

**Virginia Swimming Officials Committee**  
**18 September 2011**

**Minutes**

1. **Introductions / Organization.** Michael introduced the new members of the Committee and thanked them for their willingness to serve. He also laid out the organization of Voting / Non-Voting Members, Task Force Leaders, Coordinators, and Liaisons.
2. **Guide for Conducting Business.** Michael explained that we would try to meet each quarter face-to-face and, perhaps, monthly by teleconference / webconference. We'd like to conduct business / make decisions at the meetings, not waste a lot of time rehashing and/or complaining. We will identify issues and actions and the Members will work on them away from the meetings. When they have developed proposals / recommendations, they will present them to the Committee for a decision and implementation.
3. **Chair's Report:**
  - a. **USA Swimming LSC Officials Chairs Conference.** Michael attended the conference in Kansas City in June. He talked with a lot of Chairs from other LSCs and got some good information. Bottom line: Virginia Swimming is in good shape when compared with the other LSCs. See Michael's report on our website.
  - b. **LSC LC Championship Meets.** Our LC champs meets were successful. Bob and Jim did great jobs! The meets were adequately, but not appropriately, staffed. Thanks to all who gave their time to help. We need to work on getting more of our Officials to the champs meets. Officials and Coaches are concerned about the increased number of calls at these two meets. The MRs and Michael have analyzed the DQ logs/slips and can't pinpoint a single reason that would explain the increase, but have identified several potential reasons, that when combined, might account for the spike. Michael and the District Chairs will meet with the Coaches in each District during September and participate in a Coaches Forum at the Swimposium to establish the beginning of continued dialogue and discuss the issues. This year's Officials Component of the Swimposium will also focus on these issues.
  - c. **USA Swimming National Championship Meets.** Five of our Officials were selected to officiate at the National Championships: Michael Downs, Kimberly Schlimgen, and Pat Donohue worked both Nationals and Juniors. Bob Rustin and John Warhol worked Juniors. Kimberly got her first Starter assignment at Juniors and did a great job! Michael was a Chief Judge at Juniors. We have 15 active Officials who have worked at one of our National Championships meets!
  - d. **USA Swimming Convention.** Michael attended the Convention. He participated in the Rules and Regulations Committee meetings, the Officials Committee meetings, the Open Water meetings, the Eastern Zone meetings, the Athlete Protection seminar, and the YMCA Reciprocity seminar. The major take-homes were:
    - National Certification Program – In 2011, we have had 126 OQMs resulting in 1600 applications for certification/recertification. 1500 Officials have at least 1 N2 certification. 769 Officials have at least 1 N3 certification (196 CJ, 190 SR, 84 DR, and 61 AR).
    - OTS – 49/59 LSCs are now using the LSC module. Enhancements are coming as soon as money and staff allow. There are 12,000+ registered Officials. We have 400+.
    - Women in Officiating TF – The TF has renamed itself Excellence in Officiating and will be focusing on the results of the survey they conducted earlier this year. The reason for the change is that the TF found no significant issues that affected just women.
    - Mentoring/Evaluating – Officials Committee is working on developing standards for evaluations and development of mentoring skills. They also want to try to standardize our national protocols.

