

**August 12, 2020**  
**South End Rowing Club**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**

Note: This meeting was conducted via Zoom because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Roll Call**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>		<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>
S. Dominguez	X		J. Purmal	X
F. Hegeler	X		B. O'Malley	X
J. Sale	X		J.C. O Campo	X
B. Ip	X		A. Ramelmeier	X
M. Montgomery	X		B.J. Jaurique	X
M. Riley	X		K. Whalen	X
S. Greva	X		V. Cornwell	X
B. Wygant	X		S. Blew	X
T. Wurm	X			
G. Lazaneo	X		S. Wintersteen	X

**Approval of Minutes**

The July minutes were approved (10 – 0 – 0) with the correction that Van was in attendance for the meeting.

**President's Remarks**

Simon thanked everyone for participating and welcomed Dolphin Club president Diane Walton. He reminded us that nobody has been through a pandemic like this before. He knows that people are reaching the end of their tethers but urged each of us to treat others with respect and kindness.

Simon then recognized Kevin who shared his feelings about the recent loss of dear friend and Club member Aaron Burby. Aaron was an amazing athlete. He completed 19 iron man competitions and won the running completion of the interclub tri in both 2018 and 2019 (the second time in sandals). He was a regular member of the Irish pod and volunteered in many ways at the Club including

Pathstar. He was due to be married (the wedding had been postponed because of COVID) and was scheduled to swim the length of Tahoe before his life was tragically cut short. He will be missed. The Board then observed a minute of silence.

### **Members Moment**

George Carvalho wrote a letter to the Board which was distributed with the agenda. He asked that Board members read his letter in lieu of his speaking at the meeting.

Will Benjamin made an impassioned request (see attachment A) that the Club fly the Black Lives Matter flag for a period of three days. Several members thanked Will for coming and making a compelling argument.

### **A. Dolphin Club Expansion**

Diane updated the Board on the DC's revised expansion plans. The highlights are: the handball court stays, kitchen and gym keep the same footprint and a deck (with glass railings) is placed atop the gym. They are still looking at changing access to the cupola. She invited us to identify someone who can go over their plans in more detail.

She reminded us that the possibility of a seawall is progressing and hoped that we would partner with them on it.

### **B. Reopening Committee Update**

Van reminded the Board that we received our partial reopening permission from the City. This has allowed the rowing and sunriser programs to restart albeit with limitations.

Kevin has met with the reopening committee regarding running (see agenda item C). The reopening committee has met with the handball and gym commissioners to plan the resumption of those programs.

The new card key system has been installed at the front door. Its much easier to manage and logs who has entered the building. The

front door log supplemented with other access tracking documents enable us to perform contact tracing if required.

The committee has created a new COVID waiver and is requiring that everybody who enters the building digitally sign the waiver.

### **C. Running**

Kevin reported that he was inspired by the restart of the rowing and swimming programs to get running going again (“Its time for running to standup!”). He met with the reopening committee and has developed a detailed plan for a COVID aware running program. The plan includes protocols (e.g., briefings, aid stations, post run, etc) as well as an increasingly ambitious calendar of runs (starting with short runs without aid stations, then longer runs that begin and end in the same place and finally including point-to-point runs).

Kevin will keep the Board current on his successes.

### **D. Anti-Racism Committee Update**

Brian begin his update by thanking Will for his members moment. Brian said that the committee is still in its exploratory phase: what does racism look like at the Club if it exists. The committee fielded an initial survey that was publicized on the Google Group and FaceBook. Concern was expressed that not all Club members use those two platforms, but Brian pointed out this was just the initial survey and the committee would ensure that future surveys were advertised to all members.

More than 120 individuals responded to the initial survey and Brian quickly walked the Board through some of the highlights. Brian promised to send copies of the report to Board members and indicated that the committee would be preparing a final version of the survey report that can be shared with the membership in the coming weeks.

There was some discussion about the committee’s name (is anti-racism to narrow or negative?).

Simon closed the agenda item with the reminder that just because you because you haven't personally seen racism at the Club, doesn't mean it doesn't exist.

#### **E. Wooden Boat Repair**

Tom asked for guidance on restarting boat night. We believe that our current reopening plan allows for boat maintenance. Tom was directed to work with the reopening committee.

