

**September 14, 2022**  
**South End Rowing Club**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**

**Roll Call**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>
F. Hegeler	X	Membership	
K. Whalen	*	M. Lee	X
J. Sale	X	V. Blyth Marlin	X
B. Ip	X	S. Harrison	X
A. Marduel	X	Z. Margolis	X
M. Riley	X	E. Young	
K. Buckholtz	X	S. Kenvin	
S. Dominguez	X	L. Hovden	X
D. Puglisi	X		
G. Lazaneo	X	S. Wintersteen	X

\*: via speakerphone for item B

**Approval of Minutes**

The August 2022 Board minutes were approved (12 – 0 – 2).

**President’s Remarks**

Fran welcomed the numerous members who were attending the September Board meeting.

She thanked Laura and Sydelle for their respective efforts on the Invitational and the Tri. Laura and Sydelle received thundering “bravos” from everyone present.

Fran reminded the Board that today is Pat Cuneen’s 89<sup>th</sup> birthday. Pat is the “visual voice” of the Club and has competed in 40 Tri’s! The Board wished Pat the happiest of birthdays and thanked him for his many contributions ... artistic and otherwise.

After a two year hiatus, Pathstar is back. This is a great program that brings native American’s to the Club for a week culminating in an Alcatraz crossing. Congratulations to Nancy Iverson.

Zina conducted a water safety class last month. 12 members participated (including a couple of Board members). The class was well received particularly the in water exercises. Zina is developing plans to share the lessons learned more broadly at the Club.

SFMOMA is mounting a special exhibition on Joan Brown who was one of the women who forced the South End to become co-ed. In addition to the exhibition there will be a memorial swim and talks for Club members. Stay tuned.

The myriad standalone systems that we use to handle the various aspects of membership have stymied membership commissioners, treasurers and office staff for years. Fran previewed that Kevin has been investigating a new system that will address all of our needs.

Members are reminded that even though we do have a cleaning service at the Club, responsibility for taking care of the Club starts with each of us. Let's leave the sand outside. Not leave hairballs in the showers. Treat the Club as you would a good friend's home.

Finally there have been numerous reports of members bringing guests into the club without paying for them or having them sign the release form. We're doing the Club a disservice by violating the guest policy. Please leave the guest fee in the lock box and have your guests sign the release form at the front door.

### **Members Moment**

Many members were in attendance at the September Board meeting. Fran thanked them and noted how important it is for the Board to hear directly from the membership.

### **Cathy Bump**

Good evening, and thanks for the opportunity to share my thoughts about this very important issue.

My name is Cathy Bump and I've been a member for over 20 years and have also served on the Board in the past.

**It's been a long time since I've felt so concerned about an issue at the Club.** The rooftop deck proposed by the Dolphin Renovation Project Committee would severely and irreversibly impact the views and ambience of our beloved Day Room. While we tend to use it less for large gatherings since the onset of Covid, the Day Room is still our main place to hang out, to stop by to see who we might run into, or just to sit for a few minutes or longer – marveling at how lucky we are to be able to enjoy this space and all that we see from it. I have so many warm memories of this room over the past 20 years.

Integral to those memories, and to how I feel about this room today, are the cozy ambience and the view. As South Enders, this is our room. We welcome visitors, of course; I myself have brought friends up to this room. But it is our room. I am shocked and dismayed – and sometimes angry – that seemingly a limited number of people in the Dolphin Club apparently feel entitled to take this away from us. Make no mistake, the proposed Dolphin deck will dramatically and irreversibly impinge on our view and change the Day Room's airy yet cozy feel. Rather than an expansive view of the Promenade, Maritime Museum and buoy line, we will be confronted by railings, cloudy glass and the lower appendages of our neighbors. And that change will be forever, in perpetuity. **Realistically, there will be no going back.**

