

**October 11, 2023**  
**South End Rowing Club**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**

**Roll Call**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>		<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>
F. Hegeler	X		C. Lovazzano	X
C. Bump	X		A. Diaz	X
J. Sale	X		V. Blyth Marlin	
B. Ip	X		T. Nguyen	X
A. Gower	X		Z. Margolis	X
J. Li			E. Gliebe	X
G. Lazaneo	X		P. Mulvihill	X
S. Dominguez	X		L. Hovden	X
D. Puglisi	X			
S. Fillipow	X		S. Wintersteen	

**Approval of Minutes**

The September 2023 Board minutes were approved (14 – 0 – 2).

**President’s Remarks**

“This place is on fire!” declared president Hegeler. So much is happening that it’s hard to take it all in. The Interclub Tri was a success (yes, the plaque stays home) but everybody (from both clubs) had a great time. There were water rescue games, Pathstar, SAA, AI, Chaslapalooza and a service for Diane Major to name just a few.

We all should feel proud. The Club feels great at 150!

The AI had 496 swimmers and we made \$105k, a new record. Big thanks to Andrew Packer and Maureen Keefe for leading this effort and all the volunteers who made it a success.

Fran expressed concern about abuse of the guest policy ... particularly around holidays (e.g., July 4<sup>th</sup>) and events (e.g., Fleet Week). Over the Fleet Weekend there were too many non-members

in the Club. The front door had been propped open. Members of the public had setup an impromptu bar on the dock. We are going to need to have someone stationed at the door at these times. She noted that the place runs because of volunteerism. When we abuse the guest policy we're cheating ourselves and each other. We need to bring the membership into a greater state of awareness about guests and day users.

Lastly Fran said she would be scheduling a visit from the NPS manager to update us on their plans and particularly their plans for the historic boats currently tied up in aquatic park. By the end of the year, all of those boats will be gone and won't return for 6 to 8 years.

### **Members Moment**

Leslie Bustos-Gomez, Jesse Inghelram and Ben Stevens shared a members moment to update the Board on the MAX415 partnership.

Leslie shared that she joined the Club about a year ago. She passed around photographs taken at the various SERC/MAX415 events. She completed her first Alcatraz crossing with the Club earlier in the year. Leslie expressed her thanks and desire to continue the partnership.

Jessie is a 3 year member. He said that he's heard people describing the Club as *The best place on earth*. He thinks that it's the community that makes the Club unique. He described it as inspiring, encouraging and loving. He also noted that when walking around the Club he sees pictures that tell the story of the Club's history but that it's only one kind of story. He expressed a desire for the Club's walls to also tell the story of its new members.

Ben said it's good to see more black and brown people at the Club. He said people of color are tired of being asked why they are here. He asked for wall space dedicated to the MAX415 partnership.

Fran thanked the three presenters and reminded them that the Board doesn't take action (i.e., vote) based on members moments.

## **A. Water Safety Program**

Zina began her presentation by expressing her appreciation to the Club for its support of the water safety program she has created. She reminded those in attendance that the program started with the tragedy of Lisa Amorao's drowning. Lisa was loved by her fellow South Enders and was an experienced open water swimmer but that didn't spare her calamity.

Losing Lisa caused Zina to realize that most training assumes rescue from land or a boat and not swimmer-to-swimmer. Zina researched this specific type of rescue and put together a class that at this point has been boiled down to a 45-minute class followed by 90-minutes in water practical. To date, 110 people have taken the training including a number of Board members. Everybody finishes with a smile on their face.

Zina unveiled her water phoenix logo and presented Erika a banner featuring the logo in appreciation of her support for the program.

Zina and Erika have been discussing where to take the program in 2024. In order to take pressure off the Club's already busy weekend schedule, they came up with the idea of running next year's clinics in the afternoon instead of morning's when the Club tends to be busiest.

Zina also said that WOWSA (World Open Water Swimming Association) had expressed interest in sending some of its folks to a training in 2024.

## **B. Emergency Dock Repairs**

Fran reported that because of a winch failure, the dock was closed but now is open. She thanked the folks who stepped up to get the winch repaired so quickly.

## **C. Review of Club Dues and Fees**

At last month's meeting, Laura reported on increases in expenses at the Club. Some of these increases are a function of inflation and

some the result of increase in membership. While expenses have gone up, dues and fees have remained unchanged for at least 10 years.

A committee composed of Laura, Pete and George compared our cost of membership with the DC and other sports organizations (e.g., YMCA, JCC, etc). By every measure, we are at the low end of the spectrum.

The committee made a number of recommendations (all figures are annual):

- Increase dues from \$405 to \$450.
- Change the proration to disincentivize just joining for the warm months.
- Increase out of town dues from \$77 to \$100.
- Increase locker fees from \$125 to \$140.
- Increase initiation fees from \$100 to \$125.
- Charge \$25 for new and replacement card keys
- Allow service aides, who come to the Club in support of a member, to enter at no charge.

