**Minutes**

**Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network**

**Board Call**

**Wednesday, November 1, 2023**

**7:00-8:30 PM**

Members Participating:

John Haile, President

Chip Woodman, Treasurer

Glen Gordon

Janet Robinson

John Contas

Nananda Col

Tom Allen

Vytas Marciulionis

Greg Fergin, Recording Secretary

Ellen Gluckman, SMSKN member

The Board call commenced at 7:00 p.m.

1. Welcome.
2. Approval of minutes from 10/4/2023 meeting: the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the October 4 Board call.
3. Old business.
   1. Financial: Chip reported that SMSKN holds $6,900 in its checking account and $14,000 in its CD accounts. One of the CD’s is now earning 4.5% annual interest. John H. said Meetup told him it is not possible under its current rules to eliminate the 12-day trial period for membership in a Meetup group. John H. put in a formal request to add zero days as an option, and Meetup told him they would do that. Glen added that he is working with Meetup tech support to track members in arrears on their membership dues.
   2. Skills Committee: Tom reported that the committee met last week. He said the committee is willing to make pool sessions skill-specific if members are interested. John H said he had discussed with Glen the idea of having Tom Johnston offer SMSKN members a Wilderness First Aid (WFA) course, and of having SMSKN offer lower-level American Canoe Association (ACA) certification. Glen said he is checking with Nancy Zane first about a WFA course, since she has taught such courses in the past. On ACA certification, he said the idea would be to have SMSKN members with ACA credentials offer other SMSKN members individual performance assessments. The Skills committee looked favorably on this approach. In response to Nananda’s question, Glen explained that the process would be informal, with the assessor assessing a member’s performance over a period of time. John H. noted that certification requires ACA or British Canoeing membership, so there is a cost to the process. John H. proposed that the Board not take a position at this time other than expressing interest in what the assessment process would look like. The Board agreed with this approach.
   3. Pool sessions: Janet reported that she never heard back from the South Portland Community Center, so she checked with Westbrook. John H. said he had then scheduled four evening sessions at Westbrook on November 26, January 14, February 4, and February 18. Nananda reported that she had gotten a discounted rate of $195/hour for Bath sessions, on Sundays 3-4pm. The Bath pool needs specific dates from SMSKN as soon as possible; Nananda proposed that SMSKN ask for February 25, March 10, and April 14. Tom suggested that if SMSKN wants additional pool sessions that it look into using the Bowdoin College pool. John H. suggested that the Board hold onto that possibility. He proposed that SMSKN continue its policy of accepting voluntary contributions from members who attend pool sessions in order to offset some of the cost. Once pool dates are set he will send out a “save the date” notice to members.
   4. Holiday party: John H. reported that 25 members have signed up. In response to John’s question Nananda said her house could accommodate 30 cars. John H. proposed that SMKSN provide a couple of main dishes. Janet noted that in the past, members have been happy to bring enough food for everyone. Nananda offered to cook the main dishes and observed that attendees normally check in on what to bring. John H. said he would leave that to Nananda. He pointed out that he would not be able to participate on December 10, and wondered if the date could be changed to December 17. Nananda said she would check and get back to him. John said the agenda for the official part of the event would be board elections and an explanation of the Rotnem scholarship program.
4. New Business.
   1. Board elections: John H. said that Janet had told him she would step down from the Board at the end of the year, and that Chip had indicated he would step down at the end of 2024. John Contas said he was ready to step down at the end of 2023. John H. asked the Board to identify candidates for Board membership. He would then approach the candidates and if they agree, put them on a slate for SMSKN members to approve at the annual general meeting. Glen pointed out that the SMSKN by-laws state that “a call for nominations shall be made to the general membership at least one month in advance.” John H. proposed that he put out a Meetup notice to the membership inviting them to nominate new Board members, and that the Board review nominations in its December Board call. The Board discussed the pros and cons of a nominated slate vs. voting on all who put their hands up. John H. said that he would circulate to the Board draft language for a Meetup notice to membership on the Board nomination and election process.
   2. Rotnem Scholarship Program: John H. noted that the initial pool of money raised at the July silent auction and sale was $1,211. He proposed that the Board start with that as an initial amount for distribution, and that the Board allocate money to top up the fund on an annual basis. John H. said the last SMSKN newsletter had introduced the scholarship program, and that he will announce the program’s start at the December AGM, and in a Meetup notice later. Tom suggested that Board members promote the scholarship program to members during trips on the water. Janet proposed that the program be open to the Maine Association of Sea Kayaking Guides and Instructors (MASKGI) during the distribution of the initial $1,211, in recognition of Richard Rotnem’s MASKGI membership.
   3. Monthly meeting programs:

November: Tom’s presentation on the SMSKN Baja expedition.

December: SMSKN Christmas party.

For future programs, Glen said the Skills Committee was keen to have a program on navigation skills. For the January meeting, he suggested “How to read a chart” as a placeholder. John H. suggested that Board members propose ideas before the December Board call, so that they could be discussed during the December call.

* 1. Joe G.’s Paddle Fundraiser Proposal: Janet reported that Joe Guglielmetti wants to see how far he can paddle in 24 hours and had approached the Maine Island Trail Association (MITA) for sponsorship. MITA is reluctant to take this on. Janet wondered whether SMSKN might be interested in working with Joe on this as a means of raising additional funds for the Rotnem Scholarship Program. The proposed timeframe is the spring or summer of 2024. John H. proposed to table discussion of this proposal until the next Board call, and the Board agreed.
  2. Coordination with NSPN on monthly meeting timing: John H. reported that Sue Hriciga of the North Shore Paddlers Network (NSPN) told him NSPN has no specific dates for monthly meetings. Tom commented that in that case NSPN should look at SMSKN’s monthly meeting schedule before setting dates and times for its programs.
  3. Board Paddle: John H. suggested that all Board members gather later in the spring or summer of 2024 for a paddling trip and invite SMSKN members to join them as a way of meeting and getting acquainted with Board members.

1. Closure and Action items:
   * Once pool dates are set, John H. to send out a “save the date” notice to members.
   * John H. to draft a Meetup notice to membership on the Board nomination and election process.
   * Board members to propose ideas before the December Board call, so that they could be discussed during the December call.

The Board call concluded at 8:30pm.

**Next Call: Wednesday, December 6 at 7:00pm.**