Our Club is obviously so much more than just our building. But our building, and our physical environment, do matter. I was on the Board when we started fundraising for our last expansion, including our new women's locker room and gym. Having a new women's locker room – on par space- and amenity-wise with the men's – meant something. We, the women, no longer looked like an afterthought. By the same token, it sends a signal if we let the Dolphins ride roughshod over us when it comes to their expansion plans. **We, the South End, are co-equals of the Dolphin Club on this special little plot of land.** They would never tolerate us so aggressively encroaching on their space, usurping their views, diminishing their enjoyment of their space. And neither should we tolerate this from them. I sincerely wish them the best – as I think we all do – with their renovation project. As a rower and a swimmer, I sincerely value the camaraderie we've established across our collective swimming and rowing programs. But if this proposed deck impacts that relationship, it will not be because of us. Our relationship with them is only worth preserving if it's a mutual relationship, based on mutual respect. And this construction proposal does not indicate mutual respect. I'm hoping that we can keep dialogue with the Dolphins open and our relationship thriving – but at the same time we need to be prepared to assert our rights to the full extent necessary. We cannot roll over in order to maintain what is starting to appear like a one-way relationship.

And finally, **we need to keep our eye on the ball here.** I participated in last weekend's Interclub Tri as enthusiastically as anyone, and was as happy as anyone when we triumphed. But the Tri is a game. There's been a lot of talk about how awesome it will be to have the Tri plaque in our Day Room for our 150<sup>th</sup>

birthday. But if we're sitting in this Day Room next year congratulating ourselves on having kept the plaque – even as construction is happening 8 feet from our west-facing windows – then I can tell you who the real winner will have been.

Please, do not be the Board that – after 150 years of proud history – rolls over and kowtows to the Dolphins. On behalf of our members, I ask you to stand up for us and our special, special space.

Thank you.

### **Brenda Austin**

My name is Brenda Austin, I have been a member for over 20 years. I'm a rower, runner, and a swimmer. I have served on the board twice, once as Director at Large, and again as the Running Commissioner.

I am strongly opposed to the Dolphin Club rebuild as currently planned because it would destroy our west facing view from the day room. While I support the DC members right to enjoy and maintain their club, it must not be at the South End's expense. Our day room view is iconic and precious to SE members who gather there to sit, meet, rest, read a book, or have a snack. Let's recall that when construction was completed on our day room, elderly members sitting in chairs immediately complained they couldn't see the bridge and raised money to have the windows lowered! Let's not lose sight of this act or the importance of our view. The Dolphin Club's proposed deck would wipe out that view forever. Consider that the Dolphin Club already has a wonderful protected deck space on their ground floor. Understand that the main reasons for the DC remodel is to upgrade their kitchen and the foundation under their gym. No doubt an amenity, less intrusive to the SE could be designed for their project. Please not allow the DC to take our western view away. I hope the SE board will remain strong, accountable to the membership, and uphold SE interests over the Dolphin Club's desires.

### **Keith and Linda Nowell**

Are life members and felt like Brenda said it all. Keith mostly swims flags and shared how important it is to be able to see the flag and buoy line from the day room. It allows him to see conditions before he gets in the water and to keep an eye on his wife and friends when they are swimming.

Linda added that they have elderly friends who walk to the Club from the Van Ness bus stop via the promenade. She stands in the day room (particularly on busy days at aquatic park) and keeps an eye on her friends as they weave through the pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

**Will Newby**

Will is a former Board member and he reminded us that the proposed expansion isn't just an eye sore. Its an irreversible eye sore like your teenager getting a neck tattoo.

Will cautioned the Board that in the interest of maintaining goodwill with the DC, the easy path might seem to be simply say "Yes". But that kind of goodwill won't last.

He referenced the kind of spirit that each club brought to the recent Tri and posited they are trying to kill our exuberant spirt in the same way they've killed their own spirit.

He thanked the Board for standing up for us.

**Andrew Burell**

Andrew introduced himself as a second generation South Ender. He emphasized the importance of protecting what we pass on to future generations of South Enders. He's grateful for what previous generations of South Enders passed on to him and wants to do the same for his children.

**Tina DiRienzo**

Tina expressed her agreement with previous speakers. We should endeavor to minimize the level of expansion next door.

To those who say we need to protect the relationship with the DC, she asks what kind of relationship is it when the love is unrequited? They aren't willing to work things out with us.

