**Minutes**

**Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network**

**Board Meeting**

**Monday, March 9, 2020 and March 16, 2020**

Members Participating:

Janet Robinson, President (March 9 and 16)

Chip Woodman, Treasurer (March 16)

David Siegfried (Sig) (March 9 and 16)

Mike Duffy (March 16)

Tom Carr (March 9 and 16)

Vytas (Vic) Marciulionis (March 16)

Greg Fergin, Recording Secretary (March 9 and 16)

The March 9 conference call commenced at 7:00 p.m. and concluded at 7:35 p.m. The March 16 call commenced at 7:05 p.m. and concluded at 8:40 p.m.

1. Welcome
2. Approval of Minutes: Board members unanimously approved the minutes of the February 10 board call.
3. Old Business
   1. Committee Updates
      1. Treasurer’s report:

Chip reported that the SMSKM account has $5,121 in cash, minus $712 in checks issued (but not yet sent) to pay for Pinnacle legal fees, reimbursement for February members’ meeting refreshments, and the post office box annual fee (but see below for discussion of that issue.) SMSKN has received payment for 14 annual membership dues so far this year.

Janet pointed out that the postal box at the Temple Street post office is rarely used, and is not accessible on weekends. She asked why SMSKN needed a box for regular mail or other requirements. Chip said SMSKN needs an address for federal filing and for the annual report to the Secretary of State, though he gave his own address for the latter. The cost of the post office box is currently $124 a year. Janet asked Chip to look at other options before the end of March (when payment is due) for maintaining a box for regular mail if one is necessary. If after this review the Temple Street box is still the best option, then someone else needs to volunteer to check it on a regular basis.

* + 1. Skills Committee – tabled until the April 13 Board Call.
  1. Pool session update:

Riverton Pool is closed until at least April 13, and therefore the two scheduled SMSKN pool sessions have been postponed. Members had quickly registered for all available slots for both sessions. Vic asked if it would be possible to reschedule these sessions in May. Jan suggested that the board consider this once Riverton reopens. She pointed out that these sessions are made possible by Portland Paddle’s willingness to use its own liability insurance to cover them. That is why it is mentioned in the listing of these sessions as a sponsor. She will display Portland Paddle brochures at future SMSKN events as a way of thanking them and showing their involvement.

* 1. Group Participant Agreement :

Janet asked board members to review and provide feedback on the new Group Participant Agreement, which is based on the language of the individual Participant Agreement but is shorter and includes a page of signature blanks so that many members participating in a paddling trip can sign it. Janet recommended that the group agreement become the primary form for SMSKN trips, as it would be simpler for the trip organizer to print out and get participants to sign it, rather than providing multiple blank copies of the individual agreement for members who neglected to print out and sign the individual form in advance.

In the March 9 board call, Tom suggested that SMSKN require that members registering for paddling trips be required to complete an individual Participant agreement as part of signup process – this is what MITA does for its events. Jan responded that MITA has a different setup that allows it to do so; this would not be east to achieve through SMSKN’s Meetup registration process.

* 1. Unpaid members update:

Janet reported that she sent a message to 14 of the 28 members listed as not having paid their membership dues for 2020. A few responded by paying their 2020 dues, but most said they had not paid because they did not intend to renew their memberships. None of the people Janet contacted reported any problem paying for renewal through the SMSKN Meetup web page – which was initially suspected as the reason for non-renewals.

* 1. Upcoming Programs:

The SMSKN membership meetings scheduled for March 21 (Paddling trip reviews) and April 21 (Maine Coastal Heritage Trust) had to be postponed until further notice due to the ongoing coronavirus situation. The May program on how to organize and post a paddling trip will be the last land membership meeting before the summer paddling season. Janet suggested that in addition to this program, the meeting should include a gear swap/sale and cookout to encourage participation and interaction. Therefore we need a venue with sufficient space and access to the outdoors. Tom suggested the Brunswick Landing hangar where MITA stores its boats during the winter. He offered to discuss this with Chris or Greg at MITA. Mike suggested that we make it a joint program with MITA. Tom suggested that we also coordinate with the Maine Outdoor Adventure Club (MOAC), which has 15-20 kayakers among its members.

