



**USA Swimming Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
 Committee Meeting Minutes  
 (06/27/2022)  
 10am PT/11am MT/12pm CT/1pm ET**

**USA Swimming Mission:** USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming. We administer competitive swimming in accordance with the Olympic & Amateur Sports Act. We provide programs and services for our members, supporters, affiliates and the interested public. We value these members of the swimming community, and the staff and volunteers who serve them. We are committed to excellence and the improvement of our sport. We are committed to providing a safe and positive environment for all members.

**USA Swimming Priority Results:**

1. USA Swimmers achieve sustained competitive success at the Olympic Games and other high-level international competitions.
2. Members have and use resources for sustainable success.
3. There is growth in swimming participation and interest.
4. USA Swimming is recognized as the “Best in Class” National Governing Body.

**ATTENDANCE**

Name	Attended Mtg
Wade Atkins	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Leland Brown III	
Tina Dessart	
Jennie Shamburger	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jim Peterfish	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Rendy Opdycke	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michael Fuji	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Ruth-Ann Bode	
Samantha Brabeck	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sophia Elliott	
Zoe Summar	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diya Ackerman-Vallala	x <input type="checkbox"/>

**AGENDA**

1. Review of our Mission Statement: **Wade**
2. Meeting called to order (EST): **12:00 PM**
3. Volunteer Meeting Minutes (Wade Atkins): **Alex volunteered**



#### 4. Women in USA Swimming Opportunity (guest Beth Winkowski)

- a. Started as a covid passion project discussing opportunities for women in coaching. Feel there isn't a strong presence in governance for women coaches. Pulled numbers and don't remember the specific year (19 or 20), asked for female coaches who were General chair or senior vice chairs. Out of 118, 11 are in those positions.
- b. Started talking about how we can foster or reach a hand out to the next generation of female coaches coming up and educate and run for LSC office positions to get them on committees.
- c. Came up with Women Swim Coaches in Governance committee and do a one year fellowship program
  - i. Ask each LSC to nominate female coach in their LSC
  - ii. Looking for coach who's had 5+ years of coaching experience and is invested in their career but has >1 year of governance experience.
  - iii. Asking for nominations between July 15 and August 15 to fill 59 spots
  - iv. Work with team services to solicit these nominations
  - v. 10 weeks of zoom sessions in a row with participants and have sessions on confidence, female officials, etc.
  - vi. Do check ins to prepare these women to run for LSC elections in the spring and bring them to the workshop in Colorado Springs for face-to-face interaction
- d. Ruth-Ann – What is communication strategy? Working with Devonie who works in comms for team services. She's come up with a plan that includes doing an article on data and statistics and why this is important. We have the ability to identify all coaches who have been coaching for 5+ years and can email them directly as well as LSC chairs, DEI coordinators and coach's reps to solicit nominations. Working on a plan to hype up fellowship throughout the year. May not fill it the first year, but hoping to fill the following year.
- e. Wade – Why limit this to coaches? Beth - Feel officials are doing a great job and want to model what they are doing. Wade - What about non-athletes and non-coaches? Why only looking for General chair and vice chair? Beth - Did some focus groups that included female chairs and other strong female voices across the country. Women are doing a lot but aren't considered visionaries at the table.
- f. Alex – As a female coach I like that you're looking for coaches. Nothing wrong with outside volunteers, but if we're trying to keep women in coaching long term this is an excellent way to do it. Female coaches are leaving and if we don't make changes that they need, we won't have any left.
- g. Leland – How can we help? How can we help push work further than just women to intersection women (Lesbian, of color, disability, etc.)? Beth -



Help spread the word. We will be transparent and if there are ways we can improve it, we want to know. We are very open to all women coaches regardless of any intersectionality. Leland - The challenge is we know there are a ton of women in the US but most are white and affluent. We have to be more targeted with intersectional women and be intentional to get them involved in swimming and stay in swimming. How can we be more intentional? Beth - Not sure I have an answer and throw it back to you. How do you think you can help? We had not discussed the diversity of the group; we weren't thinking to actively diversify it but also not actively trying to not diversify.

- h. Wade – we might get questions about why other females aren't being invited and the answer is that we are focusing on coaches this first round.
- i. Beth - Speaking to women who want to be more involved or who are in these positions who don't know what they're doing. These are the people we are looking to target as the next generation of leaders to provide a support system to get them in the door.
- j. Jim – At about under 10% of females being in these positions. Do we know the number of female to male ratio nationally? Beth - Generally speaking it's about 50/50% maybe 52% male. Jim - Is that a target goal to balance that out? Beth - Target goal is to have more female coaches in governance roles. Jim - Are we trying to make it more like what USAS looks like? Beth - We haven't thought about it that specifically because there are a lot of people in the governance group. We just looked at it in terms of bringing more people to the table.
- k. Leland – if anyone has further questions, send to Beth at [Bwinkowski@usaswimming.org](mailto:Bwinkowski@usaswimming.org). Women get pushed into administrative positions and it will look like we are moving toward equity but when we look at power, it is generally lopsided towards men.
- l. Wade – task Alex and Ruth-Anne to be liaisons for this project for the DEI group.

## 5. Introduction of Michael Fuji – Wade

- a. Head coach of San Benito Aquatics in Hollister, Ca. Been coaching for 20 years. Wounded veteran and joined group to give insight for disabled, wheel-chair bound minorities. Want to give more exposure to our athletes and LSC for those that are physically challenged.

## 6. Updates from USA Swimming – Leland and Noah

- a. Community impact grants – releasing a press release and/or article in the next two weeks about which teams were awarded grants. 10 Teams have already been sent their checks and have been accepted.
- b. Hosted NCAA's inclusion forum and the NCAA will have recordings made available in the next two months on their website (google NCAA Inclusion Forum 2022). Conversations with Candice Parker, Billy Jean King, Secretary of Education, Dr. McGail Cordova and were beneficial to the work we do. No cost.



