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26 March 2004

Greetings MRRA members and Friends!

**NEXT CLUB MEETING -- TUESDAY 13 APRIL 2004, 7PM ---
LOCATION TBD.**

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MINUTES OF THE MARCH MEETING

Date	22 March 2004, 7:00 pm
Place	The Club Lafayette 565 Fletcher St. Lowell, MA <i>Thanks to Bob Bowen for making the Club available.</i>
Attendees (19)	AlbertE, BowenB, BreilandW, CorrentyA, FeenanJ, JaneiroJ, JaneiroS, KosewskiP, LynchB, MartinR, PartykaE, PopoloC, RaichekJ, RaymondE, SengstackenB, SpiekerR, ThompsonC, WelchJ, WosW
Item 1 Boathouse	Jay Feenan reports: \$40k has been spent to-date, of the theoretical \$700k. HW, HVAC, electrical upgraded, and the inside has been painted. BobB performed a surreptitious incursion into the boathouse a few weeks ago and only noticed that the interior had been painted, but he was pleased to find that the color palette chosen by the decorators didn't clash too badly with the furniture or the

soothing gray flooring, although new curtains will be a must.

UML is to assume overall responsibility for the boathouse. The current user agreement will be revised to reestablish the allocation of new costs and new access methods. In addition to receiving responsibility for the boathouse, the State will require additional contributions toward the operating costs of the boathouse, and we expect the new agreement will spell out the share of the MRRA in terms of square footage allocated to the club in proportion to the other three entities involved in the agreement -- UML, LHS and the Sailing program. Jay thinks a safe estimate is that this will be about \$10k more than we currently contribute. JBallantine in a previous email suggested that it might be around \$5k, but Jay's info seems to be more current.

Jay is talking to MarkR, Bill McGowan and will continue to report on progress.

Anita: Problems with house are lack of maintenance, not issues of access and user problems. Burden is on the State in that case...

We hope that access to the house will be as it has been. There's talk of restricted hours, sign-in desk with a warm-blooded attendant, or a restricted set of keys with real operating hours. There was no mention of luxury boxes or hospitality suites. We are unsure of the State's criteria for access to the house, but there were many anecdotes of events leading to the State's desire to clamp down on access.

Fees. No immediate understanding of impact on membership. It was NOT determined that should an assessment by the State lead to higher membership fees that all of the assessment would come from fees alone. (Potential for contributions from TRR revenues, other fundraising, etc, to limit the impact on membership fees).

Item 2 Tenant Agreement

Discussion of the new boathouse agreement was covered in Item 1.

Item 3 Membership

We expect the aforementioned user agreement will be had in the coming month, with our participation at the table. First though, UML will need to hear the parameters from the State, and a final assessment to the Club should be known at that time.

A **MOTION** was made by SJaneiro: **Keep fees at \$125 for family/single, \$200 for rack space with understanding there may be a surcharge if the club is assessed; with prorated refund if a member elects not to pay the assessment. The pro rata calculation is the simple ratio of the days of membership used divided by the number of days between May 1 and November 30.** So if the BoD/Membership decides that a portion of the State's assessment should come from an assessment on the membership, each member will have choice to pay it or receive a refund and discontinue membership. MOTION was seconded by a variety of people and **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

With a tentative fee schedule in hand, other Membership policies were discussed and clarified:

- Guests can go out after signing a waiver. Waivers are

kept in the drawer under the log book. The signed waiver form is mandatory, and a legible and full name of the guest in the logbook is also required. The member is responsible for equipment and behavior of the guest, and lost or stolen guests are not the responsibility of the Club. Use all conservative judgment when it comes to the appropriate equipment choice for the guest.

- **Membership applications are due on April 30th accompanied by a check for the full amount of the membership.**

- Discussion on family/single membership resulted in status quo; same price for both.

**Item 4
Tax Status**

No news. JBallantine to report on status of accountant. In a separate email, he suggests we have a backup plan re our accountant.