She talked to many DC members who came up to the day room during the Tri and they were all shocked by the impacts of their proposed expansion. We need to find a way to get more of their members to come over here and then get them to vote.

**Juan Melendez**

Juan identified himself as a 9-year member and he asked all in attendance to take a moment and look around the day room (where the meeting was taking place) and appreciate what a wonderful space it is.

Juan said that when he brings his kids to the Club, the first thing they do is run to the west facing windows and just stand there and take in the view.

**Judy Irving**

Judy is a life member and she talked about the peace she feels when she comes into the day room. She typically arrives midmorning, when it's usually fairly quiet, and sits and meditates and focuses herself. She said that wouldn't be possible if she felt that somebody might walk out on the DC deck.

She implored the Board to fight with all our might.

**Patrick (Bobby) O'Malley**

Bobby expressed his agreement with the previous speakers. He told the Board that we're down to brass tacks and urged us to find all of the entities that might have some role in regulating what happens next door. We need to hire our own structural engineer to review their plans to see if they really need this massive foundation? Or are they setting the table for adding another story in the future?

He asked that any Board member whose heart wasn't in the fight to resign and make room for somebody who is.

**Shannon Raintree**

Shannon is a new member. She said she joined after visiting the day room.

She thinks we need to do more to educate both our own membership and the DC's. She urged us to avail ourselves of all legal avenues.

**Jim Bock**

Jim stated that most members initially come for the sports but end up staying for the community. The DC is territorial and has a history of grabbing common ground.

Jim pointed out that our Club lets people who couldn't otherwise afford it, have a \$1m view.

He urged us to pursue this matter with vigor and verve.

**Bill Wygant**

Past President Bill Wygant reminded the group that we have a long and complex history with the DC and not all of it is collegial. Bill reminded the group of the various ways that the DC complicated (time and money) our recent addition and used the opportunity to lay claim to previously shared portions of the parcel.

He expressed concern that the massive foundation they propose is setting the stage for eventually enclosing the proposed deck.

He urged the Board to resist the DC proposal.

**Steven Hurwitz**

Thank you for allowing Cathy Bump to read this letter for me. I had hoped to deliver my message in person but, regrettably, I cannot join you tonight.

Most of you know me, but for those who don't, my name is Steven Hurwitz and I have been a member for close to 23 years. During this time, I have served on the board for two terms as a VP and have been fully engaged with our club's swim program, fundraising activities, the pilot program and countless volunteer activities.

Twenty-three years is a long time to be affiliated with any one organization but it seemed natural and easy belonging and supporting a club that shared my values and possessed such an interesting and

diverse demographic of members. Much of my connection has been facilitated through our day room.

I come to you with deep concern about the current proposed Dolphin Club building renovation which I believe would significantly impact the enjoyment of our beloved club. This is not a complaint about an “eye sore” but truly a potential existential threat to our club culture.

Twenty years or so ago, our club did its first major remodel in many decades. As a younger member, I watched scores of elder and concerned Southenders voice their concern about the remodel. Their concern primarily focused on moving the cherished day room that was located where the men’s locker room is now. The overwhelming goal was not about having a new gym or cook shack, but to make sure that the new dayroom would be equal or better to what the club currently had.

I did not get it at first why they cared so much. I was here to swim, not to sit around and look at the view. But I came to understand that what these members were expressing was the fellowship that the dayroom created and fostered for our culture and community. It was a sanctuary of sorts with awe inspiring views, where nature filled the room and allowed us to sit, talk, plan events, create bonds and simply relax. Over time, I slowly joined that culture and developed friendships with an even broader group than just my swim pod. I heard stories about the 1960’s 70’s, 80’s and beyond. I met the likes of Jim Miller, Bill James, Bob Roper, Wayne Black, Wayne Buford and countless others. These individuals were legends and they shared the stories of their own club heroes and history. When I swam with the first SERC English Channel relay team, these members were encouraging and excited for us. They cheered for all the younger members as we pursued our dreams and goals. They piloted, and fundraised for us and truly were inspirational. This was not much different then how we now support our younger members today. The new and present dayroom was built and it accomplished the goal to preserve our culture within. It allowed for more seating, equal or better views and most importantly a place where a member could come and recharge, all without impacting our neighbors. These members knew the magic and they protected it.