#### **F. Quarterly SERC\*150 Report**

Joe reported that a committee has been formed to think about our special anniversary. They are looking at the anniversary without assumptions (e.g., should we mark it or not? If so, what should it look like?). They are considering:

- Petitioning the USPS for a commemorative stamp
- Installing a device at AP that tells the time and tides
- Each of our sports putting on a special event
- That this is not about growing Club membership
- Making a donation of a historic boat to the Smithsonian

They would like the process to engage our membership, connect us with the SF athletic community and improve our Club.

The committee's report can be found here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Ysc7F95Zz5SVnH9oarE3BHp5HVI5-7qW8pgmW0z9N34/edit>

#### **G. Increase in Initiation Fee**

Josh reminded the Board that in November 2018 the Board approved an \$85 increase in the Club's initiation fee. This increase had to be approved by the City and, out of an abundance of caution of upsetting the renewal of our lease, the increase was authorized to take effect upon the finalization of our new lease.

The new lease was finalized last month and hence the increase became ripe. Because so much time had passed since the original decision, it seemed appropriate to bring the item back to the Board for review.

Since the original approval, the Club has grown by almost 30% and the pandemic has taken effect. The pandemic has caused us to cancel the Invitational and dramatically reduced the addition of new members. While there has been some modest reduction in expenses with the closure, there have also been new expenses (e.g., more than \$100k in unexpected taxes from the City).

So on one hand, finding ways to increase revenue is appealing on the other hand many people are suffering pandemic related financial distress.

The cost differential between SERC and the DC continues to grow.

	<b>South End</b>	<b>Dolphin</b>
<b>Initiation</b>	\$100	\$388
<b>Annual Dues</b>	\$405	\$522
<b>Locker</b>	\$125	\$150
<b>Total Year One</b>	\$630	\$1,060

The cost differential between SERC commercial entities (Attachment B) is even more stark.

There was discussion about members who routinely let their membership lapse during the winter months and then rejoin when the weather improves. That increasing the initiation fee would make that calculus less favorable. But there were those who dismissed that argument.

There was discussion that at a point in time when we're discussing how to make our Club more diverse, increasing cost could become a barrier to entry. However it was pointed out that at the Anti-Racism committee it was mentioned that treating all BIPOC as being poor is a form of stereotyping.

It was pointed out that our lease requires the initiation fee to be used for the processing of new members. But it was also pointed out

that same language provides some latitude in how initiation fees are spent.

Eventually Simon ended the discussion and a motion was offered to rescind the November 2018 increase. The measure failed (3 – 3 – 1). No other motions were offered so the November 2018 decision stands.

#### **H. Aquatic Park & Pier Project**

Fran reported that the effort is being positioned as a Great Outdoors project. They are in the final stages of fundraising for the visioning study (they are still short \$8k out of \$150k). Fran continues to look for volunteers interested in helping with the project.

#### **I. Treasurers Report**

Part of this report was delivered as part of item G. Susan has been shifting money around to avoid FDIC insurance limits. She briefed the Board on the unexpected tax bills from the City. She is investigating them, but at this point assumes we will have to pay them. If correct, we will have to access the special fund before yearend.

#### **J. Membership Report**

Andy reported that we added 8 new members. This about 1/5<sup>th</sup> of what was added July 2019. Each month, Andy sends a welcome letter and decal to each new member.

Andy described the importance of keeping connected with our members. This is always true, but particularly so during the pandemic. This requires accurate email addresses for each member. A number of individuals have been working on perfecting our records starting in QuickBooks and then moving on to the other systems.

Andy discussed the difficulty of dealing with members who don't/can't use SportsEngine. He suggested we consider creating some incentive for people to use SportsEngine.

The meeting adjourned with Simon reminding people for the need for tolerance.

## **Attachment A:**

I'm asking for a member of the Board to bring the motion to raise a 3 by 5 foot Black Lives Matter flag on our flagpole, for a delimited time period, to a vote tonight. And asking for other Board members to vote for it. A suggested time period would be 3 days. I would also suggest sending an email out clarifying the reasons why we're raising it immediately after it's raised, perhaps even identifying 3 reasons I'll outline for the suggested 3 days of flying it.

