

Thursday, September 26th:

Note: as in every year, a lot of the work and most important chances to steer decisions at the national level actually happened outside the formal sessions. No easy way to add those to the report, but there were many conversations in between sessions which were crucial, and those are the main thing we will only have if we continue to support a full delegation to this event every year.

Legislative Review Session: session to preview some of the proposed [legislative changes that will be voted during the HOD](#). Out of those, only a couple which stood out:

- [Proposal to make the current composition of the HOD permanent](#): this format has been tried for two years but has yet to be voted to be permanent
- [R-5 \(adding 50s of stroke for 13-14 swimmers\)](#): stated purpose of the proposal is to allow for more developmental opportunities for 13-14 swimmers by offering those events, but what the legislation will do is trigger NAG and motivational time standards for those events (which are not developmental and could have unintended consequences)
- [RES-1 \(increase in club membership fees\)](#): nobody spoke for or against this proposal during this session. Georgia's BOD has discussed its stance on it.

Opening session: there were two parts to the opening session:

- Chris Brearton (BOD President) Shana Ferguson (Interim CEO), moderated by Brendan Hansen: some conversation about where the organization finds itself, what the process will be for hiring its new CEO, and how they are hoping to stay engaged with the USA-Swimming membership through the process.
There was also some conversation about Trials and its finances. Claim that USA-Swimming made \$5million in profit with that meet, plus put swimming on the spotlight in an unprecedented way. Original goal was to make \$8mil; while they fell very short of that target (mostly due to unsold tickets), event was considered an overall success.
- Jamie Platt, Jamie Bloom, Julie Lewis, John Bradley, Dennis Lugenwa, moderated by Joe Shinnofield: this panel focused on some success stories and ideas that those in the stage had to share. Goal was to show power in community and what LSCs can do to strengthen their brands as well.

Friday, September 27th:

General Chairs Track – Strategic Planning (led by Mitch Gould): session focused on identifying LSC's current challenges with regards to Growth, Retention, and Performance. Several group exercises where I got to interact with leaders from other LSCs so share and hear what those are across the country, and some focus on regional challenges. This was a great session overall.

The ZDC Information Super Highway: presentation on what the Zone Director's council is, where does it fit in the structure of USA-Swimming, and how to use it. The ZDC had direct access, through liaisons, to staff and the USA-S BOD. On one side this feels a bit like having people door keeping instead of simply having direct access to those groups; a potential benefit of going the route of the ZDC would be having more weight behind issues. Some of the main initiatives of the ZDC is the past year were to help with

the Zone Athlete Summits, and in collaboration with other committees the implementation of the Junior Officials category

USA-S Programming and Services: overview of some of the services and initiatives that Program and Services are offering: Swimposium 2.0, Women in Governance, Coaches & Team Leaders Webinars (10&U Network, 11-13 Network, Senior Network). Those webinars are free and can be accessed anytime via the [USA-Swimming University](#) catalog.

Panel Discussion: this was changed last minute into a 90min session to discuss (and to try to sell us) RES-1 to increase the annual club membership fee. We heard (far too many) arguments on both sides of the discussion, and people involved with the proposal and delivery made assertions that there would be accountability with regards to the additional money actually being spent on services to the clubs. No easy way to get around the trust issue.

Saturday, September 28th

Senior Development Committee: several different items discussed at this meeting

- Committee approved time standards for the 2025 Summer Jr Championships – times mostly tightened on the boys’ side, some times loosened on the girls’ side (including some that are now equal to the Winter Jrs cuts; expectation that the 2025 Winter Jrs cuts will follow similar pattern);
- Discussion on the Camps and Camp progression (Zone Select, National Select, National Jr Team, National Team), along with discussion on providing additional racing opportunities for the National Jr Team (currently less than 20% of that group gets to compete as Team USA). No clear decision but the committee wanted to hear feedback and share what they have been paying attention to/working on
- Discussion on Quad Plan for National meets. National meets and selection meets actually get decided by the steering committee and the BOD, but once again committee is trying to take steps to be strategic rather than reactionary with regards to planning, especially when it comes to Futures meets. There was also some discussion on whether or not 19&O athletes belong in those meets – as usual with arguments made for both sides. Again, no clear decision but some conversations outside the session led me to believe the committee is open to looking into offering a larger number of Futures sites in years with a selection meet in June and in which Trials cuts can be achieved.

Southern Zone: this meeting had many technical difficulties which made it hard (and painful) to follow, but here are some of the main business items that took place:

- Elections: Melissa Hellervik-Bing (FL) was elected non-coach director; Herb Schwab (GU) was elected Secretary/Treasurer; John Watson (NC) was elected Age Group Chair. All three were incumbents and there were no other nominations.
- Age Group Zone Championships: some changes to event order and 11-12 400 Free and 400IM will now be timed final events, with the fastest heat of each gender swimming in finals

General Chair Report - 2024 USA-Swimming Annual Business Meeting

- Athlete Summit will be held bi-annually
- Zone meet Bids:
 - 2026 Southern Zone Age Group Champs will be held at the Rosen Aquatic Center (Orlando, FL)
 - 2026 Senior Age Group Champs will be hosted by Club Mountaineer (Morgantown, WV).
 - 2026 Zones Open Water Champs will be hosted by Gulf Swimming (Lake Longhorn, TX)

House of Delegates: opening remarks by BOD Chair (Chris Brearton) and Interim CEO (Dana Skelton), membership updates, and the business section to vote on the [proposed legislation packet](#). With lots of discussions and some amendments, basically all items in blocks A, B, and D got approved. The single item in block C failed. Of note:

- R-1: current composition of the HOD made permanent
- R-4: host teams can elect to accept mixed relays to be composed of any number of swimmers for each gender; those times will not go into SWIMS, but the time from the lead-off swimmer will.
- R-5: added 50s of stroke (back, breast, fly) as recognized events for the 13-14 age group. This means there will be now national top-10, NAG records, and motivational time standards for those events in that age group.
- R-6: no more than two fingers or toes can now be taped together in the case of injury.
- RES-1: annual membership fees to clubs raised to \$225.00 and \$750.00 for the first year for a new club (amended from original proposal which made that higher fee for three years), effective for the 2026 registration cycle. Motion was also amended to add a sentence requiring a quarterly update be provided and published to the website with regards to services offered with the additional revenue. This money will also be bookmarked in a separate line item in the 2026 budget. This required a 2/3 majority and was approved for about 80% of the voting delegates.

Informal Conversation with Joel Shinnofield following the HOD: had previously set to have this conversation, relaying some of the frustrations that I have heard from GASI membership with regards to the national body. One positive item he mentioned is that the whole staff will be enrolled in customer service training, as they are starting to understand that they need to think about servicing members as customers. Also cleared up some items with regards to LSC involvement in club approval and questions regarding the use of the additional money with the approval of RES-1. Finally, will work with him (and also enroll Clarice Wasmuth, Heather Boyer, and Sammie Burchill) to set up a session in order to look into using USA-Swimming's online Sanction tool (the same being use to approve Block Party meets) for regular LSC-Sanctioned meets.