

Official's Committee Meeting, 11/9/21 @ 7:00 pm

Attendees: Omar de Armas, Leann Colvin, Richard Davis, Patty Garcia, Paul Szuszkiewicz and Bettie Williams

Absent: Kyle Yacoben

Omar called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. He welcomed everyone to the new year of Southern California Swimming's new board of directors and new for the committee too.

As Leanne stated in her email of Nov 5 this is the agenda for the meeting:

- 1) Evaluation Procedure
- 2) Training/Clinic(s)
- 3) Open Water Officials
- 4) Review of Officials Certification Criteria
- 5) COVID Protocols
- 6) 4-hour Rule and Meet Format
- 7) SCS 2022 Swim Festival in Las Vegas

These items are to start the planning process, we will need to prioritize before starting to work on them.

1) **Evaluation Procedure:** When we started the sub-committee the thought was that the sub-committee was to come up with an evaluation procedure and with the criteria for being an evaluator. The sub-committee morphed off into a lot more (training, etc.). Omar still needs to meet with Patrick (what has already been completed and where we can go from there).

2) **Training/Clinic(s):** Richard and Karen attended one from Colorado (virtual) for Deck Referee Training. Mike Gilles who put that together gave Omar the link to all the materials that are on the Colorado website. Richard thought the training went well, except that it was long for a Zoom meeting (about an hour and half). Richard thinks an hour should be the maximum so that you can keep everyone's interest.

Richard also commented on how we should try and focus on getting individuals committed to training as an official. Some individuals are only committed to training on deck as long as their swimmer is in the water. Omar mentioned that this is one of the issues across the United States and only having volunteer officials. A lot of times they

don't even work a full session. It is recommended that the volunteers work a full session.

3) **Open Water Officials:** USA Swimming has an Open Water criteria. We need to create the evaluation form (before that we need to know the positions are). Paul will send out the information to the committee. We are having more and more open water meets.

4) **Review of Officials Criteria:** Since the criteria went into place in 2019 there has been only one person to attempt to get their Heats and Finals Meet Referee. We need to review the certification criteria. The Timed Final Meet Referee has the stipulation that they must be familiar with all the positions on a swim deck. As a Meet Referee you are in-charge of those positions (oversee all the positions including the Admin).

The Heats and Finals Meet Referee Certification Criteria says you must be certified as an AO (not AR, but AO). The Heats and Finals Referee: the majority of what they're doing is in Admin (since this is where most of the issues are coming from). They should also be versed in knowing the timing system and troubleshooting.

5) **COVID Protocols:** Someone attended a meet and tested positive for COVID-19 a couple of days after it ended. We need to put something in writing that if someone has been exposed to COVID-19 what is their responsibility. What is the Meet Referee's responsibility and who needs to be notified.

6) **4-hour Rule and Meet Format:** Update; Everything that is sanctioned to the end of year can go as is without changing the 11–12-year-olds. Starting in January the 11–12-year-olds can only be in one session. The 12&Unders can only swim in one session and must be planned for 4 hours.

The way the USA Swimming Rules shows is that the 12 & Under swimmers can only swim in one session, and it must be completed within 4 hours / has to be planned for 4 hours. What we have been doing for years is interpreting that the open events were not age group events that they were actually senior events. A senior event is not based on age, it's based on time (that's why it had the time standard associated with that open event). So, then it did not apply as an age group event.

Now the interpretation is that if you're an 11-year-old swimmer then you can't be there for more than 4 hours and only participate in one session. If you have a session that goes 4 hours and 20 minutes, then that's still 4 hours. There is about a 5 to 7 percent scratch that happens. So, in the past Admins would allow 4 ½ hours because of the scratches. If your meet is pre-seeded, then that does not apply. Any equipment issues are not counted towards the 4-hour rule. This will be a mini clinic with Admins.

7) **SCS 2022 Swim Festival in Las Vegas:** Michael Kenross is putting in a bid to run the Swim Festival in Las Vegas. Last time it was done at Commerce (before COVID). He would like to have a mini-stroke session before the meet. The Swim Festival has always strictly been a volunteer meet for officials. Last time the Swim Festival was either January or February. It is scheduled for a clinic Friday evening; the swim meet is Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning.

8) Our Annual Clinic: Once a quarter we will have specific topic clinics (starting with COVID-19 and How's everyone doing). We should attend a few of these virtually and then start our own (Benchmark). We should attend a few of the virtual clinics and then do our own.

Prioritized List:

- 1) COVID Protocols (possible contact or if you're exposed): Leanne will put something together and will send it to the committee. A lot will be based on the facility (what is their requirement if we know about a positive exposure).
- 2) 4-hour Rule and Meet Format: Bettie, Omar and Leanne will come up with something and send it to our committee. It would then go to the Board with James and Mitch. It would then go to everyone else involved.
- 3) Review of Officials Criteria / Open Water Officials: Omar will get the document for Officials Criteria (will put it on Google doc so that everyone can make updates); Paul will take care of the Open Water. We really need to look at all the criteria. Everyone should look at the criteria and send comments to the committee. We will schedule one meeting for each one of the criteria. Omar will upload it to the google drive so that everyone can make changes and it records who made it (you can also put comments without making any changes).

We can do what we did back in March 2019 (we had a meeting with the officials; you put the criteria out there and let comments and questions come in and answer them during a meeting).

- 4) Evaluation Procedure: Omar talked to several people it appears that the way that it went was towards the training aspect. Patty will request from Patrick to get the PowerPoint presentations and put them on a google drive for the committee to review.
- 5) Recruiting: What are we going to do to recruit? One of the things we need to put together a bullet point list of what things to cover in these meetings (brochure or flier with updated links; make copies and hand them out). Omar might recruit his

son to make a flier so that we can pass it out to people. Paul will also work on this.

Omar: One of the things that is in the Bi-Laws is that Leanne and Omar choose who is on the committee. Omar and Leanne's vote is that the current committee members stay on the committee. Omar asked if there is anyone that doesn't want to stay on the committee, and no one declined (Kyle would also be asked; Paul is honored to be on the committee, but at some point, he would like to nominate someone in his committee for his spot). Omar will then send out an email from the Official's Committee to all the Committee Chairs to say who is on the committee.

One of the criteria to be on the committee is that each member is open and can speak with their mind on any topic that there is and bring up to the group. Everyone is willing to listen, and we come up with the best solution possible.

Bettie submitted a protest against a Meet Referee and Admin Referee, and she wants to know where that is. The protest went to the General Chair, and he has not yet officially sent it to the Official's Committee.

The disciplinary policy that was put together has steps. The appeal process is the same for anything, but the point in the official's committee disciplinary policy is that depending on the severity and what the infraction is, is where it starts. It could be a discussion with the particular people or if it actually goes to a hearing.

The beginning processes are what we do on the deck every day. Where the Meet Referee talks to an official if there is an issue with them. If it's more severe then it goes to the GEO Chairs Committee and then it goes to the regular committee. We can go anywhere from a Letter of Reprimand to Suspension to Demote (along the steps; every step has to have an appeal). We didn't have it outlined what would happen for every step (the appeal steps). Only USA Swimming can remove their membership (we cannot do that).

- 6) Disciplinary Policy: We should review and look at and make it a little clearer on certain steps. Richard will work on the disciplinary policy (Omar will send it to him).

Omar will follow up on the athlete representatives.

Meeting Ended: 8:34 pm

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 @ 7:00 pm