

DATE: February 20, 2013

TO: LSC General Chairs  
LSC (Senior) Coach Reps  
USA Swimming Board of Directors  
USA Swimming Athletes Executive Committee  
USA Rules & Regulations Committee  
USA Swimming Committee Chairs  
Interested Others  
Anyone Interested in the Organization of USA Swimming

FROM: Peter Carney, Chair, USA Swimming Governance Committee

RE: Potential Changes in the Governance Structure of USA Swimming

The Governance Committee is responsible for reviewing the governance structures of USA Swimming. Our primary 2013 focus is the House of Delegates. If there are follow up logical recommendations elsewhere (e.g. Board of Directors, Committees, etc.), we may put them forward as well, either this year or subsequently. We want to bring you up-to-date on our progress and invite your responses.

1. **Current House Structure:** The current delegate structure is largely the one adopted by USA Swimming in the late 1970s as we became independent of the AAU as the result of the Amateur Sports Act. But it is over thirty years old and our organization and the environment in which we operate have changed a great deal over time. It is important to examine ourselves from time to time.
2. **Committee Position on House of Delegates:** The Governance Committee believes that a large House of Delegates is one of our strengths, as it:
  - A. builds a sense of community and strengthens our volunteer corps, and
  - B. ensures that critical issues are debated and approved by a large group, which builds buy in and ensures that major decisions are well vetted by many.

Accordingly, we do not believe that the concept of a large House of Delegates, which we currently employ, should be changed, although the exact numbers may change slightly (+/- 5%).

3. **Amendments Process:** Recommended changes to our By-Laws, sent to the Rules & Regulations Committee by May 15 for initial review, are posted to [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org) at least 75 days prior to the September House of Delegates meeting, where they are debated, amended, and voted up or down.
4. **Early Communication:** Accordingly, this memo is the first of several communications planned by the Governance Committee to the swimming community over the coming months to introduce our ideas, let you have time to get comfortable with them, and, most importantly, provide you the opportunity to provide early feedback along the way.
5. **Resistance to Change:** In reality, waiting until the summer to introduce proposals means delegates, most involved in the thick of a busy long course season in July and early August and anticipating a break before school starts, effectively have about thirty days to review and comprehend amendments to be debated. Human nature, being what it is, is naturally resistant to change. Even with the best of ideas for change, it simply takes time for us to get comfortable with change.

6. **Open Source vs. Proprietary Model:** Most software development is proprietary in nature. Microsoft, Adobe, Apple, Google and thousands of other companies develop their new software in secret then roll out a finished product to the public. On other hand, open source software, like the Linux operating system and the WordPress blogging software, is developed by collaborating teams, often involving many individuals and many companies.
7. **Governance Review Process:** The traditional approach to making changes to an organization is to have an outside consultancy, internal task force, or combination of both, begin with an analysis and finish with a concrete set of recommendations, all done significantly in private. The Governance Committee has chosen the open source model. We have already sought input from a number of interested parties, including the Board of Directors as well as others. This memorandum is being sent to a larger number of individuals to seek input from a broader cross section of USA Swimming.
8. **Recommendation Overview:** We have recommendations in three areas:
  - A. Shift from an annual to biennial convention (with education, training, certification programs in alternate years)
  - B. Change from Wednesday-Saturday format to Sunday-Wednesday format
  - C. Change the manner in which some delegates are selected (including, a reduction from 6 to 4 LSC delegates, with ability to receive additional delegates based on athlete registration and other criteria and the addition of direct club selection of delegates)

See a more detailed description of our current proposals on the following page.

9. **House of Delegates Composition Comparison:** The following is a high level comparison showing the composition of the House of Delegates today and how it might change:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
LSCs	Each LSC has 6 delegate slots	Each LSC would have 4 delegate slots Extra delegates based on athlete registration
Elected	Officers, Board members, et. al.	No changes
Committee	Members of certain committees (Rules, OIOC, & others)	No changes
Athletes	Minimum of 20%	No changes
Organization	Allied & Affiliate members name delegates	No changes
PAL	Up to 10% appointed by President	Presidential appointments to continue, % TBD
Club	None	Each club achieving objective standard names a delegate with a hard cap on total number.

10. **Alternatives:** In some cases, we are considering alternate options or variations. For example, for the biennial convention, the alternate educational/ training/ certification events might be held not as a single national event, but as Zone events to allow more people to attend. If you have any suggestions we would appreciate hearing them with your rationale.
11. **Responses:** Please address any questions, suggestions or comments to Peter Carney (Chair, Governance Committee) at [peter@peterecarney.com](mailto:peter@peterecarney.com) or Pat Hogan (Staff Liaison to Committee) at [phogan@usaswimming.org](mailto:phogan@usaswimming.org). If you have an opinion or a question, we want to hear from you.

***[Please forward to anyone you feel might be interested.]***

# USA Swimming

## Governance Committee

### Conceptual Recommendations for Changes to the House of Delegates

Version - February 20, 2013

- I. Move to a biennial House of Delegates
  - A. Legislation at every biennial House of Delegates.
  - B. Conventions in odd-numbered years will consist of committee meetings and education opportunities (participants could come and go).
    - 1. (alternate) Hold educational conventions in the Zones in the odd years.
    - 2. (alternate) Hold committee meetings in CS in the odd years.
  - C. The Board of Directors would approve the budget.
- II. Change the main convention days from Wednesday-Saturday to Sunday-Wednesday
  - A. The goal is to bring the collegiate coaches back to the convention.
  - B. This should have a positive impact on the OIOC.
  - C. Both of the above can be easily measured for a couple of conventions.
  - D. If the OIOC attendance is not substantially changed, the OIOC should have a sunset review.
  - E. The convention format will remain the same (i.e. Day 1 activities remain Day 1 activities).
- III. Change the automatic structure of the House of Delegates
  - A. There shall be 389 delegates permitted from the LSCs. *[NOTE: 389 is derived from the 354 currently available, plus the 10% of those delegates formerly used for At-Large appointees.]*
  - B. Each LSC shall have four, automatic delegates (4x59=236).
  - C. The remaining 153 delegates shall be apportioned to the LSCs based on athlete registration in the final year of each Olympic quadrennial.
  - D. The President may appoint 15 At-Large delegates to the House of Delegates. *[NOTE: 15 is approximately 10% of the total, non-LSC delegates to the convention.]*
  - E. Some direct club representation to the House of Delegates.
    - 1. (alternate) These delegates shall be designated to the highest performing clubs in each LSC based on the Club Excellence points ranking.
    - 2. (alternate) Election of club representatives at Zone, Junior National and National Championships.

Note 1: This is a working document and subject to change. Your input is requested.

Note 2: Please forward to anyone interested in the governance of USA Swimming.

Note 3: Please address comments, suggestions, and questions to Peter Carney (Chair, Governance Committee) at [peter@peterecarney.com](mailto:peter@peterecarney.com) or Pat Hogan (Staff Liaison to Committee) at [phogan@usaswimming.org](mailto:phogan@usaswimming.org).