**Item 5
Vice President**

Tabled. All present nominees respectfully declined. PaulaK: Let's get a description of VP, BobS suggested, and it was confirmed by Jay, that the bylaws dictate we should have 3 directors in addition to the elected officials, an "Executive Council". Jay: We should either get directors or rewrite the bylaws/constitution. JWelch and JRaichok both nominated themselves to directorships. Jay will ask MarkR.

Jay expanded on this topic in his email to the membership on 24-March

**Item 6
Boat Captain
Status Report**

A discussion here broadened into a general discussion of club policies, and it was determined then by a few members that a working committee should be formed to collect all existing policies so that we don't end up writing new ones each year. That committee will report on progress at the April meeting.

In the meantime, refer to the next section of this newsletter for important Boat Captain information.

The subcommittee on Policies was also addressed by Jay in the same email of 24-March. There is a call to action for the membership in that email, please help if you can.

**Item 7
Memberships**

This was combined with Item 3 above as boathouse agreement and membership fees are tightly wound together at this point.

**Item 8
Dates**

Yes, you can bring a date to future MRRR meetings. But it will probably be your last one.

FUTURE MEETINGS -- MOTION: Move club meetings to Tuesdays second week of every month through November. Passed UNANIMOUSLY. I would tell you what those dates are, but Secretary Carl seems to have a problem with the "second Tuesday" concept. Instead, make note of the NEXT MEETING date which will appear when we publish the minutes / newsletter from the last meeting. As a courtesy, please try to have new agenda items to me as soon as possible especially if you think they will result in unusually high floor minutes.

FESTIVAL REGATTA: Saturday July 10. Mark your calendar. Remember that membership comes with a commitment to work the gig -- excuses such as "haircut" or "getting married" will be frowned upon and could result in Dunkin Duty the next time you show up at the boathouse.

TRR: Does someone know the date? Please forward to me for reporting in the next Newsletter.

LEARN TO ROW. No dates specified until we know clearly the situation with the boathouse and who might be available to lead the LTR charge.

Scholarship for LHS. This is the time of year when we ordinarily float scholarship money to LHS. This year we will wait and see what happens in the agreement.

Submitted by Carl Popolo, MRRS Secretary

POLICIES COMMITTEE

- Background During the course of ordinary discussion at the meeting, it was pointed out by more than one senior member that we have a tendency to approach each situation as something new without considering the possibility that past generations have already visited an issue and, amazingly, there may already be a policy somewhere that deals with such issues.
- Okay, so? The discussion led to the concept of forming a committee which would be a central organizer of all Club policies, written, verbal and imagined, and would take these policies and consolidate them into a singular unified form for presentation to the Membership. Such a body of work could even result in a Member's Guide to the Club, but the prime directive is to assemble our existing policies so that we don't have to keep deciding the same things over and over again each new year.
- How can you help? In Jay Feenan's email from earlier this week, he said:
A committee of the membership has been formed to organize all the existing policies in one place, organize recommendations for new policies and provide the underpinnings for a club handbook. This will be presented to the entire membership. What I ask the membership to do is answer the following question - I always thought we should have a policy on <blank>. Please fill in <blank> with a list of the types of policies. Rack space, boat usage, membership, club participation and row safe have been already listed. If this is confusing, think of any question that you had for a club member where you received a verbal answer. These inputs should be sent to the following members:

Jonathan Raichek	jraichek@cisco.com
Paula Kosewski	vrkpmk@comcast.net
Liz Albert	ecalbert@juno.com
Robert Sengstaken	bobsengjr@yahoo.com
Jay Feenan	jay.feenan@oracle.com

[Ed note: Copy the following string to the TO line of your email]

***jraichek@cisco.com,vrkpmk@comcast.net,ecalbert@juno.com,
bobsengjr@yahoo.com,jay.feenan@oracle.com***

So what you can do is forward any existing club documentation in your possession to the members above, and also your questions or ideas about where we need new policies.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM YOUR BOAT CAPTAINS

From BobS

I stopped by the boathouse this morning (Thursday), and it looks like the process of putting in the docks is proceeding. I was told that they should go in today.