During the ensuing years I have come to the club at many different hours and have seen many different groups benefiting from the peaceful dayroom. The one commonality was tranquility and fellowship. For a time, I would come to swim at 2 pm and find many retired members relaxing, reading and talking. When entering the club, I soon found myself bypassing the locker room and stopping first in the dayroom. We were always greeted with a welcoming hello and a what are you going to swim today? After rushing through difficult traffic and parking to get to the club, the day room was a great way to transition from daily life and prepare for the joy of swimming. Through all of life's challenges, both good and bad, it was a place to come and clear your mind.

I share all this to illustrate how important this sometimes-overlooked treasure is. It is indeed a defining benefit of our club. Many of you on the board may be relatively new to the club and may be at a stage in your life where the dayroom and its greater meaning are not an important part of your daily life, and you may not see the full impact that this will have on our club and dayroom. But, please don't forget about the other members and our club's culture that depends on this.

I am not against change, but as it stands, this part of the Dolphin Club's remodel would ruin our precious, irreplaceable, valued and understated amenity. Make no mistake, this a land grab by a few, disguised as a needed improvement. If this goes through there will be no undoing it. For the Dolphin Club to accomplish their building renovation goals, they don't have to have another deck at our expense. By opposing this, we are not denying our neighbors a view, a dayroom, or a social area, they already have a beautiful, large room for all that. What we are saying no to is an unnecessary expansion at our expense.

Thank you for allowing me to voice my opinion and I ask that you do everything in your power to protect our dayroom for future generations to come.

If I can be of any help in this please let me know how.

Respectfully,  
StevenRay

**Simon Dominguez**

Simon thanked everyone who came to the meeting. He said that he heard things that he had never previously thought about. He asked for anybody who isn't 100% convinced to reach out to him.

### **Dan McLaughlin**

Dan said he 100% supports fighting the current expansion proposal. He believes that it's a small minority of people at the DC who are pushing this plan forward. Most of their membership is unaware or opposed.

He went on to describe a case of bullying by the DC cox at last weekend's Tri. The DC cox came to our Club and put his finger in the face of one of our coxes and shouted an expletive at her. Their cox then shoulder checked one of our women rowers on his way out. Dan called for the cox to be banned from future SERC events.

### **A. Membership Vacancy**

Fran explained that Michelle has tendered her resignation to tend to personal issues. That sad news was tempered by the good news that Jungah Lee has agreed to become our new membership commissioner. The Board thanked Michelle for her service and voted in Jungah (14 – 0 – 0).

### **B. DC Expansion**

Fran reminded the group that the story poles show the DC "compromise" proposal but that at their last board meeting, the DC decided to file their original "max" (to the end of the building) proposal with the City. The DC has also decided to no longer seek a letter of support from us. They are preparing revised plans which they will file with the City.

Fran recently spent two hours meeting one-on-one with John Horner. The meeting was very cordial but she was unable to get John to look at their project from our perspective. She asked if there were any alternative they would consider and he said "no ... they're tired and don't need SERC". She reminded him of all of the things we've been

able to accomplish together (e.g., saving the pier, the waterfront plan, etc) but he was unmoved.

There is a belief that 3 or 5 people at the DC are driving this project.

Fran reported that she and Josh met with Supervisor Stefani at the Club. We walked her through the day room and then went over the DC and looked at things from their perspective.

A few days later the Supervisor expressed an interest in trying to mediate the issue. Fran expressed appreciation and support for the Supervisor's involvement but asked that the DC stop work on their project while the mediation plays out. Ward Bushee replied that he wasn't willing to pause.

At this point the Board went into closed session.

