

**MRRA General Meeting:
November 10, 2015**

Boathouse 7 PM

Attendees: Mark Romanowsky, Terry Freeman, Chur Masors, Dottie Semonian, Karen Scammell, Alex Gavriel, Sandy Mathias, Dennis McCarthy, Bob Sengstaken, David Morley, Joe LaFreniere, John Ballentine, Carl Popolo. (13).

Safety Message:

No rowing with club boats, Winter Clean up completed last weekend, docks to be pulled by UML.

Hazard buoys have been pulled by Dave M and Joe L.

October Meeting Minutes:

Accept motion to approve, second, all in attendance approve accept

Joe L. wants to comment and not approve because he doesn't feel they were posted within a week or so of the meeting. Wants to see more timely posting.

Dottie S. Meeting minutes were sent to members before the meeting when found they were not posted by Carl P. Dottie S. is not able to post directly to the web site.

Program Feedback, Review of the Season:

Learn To Scull: Chur M. This year was outstanding, asked for feedback from those attending. This year changed the class length from 6 weeks and 6 weeks, from 4 weeks.

Thinks the web site was how the program was found

Lowell Community Rowing Banner was out, didn't hurt,

Joe L: Wants members to know the trade mark was renewed, he thinks the Community Rowing relents more entry level rowing programs are available through the club.

Learn to Scull had 8 rowers in the first class 6 the second, 5 from the program joined the MRRA. Karen asking Chur to email these folks and ask for a little more feedback.

Alex Gavriel: Coached, he thinks the group found out by word or mouth or from Learn To Row Day, and web site.

Joe L. Suggesting for next year using the Lowell Recreational bulletin, Chelmsford, Continuing education, can list class, advertise.

Dates would have to be available very early

Joe has posted coast guard auxiliary programs there.

Jody DeCarolis and Terry Freeman posted flyers this season to advertise for programs at Gyms and local businesses. Found most individuals were in very good physical shape this year.

Want to make sure we retain individuals that go through our programs.

Suggest Refresher Class: Think rowing on the river may be Intimidating, especially if you are alone and don't have a buddy to row with. Will need to make sure this refresher is offered early in the season. Would send a "Welcome Back" email.

Alex G. ran "Refresher" this year, had four rowers attend.

Group discussion about providing more Mentored rows. Could schedule a time on Saturday, for newest members, message board to post time, looking for a rowing buddy.

Bob S: Wonders if we should limit membership. Have we reached our capacity for sculling? Prior calculations are that 65 is the capacity for sculling with equipment we have today. Sweep have access to all 8's in the boathouse, including LHS boats
Not at capacity yet, could run 2 sessions.

Learn to Sweep: Terry F. present to review how the programs went, ran with Jody DeCarolis this season.

16 people in first session, used 2 8's with cox and coaching

10 for the 2nd, 3rd and 4th sessions, enthusiastic group

This season there was not a time when members were encouraged to join the MRRA. I

Can discuss when members should be encouraged next year, seems likely to ask when ready to be Masters Sweep level. Goal has always been to have program attendees join the MRRA.

Will add to our volunteer base for regattas and grow the club.

Learn To Sessions kept being added, still need to see if program broke even.

Financials pending, programs need to break even, cannot cost the club money.

Fees may need to increase.

Need appropriate time to convert to membership, Carl figures \$12 per person, per row to cover cost of coach and coxswain. Launch fees were not calculated into program this year.

Alex Gavriel:

Some issue with which boats could be used, conflict when UML came back in Fall.

Some scrambling, UML was accommodating, but took priority.

This is the first time Learn To Sweep continued into Fall.

Some conflict with Open Sweep Men, boats were already reserved by Learn To Sweep Program
New Coach UML this year.

Can plan better for next year. Also have use of LHS boats. Hudson was used for HOOR.

Try to get Sweep Rowing started earlier in May.

MRRA Board will also try to get the Boat house user agreement completed with UML earlier.

Alex G.

Cox boxes are also needed. Suggest some purchases. "**Active Tools**" brand cost about \$400 more than NK but also have recorder, GPS, stoke coach, can work without magnet.

Uses the same speaker system as NK \$1000, NK about \$648

Joe L. Membership, discount rate for combining Learn to Sweep for new people

Learn to scull then convert, might proactively, offer discount to someone returning.

Carl P: Masters Sweep is the next progression after Learn To Sweep.

Alex G: Suggesting purchase of additional club sweep oars, with Open Sweep, not enough club blades.

Joe L: Hesitates to purchase more sweep oars for conflict that only happened twice a year for regattas.

Masters Sweep: Can work with what is available. No one being disrespectful of the Masters Sweep, but do anticipate Open Men would be using the oars they have set for their boat.

Will also solidify equipment use in the boathouse.

Open Sweep: Is also a program not sure if one program or the other takes priority.
Between scheduling think Open Sweep should review with Masters Sweep and Learn To Sweep.