I want to start out by acknowledging and clarifying. I acknowledge that some people are upset over this concept, and that some people might be upset over it. However, hopefully they will come to see it not as anti-police, but in the context of a movement that has swept much of the nation. This is mainstream. So many companies and sports teams like the 49ers displayed it. And the freaking Fairmont Hotel has displayed it, which is about as boringly intentionally unoffensive as you can get.

That actually very great progress that we've seen only came as a waterfall effect from seeing others display the BLM flag.

And that's what leads to a tipping point for change, by inspiring others to acknowledge the issues, display the BLM flag, and act. That's exactly what we would step up to contribute to. More on that in a moment.

The SF Police Commission voted to put BLM signs in all SF Police Stations, so BLM signs are in our police stations.

I can understand that police officers and police supporters may not love it, and I really do respect the critical job that so many good police officers do. But this is primarily about calling out the unnecessary, often unheard deaths of primarily Black Americans like George Floyd that absolutely shouldn't keep on happening. The point isn't blame, really, it's about finally getting to an end to those killings.



For these reasons, there's no other flag to be displayed, it needs to be BLM, as a part of this mainstream movement, to show the South End's part of positive change in society, that we're IN.

Is it political? Well, kinda of, I guess. The Civil Rights Movement was political too, especially according to its ardent detractors. But the American flag is political too in a way. People use the American Flag at the rallies for all sorts of crazy and terrible causes, but we don't let that let that subvert the basis of what it represents.

So, three core reasons for raising the BLM Flag for 3 days:

1. We want to show and signal to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color that we, the South End, strive to be an open, accepting place free of racism. Consider what that would mean to members, guests, and outsiders who are BI&PC to see us raise that flag, and what that could mean to them. It also indicates the level of acceptance we want to show at our Club. /// It's analogous to displaying the Pride flag, which shows that we accept members, guests, and others of all sexualities, and that we strive to make it so that LGBTQ people can feel safe from harassment at our Club. A flag goes a long way for that. And, indeed, we already display the Pride flag.
2. We're a historically white club, and still a very white club. The BLM flag would be saying that we want to advance in the best way we can in progressing at being Anti-Racist on a broader level.
3. is perhaps the most compelling. It's that this is a moment in history where we can be part of helping move society in the direction of a solution. Raising this flag isn't just a mere gesture, it's adding some of our weight into a movement that can actually help galvanize change to a societal issue, including in our own communities, that was being ignored. Specifically, deaths of Black people in America at an outrageous regularity that are obviously wrong and keep happening. So, yes, there are many other causes that need help. But, for instance, raising a flag that has a whale on it isn't going to do much to save our whales, because that needs something different to address the problem. This cause, however, very explicitly needs societal, mainstream buy-in to show that it recognizes a

problem is happening, then to gather momentum with public displays to bring light and change to an issue that has stayed unrecognized and unchanged for far too long. We would be doing our part to stand up to show we're contributing to a tipping point in our society, which is really the only, only, ONLY way change happens with a problem like this. Just like it was for Pride and LGBTQ issues. Like the Civil Rights Movement, it needs buy in and building social momentum. If we don't speak up, if we don't add our voice, in this very particular societal issue, we're remaining silent.

Change isn't easy, but this is mainstream and actually part of a path showing we're IN for a better way forward. So, are we IN? I ask you to show it by raising the BLM flag.

**Attachment B:**

**COST  
COMPARISON**

CLUB	24 hour fitness		DC	SERC*		Olympic Club	Bay Club	Equinox	YMCA
	41.99	51.99		Proposed			219	200	85
	12	12					12	12	12
<b>ANNUAL DUES</b>	<b>503.88</b>	<b>623.88</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>2628</b>	<b>2400</b>	<b>1020</b>
<b>Initiation Fees</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL TO JOIN</b>	<b>503.88</b>	<b>623.88</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>605</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>3128</b>	<b>2900</b>	<b>1020</b>

\* prorated annual fee

Add ons for classes  
 Annual is sliding scale w proof  
 Charitable org  
 Volunteer org  
 Membership does not cover costs - fundraisinhg  
*source: vice chair of membership + bo member*

**\$100** \$8.33 per mo or 2 venti lattes @ starbucks  
 or 1 North Beach Large Mushroom Pizzas every 3 mo. (@\$26.50 ea)