For the few hardy souls that are eager to get out on the river:

1. You **must** pay your 2004 club dues first.
2. While the water is extremely cold, **use a buddy system**, go out with another single, coaching boat or row the double. This goes for private and club boats. **Please note in the log book who your buddy is.**
3. Until the key situation is worked out, you will need to row at the same time as the college and make sure that you are back when they need to lock up, or you may not get back in to the boathouse!

I have not been able to get into the boathouse yet to check on the conditions of the boats, please report any problems to me so that they can be repaired.

Bob Sengstaken
MRRR Boat Captain

BROKEN EMAIL ADDRESSES - PLEASE HELP

Item -
Bad Emails

Until all 2004 applications are in and final, I have no better source for membership emails than the 2003 list. And that list contains some bad or abandoned email addresses. If you recognize any of the following email names and know of a new or updated address for that person, please let me know.

Email Address	AKA
john.mcdonough@azab.aorcentaf.af.mil	J McDonough
jack.frackleton@benow.com	J Frackleton
themachine9383@aol.com	J Marchand
frostynavell@yahoo.com	M Griffeth
james.griffeth@autodesk.com	J Griffeth

FACTS, FICTIONS and RUMORS

Item -
Waterfront
Property

The Middlesex School in Concord has made a deal with the new property owners on the south side of the river upstream to row out of the boathouse there for a year. According to sources, the

owner plans to develop the property into a fun zone which might include a skating rink of some sort. No clue on what improvements might be made on the existing boathouse.

SECRETARY'S NOTES

- On or around April 1st I will be sending an email to all who need a new swimming test. My info is that your swim test is good for 5 years, so some will be expiring soon and I will notify you in time so that you can get your test done before the application deadline of April 30. Your application cannot be accepted without the swim test if you are due to submit one.
- I have a current email address list that can be used for sending membership-wide email. Please write me for details. It's largely the 2003 list, so for now maybe you want to run membership-wide alerts through me until the 2004 membership is settled. Even then, the BoD may decide to limit access to the full membership list in the interests of privacy as well as keeping a lid on the accuracy of the list since it can get outdated quickly.
- Secretary Carl now officially has access rights to the web site and will be poking around there the next few days to get acquainted with the structures. This is kind of like letting your 17-year-old take out your Maserati, and just like your 17-year-old, I promise not to do any damage, and if I do, it wasn't my fault. AnnB has graciously offered to assist, and I will gladly take her up on this offer in the coming weeks. For starters, we have a limited but aggressive agenda -- a Members Only area which may feature a bulletin board area; perhaps a little reorg of the menu structure, the posting of meeting minutes and newsletters, and maybe some member profiles if we're not too shy about it. Long term, I would like to put the site in position to be good enough to shake down a few sponsors for cold cash if we elect to pursue that, as well as build a large reserve of rowing-related links to make the site your starting point for all things rowing. And I think you will all agree with me that the site is already in excellent shape due to the hard work of AnitaC and DavidG over the past few years.

JARGON WATCH

quiche - v. to refrain from fully exerting oneself. The origins lie within the phrase "real men don't eat quiche", taken from Bruce Feirstein's 1982 book of that name. In a rowing context, though, "quiche" has lost its association with gender politics and is now a catch-all term for unwarranted softness and/or crapness, used by oarsmen to describe things both on and off the water ("England were more talented than Greece but struggled to a draw because they were clearly quiching"). The word has become incredibly versatile, existing as a verb ("3 seat -- you're quiching you bastard!"), an adjective ("Even for a 3 man, he's unbelievably quichy") and a noun ("The first piece was pretty good, but the second one was complete quiche").

Send your comments, critiques, ideas, facts, fiction, questions and future newsletter ideas to me at SecretaryCarl@merrimackrowing.org.

-- Secretary Carl

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