

MAY 2011 BOARD MEETING

WESTERN RESERVE ROWING ASSOCIATION

May 2, 2011, Rivergate

In attendance: Mark Silverstein, Joanne Hull, Jeff Zabor, Erik Murdell, Gary Clark, Sally Fahrenholz, D.D. Meakin, Craig Gates

APRIL 2011 MINUTES

Motion to approve previous minutes as noted through board emails.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

PROCESS FOR BIDS FOR HEAD OF THE CHARLES

- A Head of the Charles Regatta Committee will be formed in response to requests by members. The committee will clarify process and decisions for sending crews to Head of the Charles – regarding crew selection, eligibility for participation, selecting bids, determination of rowers.
- Formation of such a committee is appropriate because WRRRA club pays for this regatta.
- Gary Clark suggests that new and returning bids need to be considered, also practice schedule for the participants.
- Advisory members of the committee will include Coach Lang.
- Update: The Head of the Charles Committee has been selected to craft recommendations to the Board of WRRRA concerning procedures and protocols for the HOCR. The committee will sort out the details and make recommendations about such things as:
 1. Which bids will be sent to the HOCR committee from WRRRA
 2. How boats representing WRRRA at the HOCR will be selected
 3. How rowers will be selected to fill seats in boats representing WRRRA at the HOCR
 4. Other issues the committee deems of importance.
- Those selected for this committee are:
 - Cara Sieberth, Chairman
 - Chris Sheridan, Sheila Nowacki, Betsy Batts, Kirk Lang

CRF UPDATE

GARY CLARK REPORTING

- The new logo for Rivergate Park is on the website.
- Restructuring of loan is still in process. There have been unexpected costs, such as roof repair at \$6K, which will be done.
- 20 coaches met at Rivergate on April 20 to discussing safety in particular. Of special concern are the docks – which may need to be reconfigured to avoid damage to launches.
- Wooden dock will have new ramping – in both directions. There is a plan to better secure it to the bulkhead – the gap needs to be closed. A group is working on these high priority items from the coaches meeting. It was emphasized that these concerns need to be addressed before the start of SRL.
- A new policy prohibits the use of single-use plastic bottles. CRF wants to encourage all to use reusable plastic bottles and urges coaches to inform team members of this new rule.
- New rowing program fees are being considered.
- Kayaks will launch from the docks. An agreement has been executed with Cleveland Metroparks, who will orient and control kayaking groups launching from Rivergate.
- CRF will also post a sign – no open access due to safety concerns.
- On Monday, May 16 an open house for scholastic and collegiate programs will be held.
- On Tuesday, May 17 – CRF will hold a formal ribbon cutting ceremony for local supporters and politicians.
- National Learn to Row Day is June 4.
- Rivergate bash is July 23. Contributions are still being sought.
- Charity Poker is August 30 and 31.
- First Aid kit and AD hook are in coaches area. Small lockers for WRRRA are being made available.
- Boathouse computers still to be installed for reservations, weather conditions.

- Need online reservation system for sculling fleet.
- Member at large position is available on CRF board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION AND MEMBERSHIP GARY CLARK

- The board recognizes Frank's commitment to membership and his salesmanship
- Membership report from Frank Campbell:
 - SRL numbers are soft – 216 registered. Last year total was 268. 15 people registered May 2.
 - Of 268 SRL members from last year – only 110 have registered – a 40% retention rate.
 - 168 people registered for LTR – 38% conversion.
 - Reminders of deadlines are going out to LTR and former SRL rowers.
 - We have 12 to 14 coaches registered and 5 coxes.
 - Rec has 18 people signed up.
 - Masters has 27 registered.
 - 25 for general sculling and general sweeps.
 - Registration is a user unfriendly process. Homepage is under CRF, and changing it is not possible for WRRRA purposes.
 - In discussions with Active Net – we've learned of a major change in the fall for the look and feel of ActiveNet.
 - Frank is talking to ActiveNet about making WRRRA a separate "site" for look and feel – in information gathering stage.
 - Frank is researching a registration system for sculling reservations.
 - Discussion of further registration for SRL – need to be flexible to allow more rowers, Learn to Row, making additional teams. Late registration is typical. We are expecting surge for 2nd srl row session.
 - Suggestion – assemble a focus group of people who did not sign up for SRL ask why they aren't coming back, what they are looking for, etc.
 - Email message to potential SRLers -- Due to popular demand, we've decided to extend the deadline.
 - Equipment reservation will incorporate other shells for sweeps buddy boats. It gets complicated with schedules for Rec and Masters. Very specific levels of rules are difficult to program for in the system.
 - There is interest in buddy boat reservation in general sweeps people. Equipment should be available for them. It might be a good idea to give general sweeps priority at certain times.