The Board returned from closed session and reported that it had passed (12 – 2 - 1) the following motion:

- Whereas SERC supports the DC's desire to improve their kitchen and weight room and enhance amenities for their members.
- Whereas SERC has consistently stated over the last three years that we will support a project that doesn't undermine the South End Rowing Club and its members by impairing our ability to host handball tournaments or diminishing the peaceful enjoyment of the SERC day room, our sole public gathering space with a welcoming view of Aquatic Park and the bay.
- Whereas SERC has suggested a number of possible modifications to the DC plans that allow them to improve their kitchen, weight room and still add additional deck space without compromising our day room.
- Whereas the SERC By Laws command each board member to "To preserve the Club for future members;"

- Whereas previous SERC Boards have repeatedly voted to oppose any DC expansion that diminishes the experience of our day room.
- We therefore vote at the September 14, 2022 Board meeting to authorize President Hegeler and VP Whalen to represent SERC in the upcoming Supervisor Stefani sponsored mediation process. They are authorized to bind the Club to any DC expansion plan that they believe is in the best interest of the SERC.

As described in the By-Laws, the Secretary then announced three Special Meetings of the SERC Board: September 21, September 27 and October 5. Those Special Meetings will be cancelled if not required.

#### **C. Acquire Costal Quad**

This item was deferred.

#### **D. 2022 Membership Meeting**

The 2022 Membership Meeting will occur on Thursday October 27 at 6:30pm. The meeting take place at the Club and will be in person only.

Each sports commissioner should be prepared to give a brief update on their program. We will also have reports from our treasurer, the 150<sup>th</sup> committee and our progress towards creating a 501(c)(3). The revised By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation will be placed before the membership.

#### **E. ABC Permit**

Josh shared that, after completing 20 forms, fingerprinting our officers and testifying before the Board of Supervisors, we finally received our permanent type 51 ABC license.

This permit allows us to serve alcohol anywhere on the first floor of the club except for the dock, beach and bay. The license needs to be renewed each year.

The permit comes with credentials that allow us to access an ABC portal. Elizabeth Young has agreed to be the person who manages the portal. This role will be passed on to future entertainment commissioners.

Josh will be updating the Club procedures to document the new permit.

Kevin B. described the new (July 2022) requirement for people serving alcohol to go through Responsible Beverage Service (RBS) training and certification. This is unrelated to our permanent license.

Kevin got himself certified and reports it took a couple of hours and cost \$12. We need to get our servers trained and maintain a list of certified servers. Kevin will discuss this with Eric.

#### **F. Onboarding New Members**

Mary reported that she intended to call each new member ... until she realized that 800 people had joined the Club since 2020. She reported that we needed a way to instill the spirit of volunteerism in new members as well as ensure they understand restrictions (e.g., unsupported swim boundaries) put in place for their own safety.

She's thinking of having a recurring a Zoom call for new members that include a couple of Board members. There was also discussion about hosting mixers.

There was a question about the status of the South Ender newsletter. That's would be another way to stay in touch with new members.

There was also some discussion about having a new members swim, run, etc prior to social hours.

Mary pledged to continue working on this important item.

## **G. By-Law Updates**

Since we're updating our By-Laws to facilitate the 501(c)(3) (voted on at the August meeting), we're using the opportunity to make a few other minor adjustments:

- Clarifying how appointed Board members are replaced.
- Defining a process for approving updates to the Articles of Incorporation.
- Requiring appointed Board members to be members for at least one year.

The Board recommended these changes to the membership (14 – 0 – 0).

## **H. Alcatraz Invitational Results**

Laura reported that we netted \$63k from the AI and that we're still making money from the sale of photographs.

## **I. Tri Results**

Sydelle reported that we won! Everyone had fun!

She said that SERC swimmers outnumbered the DC 200 to 71. SERC took 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the barge race.

Randy Whitney filled all of the hungry bellies with a tasty lunch. Randy has offered to teach a class at the Club on how to cook for a large group. Great idea!

## **Appoint Election Manager (not on agenda)**

Josh made a motion to appoint Sue Free as election manager for the upcoming Club elections. The motion passed unanimously.

As we were adjourning, Simon asked us all to express our special thanks to Fran for all the hard work she has been putting into both Club business as well as the Pier and Waterfront projects. Hear hear!