

October 14, 2020
South End Rowing Club
Board Meeting Minutes

Note: This meeting was conducted via Zoom because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In contrast with previous Zoom meetings, this meeting was organized as a Zoom video webinar instead of video meeting. Board members were classified as panelist and non-Board members were classified as attendees. This change ensured that all Board members were visible on the screen at all times and allowed for more orderly participation by non-Board members.

Roll Call

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

Approval of Minutes

Brian objected to the way the September meeting minutes characterized the handling of that meeting's substitute motion. Simon stated that after the September meeting he researched substitute motions and based on this research, now believes the matter wasn't handled correctly. The September minutes were approved (11 – 3 – 1).

President's Remarks

Simon congratulated Van for his English Channel crossing and turning 50 ("he doesn't look a day over 49"). To honor Van, we considered

conducting the meeting in our birthday suits but then thought better of it.

Simon then continued by congratulating Kevin and Bella on their 2nd anniversary. Still newlyweds! Simon also thanked Kevin for recently organizing a really fun ½ marathon (fun and marathon in the same sentence sounds like an oxymoron) and bringing back running. Kevin, said the next run would be the approximately 22 mile Top of Tam run. Talk to Kevin if you're interested in participating or volunteering.

On a sad note, Simon noted that today is also Elizabeth Glass's birthday. We all miss her. Rest in peace.

Simon's final personal note was that Membership Commissioner Andy Ramelmier is making good progress. Andy is working very hard and appreciates all of the positive energy coming to him from the SERC community. Andy, we look forward to having you back soon.

Simon then thanked all of the members who participated in the Anti Racism Exploratory Committee. He noted their investment of hard work and energy over the last several months. Simon observed that the recent survey showed broad Club support for making the Club more diverse and has decided that it's time to transition to a more permanent committee (final name to be determined). As a steppingstone to the new committee, Simon is creating a *selection committee* composed of himself, a board member and an individual from the AREC committee. The selection committee will become the first three members of the new committee. The new committee will be rounded out with four additional Club members chosen by the selection committee (for a total of 7 as recommended by the AREC). Once constituted, that committee will agree on the final name, scope of work and propose practical steps to move forward with making the Club a more diverse and welcoming place.

Simon also announced the cancelation of the November 11th Board meeting. Instead, we will hold the Club's annual membership

meeting on that date. Simon asked commissioners and the reopening committee to start preparing material to be presented at the meeting.

Members Moment

Mina Rhoden asked for a members moment. I listened with pen in hand, taking the notes needed to produce these minutes. However, a few paragraphs into her presentation I had to set down my pen and just listen. Any attempt to summarize Mina would be a disservice to her and the Club. Here she is in her own words.

These are strange times and we are all in a hard place due to isolation and disruption of our routines, especially the routines that provide stress relief and joy like swimming at the club. This unprecedented situation has dragged on for months and there is no end in sight which is exacerbating everyone's stress including mine.

As I watched George Floyd die over 8 minutes and some 43 seconds, it wasn't just sadness I felt, but rage and grief and hopelessness and pain. I do not speak for every black person in America, only for myself when I say that it was a pivotal moment. Something inside me broke...forever. For 48 years, starting with my own father's murder at the hands of 3 white men who robbed him and shot him and went unprosecuted because the Boston police captured and released them on bail, never to be seen again, I have known that Black lives don't matter in America. They just don't. The same horror was visited upon my family again a mere 3 years later when my brother was murdered after a traffic incident, followed by an argument and the other man went and got a gun and shot my brother dead. The police said, it was self-defense and because it was black on black, nobody cared because black lives don't matter.

Every time and I mean every time, I see another black person hunted down and killed by a police man, the hurt and pain peeks out a bit but I, like many others, quickly put it aside, bury it, get on with my day, « eyes on the prize », don't let them see your pain. And then George Floyd happened. I had a moment of hope when I saw so many white

people, young and old rally to our cause of racial justice, racial equality and the statement that black lives matter.

So what does this have to with the South end rowing club? When I walked through the doors of these hallowed walls over 10 years ago, I was a little intimidated. I wasn't much of a swimmer only having just gotten into open water because I was doing triathlons. I was asked to join but didn't for almost 8 or 9 months because I saw no black people at the club except Naji and Marie and none on the walls at the club which was covered with only white people. Because I had a such a strong ally in Kat Filley, I eventually joined. She made the club feel like home as did many other women in that hell hole of a locker room and that sauna we sometimes referred to a Mercer central.