FINANCE JOANNE HULL

- Restatement from the Code of Regulations: Each program shall be allowed to operate only within the level of actual revenue.
- Lower registration numbers necessitate scaling back of expenses for any given program.
- By this time next month we will need to make appropriate adjustments to budgets based on actual revenue numbers.
- Via email, this motion was made, seconded and approved:

Motion to approve the removal of Kathleen Whitford and Mark Shupe as signatories on the WRRRA bank accounts, and to approve the replacement signatories of Jeffrey Zabor, Gloria Story and Joanne Hull.

COMMUNICATIONS ERIK MURDELL

- Website is updated all the time. Of note are: 1. Page for masters practice signups and away regattas; and 2. Page for WRRRA forms – waivers, financial forms. We are updating the contacts list – board member info, complete with photo. Committees will also be added, with minutes, etc. Working with board and committees to gather information. We will also add pages for equipment and coaches pages with photos.
- WRRRA emails have been standardized. President, secretary, other title or function [@westernreserverowing.com](mailto:westernreserverowing.com), e for a more professional appearance.
- Social media and PR report from Jim Ridge: Facebook ad campaign was a leap of faith. Interest may not have translated into new SRL memberships. The daily \$50 ad spend was achieved each day. 72,000 people saw the ad with over 710K impressions. Social click through rate ended at about 21%. A big surge in our page likes – about 630 people now. This is a good base to continue from.

- Radio spot on Friday morning, April 22 – Erik and Jim, mention of Rivergate and rowing – we got some LTR signups from this spot.
- Facebook and website will develop a greater audience over time. Craig mentions that people need to see something a minimum of 7 times before they take action.
- How do we carry on the FB momentum? We can try to leverage for mid-season SRL. We need to keep posting content and engaging the audience. We need WRRR to like and share on FB to build the network.
- We are gathering information about occupation and affiliation from LTR registrants. We would like to know more about the associations current members have for presentations to corporations, but e need to be careful with this info.

OUTREACH AND INNOVATION ERIK MURDELL

- CRF will not be holding Row 4 the Cure. WRRR may pick up this event.

UNITY AND SOCIAL ERIK MURDELL

- Cover sheet will be done next week.
- JZ believes unity needs affirmative action – by personal action. Stay tuned – we may have a unity summit meeting regarding how to engage and help.

FUNDRAISING ERIK MURDELL

- Forming. Needs committee members

MERCHANDISING ERIK MURDELL

- Forming. Needs committee members.
- This committee will expand on what Janet Clark has done in this area.
- First meeting is next week.

LEARN TO ROW ERIK MURDELL AND MARK SILVERSTEIN

- Thanks to everyone – coaches, coxes, rowers. It takes 16 people to put on a LTR for 24 people. We need more inclusion from current members and need to explore how to get greater involvement.
- We have doubled the number of learn to rows this year.
- We have one more – sold out this weekend.

SUMMER AND FALL ROWING LEAGUES MARK SILVERSTEIN

- Thanks for Erik for LTRs – they are going really well.
- Jerry and Sandy are doing well as SRL chairs.
- Cox boxes and lockers and lights are being repaired and lined up.
- Cara has worked on oars and will be working on signs for oar racks.

RECREATIONAL ROWING PROGRAM MARK SILVERSTEIN

- Need some publicity for growing this base this year.
- Makeup days need to be scheduled because of weather.

GENERAL SWEEPS ROWING D.D. MEAKIN

- No current report.
- Jeff Renston is the point person and will act as a liaison for general sweeps rowers and board.

MASTERS ROWING PROGRAM D.D. MEAKIN

- Program outline document as an attachment to committee cover sheet.
- Details of program outlined in the cover sheet.
- This document was presented to the team and it was well received.

Joanne moved to approve the masters committee documents with D.D. seconding – the motion was unanimously approved.