- c. Will be awarding HBCU grants as well. Can reach out to me if you want more info. Are to help curb swimming literacy in black communities with the goal to
  - i. Create those who are trained
  - ii. Those who can train others
  - iii. Helping swimming literacy on campus
  - iv. And creating competition
- d. If you have any cool pictures or stories keeping you connected to world champs, please email Leland.
- e. Wade – briefing on open committee positions? Had two open positions and sent letters to Emily Murray and Tommie Jackson. Waiting to hear back from one of them and we are in good standing with one of them already accepting.

## **7. FINA Policy – Abby and Joel**

- a. Joel - New FINA policy about transgender inclusion and the new prohibitions around male to female transgender athletes and what their path looks like. FINA has determined that an athlete that has gone through puberty will be ineligible to compete. Mentioned in their release that they will explore an open category for them to compete but will take 6 months before it will be implemented. It is unlikely that an open category will be present in USAS competitions in near future. Don't believe they'll implement it in 6 months, but think they will be in the developmental phase. Some ways they'll determine how an athlete will be categorized includes Chromosomal testing, something that is not be feasible in the US to do based on cost.
- b. Abby – this is applicable only to international events and doesn't affect local events. It might affect Olympic Trials because that is who represents us in international events. Could also mean Jr. National and national levels and also FINA approved events. Unlike policy that was developed by USAS in Feb 22, this was voted on by FINA congress and the majority vote passed it.
- c. Joel – FINA approved events are limited in number in each continent. The number generally goes up during an Olympic year. Example of an extra event would be time trials at NCAA. On an annual basis meets that are approved by FINA for USAS include Pro-Series, National Championships and US Open and sometimes long course Juniors. Have to conform to their standards in order for our athletes to participate and to not violate the Ted Stevens act.
- d. Alex – How did USAS vote? Joel - USAS is part of a group including Artistic swimming, diving, water polo, masters and USAS. Was our vote yes, or no? Not sure how voting went but our overall vote was affirmative. FINA has not made it known who voted for what. Alex - Is there someone else we can contact to find out how we voted? Joel - We'll let you know when we have confirmation.



- e. Wade – do our gender identity procedures stay the same at a local level for transgender athletes? Abby - Yes, but we will review our elite athlete section that we noted in our Feb 22 release. The self-identity verification policy will remain in place. Joel - The only change is in the athlete support program about FINA’s policy and that they may not be eligible for international events. Something we will share with their coaches as well.
- f. Alex – if we have to update elite athlete section will DEI committee be consulted? There will be an assessment with Abby and outside counsel and if we are legally bound to change our policy based on FINA we will change it. If we have the ability to have a multilayered approach to determine eligibility at our national competitions even though they are FINA approved, then we would come to this group to seek guidance. Abby – start with legal review and determine our flexibility and consult a number of different groups.
- g. Leland – If you have further questions/comments email Joel and Abby.

## 8. Project Assignments (WA)

### a. Overarching Goals:

#### i. Develop (3) Resources for Coaches, Athletes, and LSC Boards – Alex, Jim –

1. Alex - Guide to create DEI Committee for Teams - Have a meeting with Portland Aquatic Club (PAC) who, to the best of my knowledge, is the first to create this on their team.
2. Wade – can we have something to present by the end of July? Yes.
3. Jim - 30 ASL Signs project – determined signs and have someone working on finalizing them. May have to go through legal as far as copywrite rules for signs that have been published before. Hope to have completed by end of summer. Want to publish the signs and also have video so coaches can learn them. Talked to Theron and Paul who made most of the content for the tapping video. That is something that could be completed, but would like to have them schedule a webinar.
4. Leland – when you have it ready, we can make it look pretty and take care of the rest.
5. Wade – Abby and Michelle can help us with any legal issues.

#### ii. Hold (1) Webinar – Educational Event – Sophie

1. Three topics that we decided on:
  - a. Round table with Tommie Jackson and Stanley McIntosh to learn about their clubs and swim lesson programs



- b. Paralympic/disability swimming and coaches who work to create an inclusive environment
        - c. Athlete round table with elite athletes and LSC reps to discuss what they have done in DEI
      - 2. Wade – once you know what you want to do, reach out to Leland and Noah to plan logistics and help identify other leaders
      - 3. Ruth-Ann – the round table is the first project we’re going to do. Make it an interview video.
      - 4. Wade - Add to the group Rob Green and Keisha, who held first Juneteenth meet.
    - iii. **Create (1) Athlete Influencer Toolkit - Diya, Sophie and Zoe -**  
Have 7 athletes working with us. Want to have a form for applying to be an influencer completed by next meeting as well as a rough draft of the training we want to do. Looking for coaches or adults that can serve on subcommittee. Looking to roll out new set of athletes every summer and throughout the year have zoom trainings. In the long term, have athletes leaving the program mentor the new ones coming in. Next meeting is July 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00EST
    - iv. **Develop and Disseminate (1) Membership Experience Survey –**  
Wade - Have a draft of 10 probing questions, been suggested to have more questions and an open comment section. Still working on wording and this will be a baseline survey.
    - v. **Ad Hoc Assignments:**
      - 1. **Reviews:**
        - a. **Children w/Challenges – Jim – On pause**
        - b. **Adaptive Coaching Guide resource-Jim – long term project and will not be ready by end of this month**
- 9. Wrap Up and Next Meeting Announcement:**  
a. Next Meeting scheduled for July 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00EST
- 10. Adjournment (EST): 2:00 PM EST**
- 11. Minutes submitted by:**  
a. Alex Cramer