1. February Goal Status: How to Increase Membership
   1. List of venues:

Janet commended Sig for the comprehensive list of sales and guide outlets. She asked board members to volunteer to go to specific venues and ask them to place brochures there. Board members responded as follows:

Nanuq Kayaks: Janet

Maine Island Kayaks: Vic

Eastern Mountain Sports: Janet

Paddle Maine, Brunswick: Tom

LLBean – deferred because it is closed for two weeks

Duck Trap Kayak, Lincolnville: Janet

Maine Sports Outfitter, Camden: Vic

Kittery Trading Post: Janet will ask Deidre St. Louis

Tidal Transit, Boothbay Harbor: Tom

H2O Outfitters, Harpswell: Tom

Portland Paddle: Janet

Castine Kayak: Vic

Sea Kayak New England, Wells: Vic

* 1. Flyer status:

Janet noted that Mike Charek created SMSKN’s handout brochure in 2014 in Adobe InDesign format, which complicates editing for anyone without access to the InDesign software. In addition, some of the text of the brochure is outdated. Janet also produced a single-page promo handout for a recent MITA meeting. She asked Board members to review both of these documents and send her any suggested changes. Vic volunteered to create a bar code for the documents which would link to the SMSKN website when scanned with a smartphone camera.

* 1. KTP, Beans contact: As noted in item 4.a. above, Janet will ask Deidre St. Louis to contact KTP, and contact with LLBean will be deferred until it re-opens.
  2. Instagram, website photo posting:

Janet observed that she was initially concerned that adding a SMSKN Instagram account would give us too many platforms and dilute the value of the ones we already have (i.e., Meetup and the SMSKN website). She said Vic had allayed her concerns and convincingly described Instagram’s advantages. She said the SMSKN website should remain the main repository for member photos of SMSKN trips. Vic noted that he is looking at creating a plug-in that would allow members to simultaneously upload trip photos to Instagram, the SMSKN website, and the SMSKN Meetup page. He said that Instagram would want an SMSKN e-mail address as part of the account registration process, to allow account password recovery. He will check G-mail and other e-mail providers in order to create an SMSKN e-mail address for this purpose. In response to a question from Sig, Vic said that it would be possible to capture usage metrics from our Instagram account.

After discussion, the Board endorsed creation of an SMSKN Instagram account.

1. March Goal Topic (revised): VISIBILITY

Janet asked for suggestions on how to increase SMSKN’s visibility to potential paddler members. Board members proposed various ideas, including handing out or posting SMSKN brochures/flyers on bulletin boards at microbrew establishments, university student centers, coffee shops, and other settings where they see potential or actual paddlers.

Janet wondered whether it would be useful to create and distribute an SMSKN business card in addition to the about-to-be-edited flyer and promo handout. Board members liked the idea of having cards to hand out whenever SMSKN members meet people who express interest in kayaking. Janet asked for a volunteer to design a SMSKN business card, with appropriate text and perhaps an attractive photo from the SMSKN archives. Sig offered to check online regarding business card production costs.

The discussion returned to having a SMSKN booth or table at the Kittery Trading Post annual sale and the Maine Boat Show in Portland. Mike pointed out that MITA has a shift schedule for its presence at the Boat Show. Tom added that MITA used to have a booth at the Kittery Trading Post sale, but no longer does that.

1. Closure and Action Items.

SMSKN Post Office Box: Chip to check on feasibility of alternatives to maintaining an SMSKN post office box address before the deadline for renewing the post office box subscription (March 31).

Group Participant Agreement: Board members to review text and give feedback to Janet.

May monthly members’ program: Tom to check with MITA on using its hangar space and adjacent outdoor area for this meeting/gear swap/cookout. Per Mike and Tom’s suggestions, we should make this a joint event with MITA, and also coordinate with MOAC.

Flyer/Handout/Business Card:

* Board members to send to Janet suggested changes to the flyer and promo handout.
* Vic to create bar code for SMSKN documents to link to SMSKN website.
* Janet to ask SMSKN members for a volunteer to create an SMSKN business card.
* Sig to check online regarding business card production costs.

Placing SMSKN brochures in kayak sales outlets and outfitters/guides officers: See item 4.a. above.

Instagram account: Vic to create SMSKN Instagram account and plug-in that will enable members to simultaneously upload photos to Instagram/SMSKN website/SMSKN Meetup page. As part of that process, he will create an SMSKN e-mail account for password recovery in the Instagram account.

Janet to circulate Deidre St. Louis’s research on liability insurance options before the April Board Call.

Next call: Monday, April 13. Topic: INSURANCE