REGATTA COMMITTEE D.D. MEAKIN

- Cover sheet has been made available – main points are managing finances, equipment, loading and unloading for regattas. We also need trained trailer drivers.
- Distribution of 2011 regattas – the committee is gauging interest among masters rowers.
- Unity considerations include a buddy system for away regattas.
- Proposed regatta list will be at next meeting.

Joanne moved to approve the masters committee documents with D.D. seconding – the motion was unanimously approved.

SCULLING PROGRAM D. D. MEAKIN

- Tim Marcovy presents new bylaw to board.
- Committee cover sheet addresses -- certifying independent scullers, learn to scull program, coached sculling program, recs for sculling equipment. 60% of the fleet may need repairs.
- Proposed bylaw: proposed by committee. Given to board electronically, with edits by board members. Reserving financial authority for board for equipment and program costs.

Move to approve committee cover sheet made by Joanne with second from Mark. Unanimously approved.

- Learn to scull program – 6 lessons for \$200 – have had coaches step up to run this. WRRRA would pay coaches \$25 for one student, \$35 for two students. No more than two students at a time.
- Coached sculling capped at 6 people per session – for folks who have completed the learn to scull stage. Each session is capped at 6 people. More advanced scullers who want to refine racing techniques can call on Russ Eckles to coach. Registration would be through Active Net. We could sell bundles of outings – and scullers would use as needed. The administrative details – including equipment reservation -- are still to be worked out.
- The Sculling Program is designed for maximum flexibility. This is an individualized program open to WRRRA members who have paid general CRF and WRRRA fees.
- Learn to scull will start May 15. Coached sculling to start June 1.
- Participants could bring or reserve boats. TM sent wishlist for reservation to Frank. The operational issues are given to the committee to implement.
- Buddy sculling program – for folks who are not yet certified as independent scullers. They need to go out with someone – is a facilitation to find buddies to go out with – a dating service.
- Question specific to quad: must have qualified people in the bow –the SOM mandates that cox is SQL2 if the boat goes out by itself.

Motion by Gary Clark: bow in quad must be a certified independent sculler in addition to being an SQL2. Craig Gates seconded, unanimously approved.

Move to approve bylaw from D.D. Meakin, seconded by Gary Clark, unanimously approved.

- Repairs for sculling equipment: quad has been repaired. Some repairs have been needed for quite a while. Further deterioration needs to be prevented by scheduling timely repairs. Will the \$2200 budgeted for repairs be sufficient? We will assume so unless we are informed otherwise. Most repairs are to hulls, and are small. Biggest expense is for convertible pair/doubles. Rudder equipment for these has not yet been found – this is for Jones and Blue Moon.
- Partially donated Schube should to be used only for people racing or training for racing. This communication on the restriction will be going out to those certified to use it.
- Operational issues are to be handled by the sculling committee.
- Next meeting we will look at budget, since repairs seem to be on the horizon. The actual expenses need to be tracked against budget numbers.
- Skeg damage policy still stands and will be managed operationally as it was in the past.

HEAD OF THE CUYAHOGA

- Cara Sieberth is HotC chair.
- HotC will work in collaboration with Ingenuity and Dragon Boat Festival. Shuttle to bring more spectators and information booths are planned for these partner organizations.
- We want to encourage as many WRRRA members to row in HOTC.

COACHING COMMITTEE CRAIG GATES

- As for last year, we will have a staff of college coaches, managed similarly.
- Numbers are being cut back. Assignments of college and local coaches regarding SRL is an issue. We don't know if we have too many or too few coaches. We need to accommodate all coaching candidates, college and coach WRRRA members.

- We know we need more coaches amongst the WRRRA members, because of significant demand in spring and fall. So we have been encouraging members to be coaches – we have had a lot of volunteers for coaches and we don't want to discourage them.
- Kirk will oversee the coaching staff as was done last year. He is the overall head coach. Wayne will be supervising and coordinating the SRL college coaches.
- JZ suggests -- Beginning in fall, when coaching is needed – establish a policy to give priority to coaches from WRRRA coaching WRRRA. Fill in with WRRRA coaches as a priority first.
- It was agreed that the coaching committee will prepare a written recommendation to the board for coaching compensation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COACHING COMMITTEE MEETING