Open Sweep has been Tuesday and Thursday evenings

Masters Sweep: Mondays and Wednesday evenings

Equipment:

Karen S.

Received Bill from UML for \$1000 for using UML launches for Sept and October, for two days a week. Used for Masters Sweep and Learn To Sweep.

Calculation comes to about \$40 per night if broken down for 12 weeks, 24 sessions.

Carolina \$1500 cost, was out of service, returned in August, MRRA not really contributing to the launch pool. Didn't have our launch much of the season.

UML did not bill the MRRA for the launch use during the Summer months.

Karen will be speaking with Chris P on Friday to find out how this amount was determined.

Want to find out cost to "buy into launch pool."

Money set aside to purchase wake less launch from the budget this year.

Data point, never discussed cost before. Would like to know what LHS pays.

UML owns: 2 wakeless launches, 2 boats plus brewer, UML intends to purchase additional wake less launch.

Not suggesting selling Carolina.

Karen S. Don't think the MRRA members are interested in servicing launches. Historically we have not had a member want to care for launch servicing, gas, etc.

Joe L: consider participating in the launch pool and also purchasing a boat

Concern about if short on boats, MRRA could be left without launches.

Need to know what the cost would be to join the launch pool.

Joe L. Recent Safety committee meeting:

Wakeless launch was an asset from a safety aspect at the TRR. Low gunnel, deployable ladder, needed for TRR rescue.

Committee decided want to get 25 StillWater wake less launch.

More wakeless launches in use better for small boat programs.

Meeting with UML Karen will meet with Chris P, to recap how the season went.

Brewer: Joe L spoke to Chris P, added additional pontoon. Doesn't think UML is interested in keeping this going forward.

MRRA owns the motor. Discussion about taking the motor off, but needs controls, not that simple.

Carolina skiff will be pulled out Friday by David M.

Looks like there may be room on the new dock if MRRA purchased an additional launch.

Boathouse: Search Committee: Future Boathouse Development: (Site selection committee)

Would like to find Chair Person, site search committee:

Alex Gavriel has agreed to Chair.

Plan to seat committees, to talk with land owners, DCR, Towns, start process, have some interest from Westford as a tenant.

MRRA Members welcome to join this committee. Those in attendance want to be on committee

Mark Romanowsky, Joe LaFreniere, Karen Scammell. Will also review prior meeting minutes to see which members expressed interest in joining this committee.

Dave Cormier Westford/Littleton Coach: also interested in boathouse on the Merrimack.

Joe L. Concern about inviting Westford as partner. Wants search done exclusively by MRRA.

Then have club and BOD review whether we want a partner, or are we really looking for tenant.

Other members want to open up to community, may need financing.

Joe L: State program DCR may give long term lease on land.

State may offer, may go to open bid, and highest bidder.

May come down to who has the cash.

Want to keep the search to MRRA to start.

Alex G. Girls Inc, G Row in this area, would be interested in programs.

Group attending agrees to limit the Land search group to MRRA only at this time.

Peter Murray aware we have a 5 year plan, MRRA looking for new home.

UML may also have growth and could ask MRRA to leave the boathouse, think unlikely to put LHS out.

Carl P.

Looking at numbers from prior question about whether or not logbook sculling is at capacity.

Logbook Scullers 45-70 45 peak, the remaining off peak, not yet at capacity.

Still need someone to run for Boat Captain: Will send out request to club.

Strongly supported by the Equipment committee:

Will nominate Alex Garviel: ** (After the meeting it was determined that Alex has a Student Membership given by Carl P, as a coach, and can not run for office per the bylaws.)

Pulling for Polcari: Date advertised: Saturday November 21.

Advertising on MRRA web page: Hope MRRA Members will attend.

Further discussion on donation amount to Polcari Charity.

Carl P. Directors of the TRR, have maintained a specific pool of money to refund clubs and individuals for events cancelled. Individuals were offered a return of 50% of the entry cost.

Some have said, 'keep it.' Last meeting in October thought the money not refunded or returned back would be contributed to the Polcari fund. At the October meeting it was not established how much money could be left in this pool. Upon further review the amount could be, possibly more than \$2000.

There was concern at the Board meeting this week. Specifically related to the amount of donation. Donating \$2000 or more to the Polcari fund before knowing what the P&L from the TRR was concerning. BOD wants to preserve the TRR balance for typical distributions to UML, LHS and MRRA. Then discuss donations.

Board was not against making donation but would like to see it in keeping with past contributions, more like \$500.00

Joe L: Suggestion TRR Directors, would like to make contribution of \$500 from TRR, after all the P&L from the regatta, possibly more.

Carl P has started to thank people for their contributions, if they decided not take the refund.

John B. Wants to look at Charter to make sure okay to make contribution to individual and not a group.

Charitable organization: Joe L will check with accountant.

As meeting ending, those in attendance informally agree to the \$500.00 contribution to Polcari event from the TRR funds.

Motion to Adjourn: 8:30 PM