- Open Water – There are lots of rules changes regarding OW safety. Applications for Sanction are more detailed and require higher level approval, comprehensive Safety Plans are required, an Independent Safety Monitor is required, and water temperature/quality standards must be met. An OW Meet Referee’s Guide is about to be published. Still no word on OW Officials certification.
  - Rules and Regs – Only a couple of technical rules changes were enacted; Referee may combine heats/events without having an empty lane between them with the concurrence of the affected coaches (eff immediately); Starter must stand within 5M of the start end; mid line rope in LC pool is no longer required; and MA must contain statement regarding use of audio/video recording devices in the venue (eff 1 Jan 2012).
  - Athletes’ Comments – Swim-offs during Time Trials at National Championships without prior notice is not good for the TT participants. Athletes are appreciative of the Officials who work the meets, but they are concerned that they aren’t seeing new faces - they wonder where the next generation of Officials is coming from.
  - Athlete Protection Training Course – The 2010 HoD adopted a requirement for Non-Athlete members to successfully complete an APTC. The course was developed by a respected child protection company and went live on the USA Swimming website in mid-September. Bottom line: If you see something that doesn’t feel right, say something!
  - Burning Issues – This is the first year in 10 years that a new rule interpretation hasn’t emerged from this meeting! Dan McAllen reiterated the interpretation of the 15M rule that came out at the LSC Officials Chairs Conference (once you surface, you must remain on the surface). He also reiterated the interpretation of the first pull in BR (purposeful movement to begin the pull, not just any movement). He explained again the sequence for observing the pullout (whole body, hands, kick, hands, head). MDs should be establishing and managing camera zones in the venue. MR/MDs should be training Marshals to do their jobs. Maintain a current email address in OTS by going to the account creation page and making sure the email you use to login is the right one. Remember to use your Starters as Place Judges (OOF) – one is required. If you use semi-automatic/manual timing, at least two are needed.
  - NCAA instituted no-recall false starts this year!
  - USA Swimming and the Y continue to work on Officials reciprocity. Main emphasis is on training/certification. Still trying to figure out how to handle the SRs and DRs.
- e. **USA Swimming Officials Workshop.** Since names were due prior to the Committee meeting, Michael selected the 2 Referees to represent Virginia Swimming at the workshop. The Committee agreed with the selections: Dan Demers and John Squires.

f. **National Certifications.** Virginia Swimming has 83 Officials with current National Certifications:

	<b>S&amp;T Judge</b>	<b>Chief Judge</b>	<b>Starter</b>	<b>Deck Ref</b>	<b>Admin Ref</b>
<b>N2</b>	41	26	24	19	6
<b>N3</b>	42	5	5	4	3

We have 2 N3 National Evaluators (waiting approval of a 3<sup>rd</sup>) and 8 N2 National Evaluators.

**4. District Chair Reports: (1 DC was conducting a clinic and 2 DCs were new)**

- a. **Status of Trainees.** DCs need to review the status of their Trainees that are still on the roster and develop a plan to get them certified ASAP.
- b. **Issues.** DCs identified no new issues at this time.
- c. **Future Reports.** We’ll have a report format for future meetings.