- The following recommendations were approved via email by the board members:
- 1) Applications for Coxing&Coaching: The committee unanimously agreed on the 2 applications that Jeff Z designed.
Recommendation: The board put them in place and require all coaches & coxswains to fill out.
- 2) Coaching training: We all agreed this effort needs to continue with future sessions and mentoring opportunities for those who want to become coaches. Craig to continue pushing this agenda by holding more coach training clinics and providing opportunities for observation as the new "Big Launch" comes online through the Ignatius program. Sharon also offered mentoring for new coaches. Craig to reach out to those who are interested and continue to provide training opportunities. Russ will be the main training person. He has given approximately 8 hours of donated time over the first 2 clinics. There will need to be some compensation for further clinics. Although a dollar amount was not discussed at the committee meeting Friday, I would like to recommend \$75 be paid to Russ for each additional clinic. Please respond either way on this so a recommendation can be forwarded to the board.
Recommendation: Approval of \$75 per clinic paid to Russ for future sessions.
- 3) Coaching structure: The new push to train more coaches has given us a good problem to have. How do we honor the current system and give new local coaches opportunities as well. A healthy discussion was had in regard to our current coaching structure and what we should do now that we have more interest from new, in house coaches. We talked about the college staff coming in and discussed how to handle this along with the interest from our current and prospective local coaches. It was generally agreed to handle the scheduling in a similar manner as we did last year. We have a few experienced coaches that will get opportunities to coach teams while giving the large majority of teams to the incoming college staff.
- Recommendation for fall 2011 and entire 2012: Since we want to continue to promote local rowers to join the coaching ranks, we recommend that in house coaches be given priority for next year if they coach a team in the fall for FRL. These coaches will need to communicate their interest and make a commitment to coach SRL 2012 and will be given priority over college coaches as a result. This will accomplish a few things. We will give our members opportunities to get involved and have priority for next SRL season if they show the willingness to help with the FRL season. This will also help us understand who is serious about coaching and help us forecast coaching needs for the next season.
- 4) Coaching & coxing pay structure: We used Jeff's "Wrrra coaching & coxing proposal" as a starting point. Please see the revised proposal to see the specific structure we are recommending. A pay scale was determined based on encouraging repeat coaches.
Recommendation: Bottom line is first year coaches make \$25 per session, \$30 for coaches in year 2 & 3, and \$35 for those who return for 4 years or more. We also recommend a \$5 supervisor fee for the "SRL head coach" (Wayne) for heading up and organizing his SRL staff. This system should apply to college and local coaches involved in SRL and FRL. Coxy pay scale as follows: \$25 for Masters program & \$20 for Novice SRL/FRL. Away per diem was also discussed. Only the head coach and cox's get a per diem. Head coach \$100/ coxy's \$25. It was agreed that further assistance should be provided by rowers such as offering free transportation & lodging in group rooms at away regattas. If a coxy or head coach decides they do not want to stay with the rowers, they are need to pay their own way. Please see details in the attached proposal.
- 5) Last item pertained to an SRL retention survey:
Recommendation: Put out an SRL survey in January to find out 2 things: Are you coming back for the season? Why?

EQUIPMENT CRAIG GATES

- Pair/double will be ready for HS Nationals at the end of May. Should have been done by the end of April.
- Empacher – need status regarding whether it's ready to row.

SAFETY AND COXING COMMITTEES CRAIG GATES

- Coxes for SRL need to be coordinated with Chris Morgan. 2 coxes are coming in from college and will be available for SRL

- NCAA considerations will be discussed – loopholes for coxswains may be in effect.

ELITE PRE-ELITE CRAIG GATES

- Set pieces in place for this program. Not a lot of interest as yet – we need more publicity.

VOLUNTEERING GARY CLARK

- LTR volunteers – have been changing schedules, cancelling.
- SRL regattas will be coming up and volunteer will be needed for that.
- Success story – a LTR participant became an instant volunteer.

MASTERS ATTENDANCE AND SUBBING

- Coach Lang would like masters rowers to find subs when they are unable to come to practice.
- There are former rowers who could sub in – paid sweeps are OK, but certified scullers may be available. This should be publicized to Rec and general sweeps first. Boats were often filled with people who did not pay at all – scholastic rowers, rowers from other programs. This was a big help.
- Rec and general sweeps rowers will be invited to join the Masters sub list. Women and men can sub for each other in the Masters program.

Move to adjourn the meeting: Erik, with Mark seconding, unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

Next meeting – Tuesday, June 7 at 6:15