges remain for the upcoming year, BU leadership has committed to providing more favorable and consistent scheduling in future years.
- The goal is to establish Boston University as a long-term championship venue.

Short Course Yards Championship

Douglas reported that SCY Zones will not return to George Mason University this year, and any future events at GMU are uncertain. Alternative venues need to be explored any insights from LMSC's is appreciated.

Discussion focused on:

- Identifying pools capable of supporting 300-400 swimmers.
- Potential venues in Northern Virginia and Loudoun County near Regan International Airport.
- The importance of finding facilities with local team support and volunteer resources.
- Seeking recommendations from LMSCs across the Zone.

Douglas thanked Jeff and others who assisted with championship planning and venue negotiations.

5. Expenses / Budget

The Zone discussed website hosting expenses.

Key points:

- Annual website hosting and domain costs totaled approximately \$179.
- Several LMSCs have supported the website over the past several years.
- New Jersey LMSC volunteered to review funding support with its board and report back.

No additional budget items were discussed.

6. New Business

Open Water Outreach

Jeremy provided an update regarding efforts to strengthen connections between USMS and regional open water organizations.

Discussion included:

- Opportunities to improve collaboration with independent open water event organizers.
- Potential methods to increase visibility of open water events among USMS members.
- Continued conversations with USMS leadership regarding event listings and swimmer engagement.

Grown-Up Swimming Events

Jeremy shared plans for a local, informal "Grown-Up Swimming" style event intended to:

- Introduce swimmers to competition in a low-pressure environment.
- Encourage participation among new and returning swimmers.
- Serve as a potential model for other LMSCs interested in similar programming.

USMS Relay and Annual Meeting

Several reminders were provided:

- Delegates should review annual meeting materials and participate in forum sessions prior to voting.
 - New delegates were encouraged to connect with experienced delegates for guidance.
 - Upcoming rules, legislation, and long-distance forums were promoted.
 - Informal networking opportunities at Relay were discussed.
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7. LMSC Updates

As detailed LMSC updates were provided at the LMSC / Board member meeting in July, rather than conducting individual LMSC reports, attendees discussed:

- Delegate preparation for the USMS Annual Meeting.
- Opportunities to improve communication and collaboration through Slack and other online tools.
- Support for new delegates and volunteer development.

Several attendees emphasized the value of inter-LMSC collaboration and sharing resources across the Zone.

8. Adjourn

With no further business, Jeremy Gross thanked attendees for their participation, encouraged engagement in the upcoming Relay and Annual Meeting activities, and adjourned the meeting.

Action Items

Action Item	Owner	Due
Ray & Chris to coordinate on reimbursement of Web expenses for past year.	Chris McGiffin / Ray	ASAP
Follow up with USMS leadership regarding Knowledge Network rollout and coach/ALTS training plans.	Guy Davis	Ongoing
Continue discussions with USMS regarding LMSC records access, database tools, and technical solutions.	Guy Davis, Chris McGiffin, Doug O'Brien	Ongoing
Identify and evaluate potential venues for future Colonies Zone Short Course Yards Championships.	Douglas Sayles, Jeremy Gross, interested LMSCs	Ongoing
Share LaTanya Moyer's award nomination and recognition materials with Zone members and website.	Jeremy Gross	Complete
Continue discussions with regional open water organizations regarding collaboration and swimmer engagement opportunities.	Jeremy Gross	Ongoing
Encourage delegates to attend annual meeting forums and review pre-read materials prior to voting sessions.	All LMSC Delegates	Before Annual Meeting