**5. Break**

## 6. Short Range (Oct-Dec):

- a. **Registration.** This year's new requirement is for all Non-Athletes to complete the Athlete Protection Training Course. The course is online on the USA Swimming website. You have to be a Member (or have submitted an application with fee) and have a linked account to take the course. Current Members must complete the course prior to extending their memberships to 2012. We must complete the course every 2 years. There's no cost. So, now we have 4 components to our Membership that must be negotiated successfully before we can get our credentials: 1) Submit a Non-Athlete Membership Application with a check for the Membership Fee; 2) Create a USA Swimming website account and link it to our Membership Number; 3) Submit a Background Check request and pay the fee; and 4) Complete the Athlete Protection Training Course. Our Membership Cards will have the dates of our BC and APTC on them as will our Certification Cards.
- b. **New Officials Orientation/Clinics.** DCs set up the Orientation/Clinics in their Districts as required. Michael wants the DC to do the Orientation portion, if possible. DCs can pick their Clinicians, for now, but we'll be looking at whether we should maintain a list of approved Clinicians. We should be following the Clinic Outline and using the training materials on our website. DCs need to get the Clinic Flyers for their clinics to Michael ASAP for posting on our website.
- c. **Training.** DCs are the Master Trainers in their Districts. They are responsible for implementing and supervising the training program. Make sure our Trainers are doing their jobs, not just checking off the blocks. Make sure our Referees are doing their jobs – they are the quality control. They should talk to each Trainee/Trainer pair at the end of the session to assess the training, provide guidance, and identify the next step. Make sure our TCs are doing their jobs – they need to help their Trainees through the process and are responsible for getting them completed.
- d. **Meet Referees for Championship Meets.** We want to develop our Championship MRs through a progression of increased responsibility at our lower level champs meets and shadowing a MR at the LSC Champs meets. We've done some of this in the past few years, but we need to do better. We've identified candidates and Michael will be trying to get them through the progression. MR for the SC Senior Champs meet will be Jim Frye. MR for the SC Age Group Champs Meet will be Bob Rustin. We'll be doing the same thing for our Championship Admin Referees. ARs for the SC Champs Meets will be named soon. MR candidates for the SC District/Region Champs meets are due to Michael by the Swimposium. We will name the LC MRs/ARs in our December meeting.
- e. **Mentoring Program.** One of the critical issues we need to tackle is consistency, both in calls and in protocols/procedures. One method proven to work is mentoring, so we will be expanding the Mentoring Program. We have 10 N3 Officials who have regularly worked at the National Championships for several years – we need to use their experience. We'll be pairing them up to go to meets around the LSC (preferably out of their Districts) to work with the Officials through coordination with the MR. They will be available to conduct clinics/briefings, work with Officials on deck to improve their performance, review policies/procedures/protocols and provide guidance, assist with situation resolution by offering suggestions, and identify Officials who are ready for advancement. Michael will get with the Mentors and work out the schedule for SC at the Swimposium.
- f. **Officials Qualifying Meets.** We have 4 OQMs a year (the LSC Champs meets). Some Officials have expressed a desire for more opportunities within the LSC. We will look at adding 2 meets in December (VSTP and SEVA) if we can get the appropriate MRs and National Evaluators lined up.
- g. **Radios.** Now that we are certifying and using Chief Judges more, we need to also be using radios. Our Officials are at a disadvantage when they work meets outside the LSC and at our LSC Champs meets because they are not practiced in the radio protocol. We will purchase 5 sets of 8 radios/headsets for use in our local meets. The sets will be assigned to the DCs who will be responsible for maintaining them, getting them to their local meets, and ensuring their use. Michael will give Jim the parameters and Jim will work with Equipment Coordinator to develop recommendations/costs. Michael will secure BoD approval, if required, at 30 Sep meeting.
- h. **Referee Candidates.** Freddie Persinger and Georg Fuhs were approved to begin their Referee training. Michael Downs will be Freddie's Mentor and Bob Hood will be Georg's Mentor.

- i. **Swimposium.** Michael wanted to have a “training-focused” Swimposium this year, but we aren’t really ready to do that. We will do the Train-the-Trainer seminars next year. We discussed the approach for this year and decided that a half-day program was better and we would focus on items that will help improve our consistency. Pat Lunsford will be here to conduct the Coaches Forum, so he will also discuss Philosophy of Officiating with us.
- j. **Officials Stuff.** Patches, pens, lanyards, and relay take-off slips were distributed to the DCs. Newly-certified Officials should receive a patch, pen, and lanyard. DCs need to notify Michael of Officials who are getting close to certification, so that we can get their nametags ordered.