The committee didn't make a recommendation on day use fees because they thought such a change needed to be coordinated with the DC.

As one might expect, the committee's report was followed by a lively discussion. This included:

Reminding everyone that changes in dues need to come from the Board but need to be ratified by the membership. The agenda for the general membership meeting will be fixed and noticed prior to our November Board meeting. So if we want to change dues in 2024, we must decide that tonight.

We also must remember that all revenue doesn't flow into the same pot. Locker and initiation fees go to the Club's special

fund not the general fund. There are limitations on how the special fund can be used.

Changes to dues and fees also must be approved by Rec and Parks. Fran agreed to give Rec and Parks a heads up about these changes since we hope to have them approved before year end.

An argument was made to eliminate the proration of dues in the interest of simplicity. Also we're at a point where capacity is becoming an issue. Proration makes membership more enticing and this might not be in our best interests.

Each year approximately 20 people request financial assistance from the membership commissioner. These requests have always been granted.

Membership would prefer to transition people from card keys/fobs to the pdk phone app because its easier to deal with phone replacement than it is to deal with card key replacement.

The rapid growth in membership over the last few years has allowed us to avoid dealing with the big increases in expenses. But that approach isn't sustainable as we reach capacity.

After lengthy discussion, a series of motions were made:

Increase dues from \$405 to \$450 passed (5 – 0 – 1)

Increase out of town dues from \$77 to \$100 passed (5 – 0 – 1)

Increase initiation fee from \$100 to \$125 passed (4 – 2<sup>1</sup> – 0)

New and replacement card keys/fobs increase to \$25 and no charge for the pdk app passed (6 – 0 – 0)

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<sup>1</sup> The two no's thought the increase was too small.

Increase locker fees from \$125 to \$140 passed (6 – 0 – 0)

The committee was asked to examine changes to day use fees and report back at the November meeting.

The Board also asked the committee to work with Catherine to create an estimate of what these changes are likely to yield over time.

#### **D. Plan 2023 General Membership Meeting**

Fran shared her plan for the meeting.

- November 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm in the cookshack
- All slides to Fran by November 1st
- Overall Theme:
  - Fran to chair and Cathy to act as timekeeper.
  - Try to keep meeting brief. Aiming for one hour.
  - All presentations to stay focused on highlights (not exhaustive lists). Top 2 or 3 items.
  - Details can be covered at the various sports meetings.
- Agenda:
  - President's remarks/state of the club 10 minutes
  - Approve Adele as DAL 2 minutes
  - 4 sport commissioners 3 minutes each
    - rowing and boathouse together by a single presenter
  - Entertainment report 3 minutes
    - opportunity to pitch the holiday party
  - MAX 415 5 minutes hopefully presented by Leslie and Jeff

Membership report 3 minutes

Building report 5 minutes

Treasure report 3 minutes

Increase in dues 5 minutes

- In contrast to 1873 fund, needed for operational expenses & rainy day

1873 Fund 501(c)(3) 3 minutes

- In contrast to dues, focused on bigger capital projects e.g., building foundations

#### **E. Southender Newsletter**

George reported that its been 2.5 years since the last issue of the Southender came out. In the intervening years, the monthly email blast has served as our newsletter.

George reported that he has reassembled the old team (with Dylan acting as a consultant) to put out 4 more issues (one in 2023 and three in 2024). He requested \$4,500 for 2023 and \$9,000 for 2024 to support this initiative. The Board voted (16 – 0 – 0) to approve \$4,500 for 2023 and will include the other amount in the 2024 budget.

George and team received thunderous appreciation from the Board for stepping up.

#### **F. Personal Stuff Left at the Club**

Steve asked for Board input and support for his plan for dealing with personal stuff (kayaks, etc) left at the Club. Steve will red tag items left at the club. After two weeks he will remove the items and not less than two weeks after that, he will dispose of them.

The Board supported Steve's plan as presented (15 – 1 – 0).

## **G. Ambassador Pilot Program**

George presented his plan for managing the front door of the Club. The essential part of the plan is to have people at the front door to welcome guests and day users. This isn't an enforcement role but rather an ambassador for the Club. The person will be able to answer questions, make people feel welcome and help them understand expectations.

No doubt reading the minds of many Board members who wondered where the volunteers will come from, George pointed out that during Covid, we had 65 volunteer door monitors. George feels that if we can do it once, we can do it again.

Once again, the Board thanked George for taking on the hard problems.

## **H. Club Wide Announcements**

Steve pointed out that he occasionally has the need to send out Club wide communications (e.g., the water will be turned off between certain hours on some specific day). He doesn't currently have access to or training on using Mailchimp.

Steve often has advanced visibility about these events and in such cases, it was suggested these announcements be included in the monthly email blast. Steve will talk to Claire, who puts together the monthly email blast, about getting a regular section in that announcement.

On those occasions where information needs to be sent on short notice, Steve will get with Fran to get his announcement out to the membership using Mailchimp.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned to a scrumptious homemade dinner courtesy of George (it was a big night for George)!