

USA Swimming Athletes' Advisory Council Minutes

January 16, 2026 / Virtual Meeting

Present: Phoebe Bacon, Topher Bishop, Gunnar Bentz, Nic Fink, Lilly King, Caitlin Leverenz Smith, Olivia Tighe, Alex Walsh, Allison Schmitt

Absent: Carson Foster, Katie Meili Playko, Josie Uerling

Guests: Greg Meehan, Stacy Michael-Miller, Michelle Steinfeld, and Kim Williams

Call to Order: Lilly King called the January 16, 2026, meeting of the Athletes' Advisory Council (AAC) to order at 10:04am MST

Conflict of Interest Disclosure: none

Agenda:

- Fill open seats on Nominating and OW committees: – *Lilly King*
 - Nominating:
 - Taylor Abbott has recused himself - will need someone to fill his seat.
 - Nic explained what the time commitment is for this committee.
 - Due to time commitment heading into summer may be best for a retired athlete.
 - Reach out to Lilly with athletes who may be interested.
 - Open Water:
 - Erica Sullivan has recused herself from Open Water Committee.
 - Lilly will reach out to names suggested by AAC athletes.
- LSC task force discussion and appointment of athletes to task force: – *Lilly King*
 - Board is putting together a Task Force to audit LSCs
 - Review what is working well, what could be improved, etc.
 - Caitlin chairs Governance Committee and added some context regarding responsibilities and the roles of USA Swimming and LSCs.
 - This committee needs to appoint athletes to this Task Force.
 - Good opportunity for athletes who have experience with their LSC governance.
 - Nic motion to approve
 - 7-0
- 10-year athlete board election – *Michelle Steinfeld and Caitlin Leverenz Smith*
 - All four-year terms
 - Maya Dirado's seat is up this year so a new person will fill her role beginning in September 2026
 - What qualifications are we looking for in these candidates?
 - Balance of workplace experience and recent competitive experience
 - This group will create the list of qualifications for candidates
- ONDCP and WADA update – *Michelle Steinfeld*
 - Recent proposed legislation regarding WADA
- National Team Update – *Greg Meehan and Kim Williams*
 - National Team Webinar at 10am MST on Monday, January 19
 - Funding
 - National Team Staff
 - Short Course World selections

- Update meeting times – *Lilly King*
 - Poll shows Wednesday or Thursdays may be best day
 - Many people only have morning practice on Wednesday
 - Mid-day seems to be best (approximately 1pm Eastern)
 - Lilly will send
- LA28 Alumni Olympic event – *Caitlin Leverenz Smith*
 - Many swimmers attended – mostly southern California
 - LA is offering tickets to Olympian Alumni (12 tickets)
 - Working on plan to share
- Athletes who fall off funding: *Nic Fink*
 - Nic coming back with feedback and insight

Next Meeting: February 2026

Adjournment: Lilly King adjourned the January 16, 2026, meeting of the Athletes' Advisory Council at 10:39AM MST