



**ZONE
DIRECTORS'
COUNCIL**

Zone Directors' Council Meeting

April 21st, 2025 - Minutes

4:00 PM ET/1:00 PM PT- Zoom

"Serving as a connecting link in the USA Swimming Community to build awareness and trust through shared communication and education."

Present: Zach Toothman (Co-Chair), Jamie Platt (Co-Chair), Nicole Caruso, Mike Dilli, Bruno Darzi, Melissa Hellervik-Bing, Simran Jayasinghe, Scott Shea, Bob Staab, Jack Swanson, Thomas Ugast, TJ Walsh, Hadley Wartner, Nicole Zhang

Staff: Jane Grosser, Karin Olmsted, Joel Shinofield

Guests: Pamela Lowenthal, Kathleen Prindle

Absent: Brianna Elliott, Lara Robertson

Mr. Platt called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM ET.

1. Additions to Agenda
 - a. There were no additions to the agenda.
2. Approval of Agenda
 - a. Ms. Caruso motioned for approval and Dr. Swanson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Approval of [March 10th Minutes](#)
 - a. Ms. Hellervik-Bing motioned for approval and Mr. Ugast seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
4. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest
 - a. No conflicts of interest were declared.
5. Announcements
 - a. Zone & Staff Updates
 - i. Central Zone- OH & LE Merger
 1. Lake Erie voted to merge with Ohio LSC (55% in favor)

2. Ohio to vote on new bylaws this weekend
3. Merger effective September 1 if approved
4. Challenges: Officiating differences (Lake Erie pays officials, Ohio doesn't)
5. Compromise: Officials not required to be paid, left to individual clubs
6. House of Delegates representation: 3 per club (2 non-athletes, 1 athlete)

6. Ongoing Business

- a. [Junior Officials Membership Update](#)
 - i. Mr. Shinofield there are currently 66 members and progress has stalled, which is comparable to other new membership categories.
- b. CEO Search Task Force Update- Jamie
 - i. Process ongoing; aiming to present candidates at May 4th board meeting
 - ii. Continuing search until suitable candidate found
 - iii. Over 200 names in consideration portal
- c. [LSC Leaders Survey](#)- Jamie
 - i. Report coming soon; expected to identify gaps for ZDC focus
 - ii. Will be released alongside 12 & under best practices guide and retention report
- d. Block Party Task Force Update- Bob
 - i. New dashboard created with participation data
 - ii. Q4 2024 & Q1 2025 data being compiled
 - iii. 2,300 athletes progressed from block party to regular sanctioned meets
 - iv. Total meets increased (5,780 in 2024 vs 5,200 in 2023)
 - v. 382 block party meets held in 2024
- e. CAC Liaison Update- Tom
 - i. Still waiting to hear back from the CAC. Mr. Shinofield will include Mr. Ugast on meeting invites moving forward.

- f. Zone Programming for The Summit
 - i. Each zone has a 90-minute meeting block on Saturday.
 - ii. Some discussion about whether extra meeting time is needed for zones with longer agendas.
 - iii. Possibility of presenting during a forum (formerly ABM); group to decide if it aligns with ZDC goals.
 - iv. Survey results expected in June; topics will be finalized by early September.
 - v. Plan to share topics informally at Summit breakfasts if extra meeting time isn't available.
 - vi. Parent volunteer recruitment flagged as a persistent issue—may be pursued regardless of survey results.
 - g. 2025 Report #1 to Board of Directors- 15 Minutes May 4th
 - i. Mr. Toothman and Mr. Platt will present to the Board of Directors on the LSC Leaders Survey and Junior Officials. Additional suggestions should be sent to Mr. Toothman.
 - h. Club Dues Increase Collaboration
 - i. Club dues collaboration is moving forward clearly, with defined roles.
 - ii. ZDC members may join other committees for joint work, including the mobile app task force.
 - iii. Efforts include broad input from athletes, parents, and various committees.
 - iv. Progress will be tracked in SWIMS and shared quarterly.
7. New Business
- a. Role of LSC & Zone at Zone & Sectional Meets- Jack & Bob
 - i. A sectional meet had a strict warm-up rule (sit and slide or DQ), but it wasn't enforced—raising safety and liability concerns.
 - ii. Discussion focused on conflicts between LSC, zone, and USA Swimming policies, especially at championship-level meets.
 - iii. Unclear meet sanctioning and oversight processes contribute to inconsistency.

- iv. Zones vary in whether they review meet announcements; Western Zone offered to share its process.
- v. Action Item: Western Zone will document and share its sectional meet review process to improve transparency and consistency.

b. Legislation Review

i. [Board of Directors Elections](#)- Kathleen

1. Current: 3 coaches, 5 athletes, 7 independents (15 total)
2. Goal: 5 coaches, 5 athletes, 5 independents
3. Three board spots open for upcoming election
4. Two spots must be filled by coaches; third spot open to any stakeholder
5. Concerns raised about mandating specific roles vs. allowing house to elect freely
6. Discussion on potential changes to election process (e.g., higher majority required)

c. Mobile App Stakeholder Task Force- Bruno & Zach

- i. The new mobile app is aiming for launch by Junior Nationals (winter)
- ii. Surveys conducted on desired features and functionality
- iii. Second survey more detailed and well-received
- iv. Comparing to other sports apps for best practices

8. Adjournment

- a. Mr. Ugast motioned for adjournment and Mr. Darzi seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Platt adjourned the meeting at 5:25 PM ET.