

MRRA Monthly Meeting:
October 13, 2015
Boathouse 7:05 PM

Attendees: Terry Freeman, Jay Feenan, Bronwyn Chapman, Dennis McCarthy, Jody Decarolis, Bob Lynch, Mary Lynch, Joe LaFreniere, Barbara Mack, Kathy McGowen, David Morley, Peg Landry, Wilma Breiland, Carl Popolo, John Ballentine, Anne Ballentine, Dottie Semonian (17).

Meeting called to order: 7:05 PM by VP Terry Freeman
Approve August and September meeting minutes
Approved

Boat Wash-Inventory: Saturday November 7th 9 AM

Docks come out on Nov 14th

Joe L suggesting more repairs, inventory, wash in the Spring.

Safety: Nautical rules: Lights between sunset and sunrise must have bow and stern.

10 white lights purchased last season. Most gone from the Boathouse.

Safety asking rowers to use personal headlight, if 8 approaching call out, "single ahead."

Boat Captain: Will be making call about weather, water temp.

Big boats, row with a buddy, restrictions will be coming.

Members should be following the web site.

*River being dropped by electric company, Thursday, if too low not to row above the Mother Rock. Hazard buoy has been moved. Sister rock is out further, will become a hazard.

*Dave Morley plans to go out and paint exposed rocks during low water level.

Night time, don't assume motor boats can see you.

Helping a friend in need: Jim Polcari, former member, friend, coach
Difficult times recently lung cancer, surgery, chemo, two kids, disability, not good time financially.

Jim Polcari is a UML Alumni, coached, TRR Director. Has continued to be active in the Rowing Community.

Jay Feenan and Peg Landry in contact with Jim, asking the club to support a fundraiser.

Started to look at venues, dates, collecting raffle items.

Nov 21 st April's European for location (Date works for Jim and his family)

Sell tickets:

Some discussion about a time after work, during the week. Peg thinks Jim would like to bring his children.

TRR had some clubs with races that were canceled due to weather. They did not ask to have their entry fees returned. Carl Popolo suggesting the TRR donate this money to the Jim Polcari fundraising effort.

Meeting members agree to support the Polcari fundraising effort.

Nominations for MRRA Board 2016:

Will open nominations for all offices end of October, close on November 20, need ballot ready for Nov 24, 2 weeks prior to annual meeting for absentee ballot, per the MRRA bylaws. Two Trustees stay in office. Dennis McCarthy's seat is open, his term has finished his 3 year term. His seat will run until Dec 2018

David Morley continues as Trustee until Dec 2017

Joe LaFreniere continues as Trustee until Dec 2016

TRR Recap:

Joe LaFreniere: Thanking group present, "two day event, interesting experiment."

Disappointed on small entries, interest in the Regatta on **Saturday**, thought US rowing would have been a better draw. SAT's were scheduled. Masters event mostly.

TRR Directors were worried about weather 10 days before hurricane Joaquin landed.

Sunday: Wind greater than predicted, head winds, unique conditions, current, wind direction, swells, boats swamped.

Challenging for regatta staff.

Great response from emergency personal and TRR volunteers.

Limited information on injuries related to HIPPA. But know 4 people went to ER, 3 for hypothermia and 1 hit in the head with an oar.

Joe LaFreniere and TRR Directors have sent emails to coaches to ask how athletes are.

Directors have also solicited comments and suggestions for future TRR.

Dave Morley was active in the rescue of the swamped boats. Has some additional suggestions for Marshall staging for next year.

Joe L. contacted meteorology at UML, would like to be able to watch the weather better, changes throughout the day.

Ongoing discussion about weather station with UML, maybe student involvement.

Dave Morley suggesting. Go Pro use for regattas, more affordable.

Jay Feenan. Contacted five college coaches for their evaluation of the TRR.

Wants members to be sure to understand how serious the injuries could have been. Can't make light of what happened, someone could have lost life. Wants members to realize that in addition to the swamped boats he has been notified that 2 singles flipped, got back in and rowed. And there was a rower briefly unconscious after being hit by an oar in a 8.

The course has variability in wind and current. Different view from below the start of the 2 K course. Race plans have been discussed, changes available in variable weather.

TRR Directors had a meeting with Peter Murray.

Discussion: Strained resources, the regatta has grown and our volunteer growth has not. No one is making light of the swamped boats, potential dangers, necessity for safety, when holding a large regatta.

Everyone agrees there could have been significant injury and feel thankful that the injuries were not more serious.

Some recommendations:

Ask other local programs to bring a safety launches

Joe LaFreniere recommending utilizing Joe Bernard, was coast guard commander, have him over looking Marshaling plan.

More volunteers.

Members present comment that David Morley did an excellent job and no need to bring in a prior coast guard commander. Joe L point was that he felt it might bring better PR.

To review:

Placement of the launches, dedicated marshal stations

Communication systems, staff, marshals, emergency response etc.
Making sure there is a line of sight throughout the entire course, and that is maintained. Terry Freeman could see swamped boat from the Medals Tent, but had no way to communicate to launches. May need more radios.

John Ballentine: Wants to make sure every one remembers what a wonder event the TRR is and will continue to be.

Joe LaFreniere:

Will review suggestions made at meeting, more marshals and more locations. He is suggesting using coast guard auxiliary to help, motor boat club, kayaks to visualize and bring comfort until larger launch arrives. The TRR Committee intends to start planning earlier this year.

Barbara Mack: Her experience at start, was in 8 when regatta was canceled, hard time hearing the megaphones. Appeared coxswains didn't know the return plan.

At the Coaches and Coxswain meeting: Barbara asking what the instructions where, boats didn't seem to be following the traffic pattern.

She is also asking "how about old school Bailing sponges in boats?"

Carl Popolo: Takes responsibility for the day. (Requests time to speak to the group without notes.)

Joe LaFreniere wants to discuss alternative boat launch points and exit points. Use the Roarke ramp, why not also use the N. Chelmsford Ramp. Members attending disagree. Wrong side of the river and would have to cross the course to launch. Joe L wants people to think about using.

Meeting adjourned:

8:25 PM