## 7. Break

## 8. Long Range (Jan-Dec 2012):

- a. **End State.** In order to move forward, we need to know where we are going. Our mission is to recruit, train, certify, evaluate, recertify, and supervise officials for Virginia Swimming and such other activities as may be necessary or helpful in maintaining a roster of qualified, well-trained, and experienced officials of the highest caliber. At the end of the next Quad (Sep 2015), we envision Virginia Swimming Officials will be a team of dedicated professionals ensuring a consistent, fair, and equitable competitive environment in which our athletes can achieve success.
- b. **Goals and Objectives.** To get to where we want to be, we need a roadmap. We’ve established these goals and the Task Forces will be adding the objectives and metrics:
  - 600 certified officials (well-trained, competent, confident, working regularly)
  - Appropriate level of staffing at each session of every meet (MR, 2 DR, 2 SR, 2 CJ, 8/10 ST, 1 TSO, 1 TJ, and 1 CO)
  - Fully staffed Championship meets (MR, AR, 4DR, 4 SR, 1 LCJ, 4 CJ, 12 ST, 1 TSO, 1 TJ, and 1 CO per session)
  - Every wet deck Official has at least 1 National Championship certification
  - Every dry-deck Official has at least 1 V2 certification
  - At least 30 Officials (5%) have worked a National Championships meet
  - Consistent understanding/interpretation/application of the rules and practice of established protocols and procedures
- c. **Recruiting / Retention Task Force.** Guidance: Organize TF with members from each District. Look at what we are doing now to recruit and retain Officials and determine what, if anything, should be changed. Develop Objectives to support Goals/End State. Develop/document a formal program. Include things to help Team Chairs (flyers, posters, DVDs, hand-outs, etc). Develop recognition awards (we need to recognize our Officials’ contribution to Virginia Swimming; District Officials of the Year, VSI Official of the Year, Official of the Quarter, etc). Study the issue of sessions worked and recommend ways to improve participation. Report findings and provide recommendations to Committee in December meeting.
- d. **Training / Certification.** Guidance: Organize TF with members from each District. Look at what we are doing now to train, certify, and recertify Officials and determine what, if anything, should be changed. Develop Objectives to support Goals/End State. Develop Meet Referee certification/recertification requirements and training program. Develop Open Water Judge and Referee certification/recertification requirements and training program. Develop Train-the-Trainer presentations and tools/aids and prepare for 2012 Swimposium. Report findings and provide recommendations to Committee in December meeting.
- e. **Documentation.** Guidance: Organize TF with members from each District. Look at what we are doing now to document our requirements, policies, procedures, and protocols, as well as the currency and organization of the Officials section of our website and determine what, if anything, should be changed. Develop Objectives to support Goals/End State. Develop priority of recommended document updates. Be prepared to incorporate Task Forces changes into documentation. Report findings and provide recommendations to Committee in December meeting.

- f. **Other Governing Body Cooperation.** We established 4 LNO positions to the other Governing Bodies in Virginia. We want to reach out and partner with these organizations to provide leadership and to cooperate in training/certification with the goal of potentially expanding the pool of available Officials for our meets. Thank-you to George, Kevin, Charlie, and Kevin for taking on these positions.
- g. **Officials-sponsored Swim Meet.** We want to explore the feasibility of hosting a LC meet to raise money to support attainment of our goals (in addition to budget lines). The meet would also serve as the opportunity to get together for a social event. We'll discuss a proposal in December.
- h. **Plan.** Task Forces will study the status quo and recommend courses of action to support the Goals and Objectives. The Committee will review recommendations, make decisions, and prioritize actions. The results will be captured in the Quad Plan and will be reviewed/revise each year. Task Forces will monitor and report progress against the plan quarterly.

**9. Review of Action Items:**

a. **Action Items Still Pending:** None

b. **Action items from Today's Meeting:**

- Develop template for DC Reports 1 November Michael
- Provide Flyers for New Officials Orientation/Clinics to Michael As scheduled DCs
- Provide SC Champs Meets MR candidates to Michael Swimposium DCs
- Identify SC Champs Meets ARs Swimposium Michael
- Provide LC Champs Meets MR candidates to Michael 17 December DCs
- Identify LC Champs Meets MR/ARs 31 December Michael
- Develop SC Mentoring Program Schedule Swimposium Michael
- Submit OQM application for December Meets 1 November Michael
- Order radios 8 October Jim
- Report Findings/Recommendations 17 December TFCs
- Decide on Officials-sponsored Swim Meet 17 December Committee
- Develop Quad Plan 31 March Committee
- Identify Swimposium Coordinator and NCAA LNO 1 November Michael

10. **Next Meetings.** Our next face-to-face meeting will be Sunday, 17 December, 10:00am in Richmond. We will try to have teleconference meetings in mid-October and mid-November (date/time TBD). Items that need immediate attention will be handled via email meetings.

**11. OTS Class (District Chairs only)**