Over the years, we have congratulated ourselves as being the Greatest Club on Earth. And in so many ways it is. Thanks to allies like Joe Butler, Kat Filley, Trudy Molina, Dianna Shuster, Amy Gubser, Cathy Harrington, Kelley Prebil and so many others, like some on this board, I've been able to accomplish things I didn't even want to do when I first joined. But those days are in the past and we are here now, facing a problem that has plagued our society, plagued me and all people of color for too long.

I thank you for raising the black lives matter flag ...for a week. It was a powerful symbol...for a week. But it's not enough, not by a long shot. Our club is a reflection of the generational, systemic racism that has plagued this country for hundreds of years and if we are truly to be the greatest club on earth, we must dialogue with each other, face the ways in which we all support racism unconsciously, yes even people of color, and we must do better. I understand that Suzanne Greva proposed a motion to fly the BLM flag permanently, that we have a statement supporting BLM on our website and that board take mandatory Diversity and inclusion training which I whole heartedly support.

If we cannot fly the black lives matter flag permanently, we should examine if we really believe that black. Lives. Matter. Or are we

caving in to the members who believe there isn't a racism problem here. I thank you for the one week and I have hope for so much more for this club. Actions speak louder than words, always. We aren't yet the greatest club on earth, but we could be.

Thank you.

A. Reopening Committee

Before updating the Board on reopening, Van announced the creation of a new moderate Google Group just for swimmers.

Van noted how hard it is to serve on this committee. Everybody has felt overwhelmed and disenchanting at some point. The addition of Dave Schreiber has added needed new energy. The committee is engaged in lots of detailed, thankless work. The committee members acutely understand how frustrated our members are that have either no or limited access to the Club.

Our reopening continues to be limited by City policies. However these policies aren't static so the committee members find themselves poring over dense, legal documents to understand the moving target of what the City will and won't allow.

With that as background, Van announced that the committee has submitted a revised application to the City that brings some swimming back to the Club. In broad strokes, the new plan will allow up to fifteen swimmers to reserve (online) a spot for a 90-minute swim session. There will be 3 swim sessions per day --from roughly 6:30 am - 12 noon. Fifteen socially-distanced circles will be painted on the pad where boats are set up. Each swimmer will need to wear a mask while not in the water, and use their circle to prepare to swim and dry off post swim. These swim sessions will be monitored by a volunteer. If nobody volunteers to monitor, then nobody can swim during that session. Access to the swim sessions will be via advanced signup. The committee is also investigating providing warm outdoor showers.

These swim sessions are incompatible with the current rowing program. The swimmers and rowers have cordially worked out that rowing will occur on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday and swimming will take place on the other days (Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday).

During the Board discussion of this change, it was requested that the advanced signup process acknowledge that not all members spend their days at their computer and some folks may be less tech savvy than others. In other words, the signup process should acknowledge that we have a range of people who will be competing for a limited resource and the process needs to be fair to all.

Juan Carlos asked about allowing handball practice sessions or sessions with family members. He was encouraged to meet with the reopening committee.

Fran closed this item by noting that the Club is closed but that the community is open at the bleachers and encouraged members to look for her at 6:30am on most days.

B. Gym Reopening

Bobby explained that some people have asked about taking equipment out of the gym and setting it up outside. At least for now, he's opted to keep things simple and say that gym is closed.

C. Treasurer's Report

Susan reported that she was pleasantly surprised by some unanticipated deposits from SportsEngine. She also reported that she and Susan W. (with help from George) have applied for grants from the state and USMS. She thinks we have a solid rationale and expects we will get the grants.

She reported that she has also been developing financial data to support the work of the retention committee.

All of the recent building projects are complete (“the building looks great”) and paid for. So there shouldn’t be more expenditures in that area.

Fran acknowledged the many hours that Susan puts into her role and thanked her.

D. Mezzanine Lockers

Matt noted that the Board had previously authorized \$3k to install new modular lockers. For numerous reasons, the new lockers have yet to be installed. Part of the original justification for the new lockers was the quick payback of our investment from their rental. However with the Club closed, the new lockers can’t be rented.

Matt suggested that we defer installing the new lockers until we can foresee them being rented. The Board agreed.

E. Appointment of Election Committee

The Board approved (13 – 0 – 0) the appointment of Sue Free to run this years election. Thank you Sue!

F. Hybrid November Board Meeting

In light of the cancellation of the November Board meeting, George withdrew this agenda item.

Simon adjourned the meeting and expressed his appreciation for the civility of everybody who participated.