**Minutes**

**Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network**

**Board Call**

**Wednesday, December 6, 2023**

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

Members Participating:

John Haile, President

Glen Gordon, Vice President

Chip Woodman, Treasurer

Janet Robinson

John Contas

Nananda Col

Tom Allen

The Board call commenced at 7:03 p.m.

1. Welcome.
2. Approval of minutes from 11/1/2023 meeting: the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the November 1 Board call.
3. Old business.
   1. Issues with Meetup: Glen reviewed problems that members are having with Meetup communications. If a new member doesn’t pay dues within the first two weeks, or if current members don’t renew before their membership anniversary, they are supposed to get an e-mail reminder from Meetup to pay. If they don’t pay, they go into limbo where they don’t receive any subsequent communications or notifications through Meetup. In November Glen went through the membership records on Meetup, finding 210 current members and 79 members in the”limbo” category (32 who never completed their initial payment and 47 who fell behind on annual dues payment). Glen reached out to all of those who had not paid annual dues; six subsequently renewed, one decided not to renew and the other 40 didn’t respond. Glen proposed to remove all of the non-responders, and start fresh, which will make it easier to monitor the limbo category for members who got there by mistake. The Board agreed. Janet asked if the club had resolved the earlier problem with Meetup which made it hard for members to automatically renew. Glen said Meetup denied any problems with the renewal system. Janet suggested that the next SMSKN newsletter include an article on the payment process, requesting that members contact the Board if they have any problems or stop receiving Meetup communications.
   2. Pool sessions: John H. said the November 26 pool session had gone well with 10 participants. He asked for volunteers to manage pool sessions at Westbrook and Bath. Board members responded as follows:

* January 14, Westbrook: Greg and John C.
* February 4, Westbrook: Janet said she might be able to manage this session and will confirm to John H. Nananda volunteered to be backup if Janet can’t do it.
* February 18, Westbrook: John H. will ask Vick if he can take this session.
* February 25, March 10, and April 14, Bath: Nananda and John H. will cover.
  1. Holiday gathering: The Board discussed the agenda and logistics for the December 17 AGM and holiday party.

1. New Business.
   1. 2024 Budget: Chip reviewed the final 2023 budget figures, noting that the number of SMSKN memberships decreased, which decreased revenue and caused a $600 deficit which had to be covered by the club’s cash reserves. December receipts included 18 membership payments, unusually high for the end of the year – possibly a result of Glen’s outreach to members who hadn’t paid their dues. Chip said the 2024 budget was based on 2023 receipts and expenditures. In response to John H.’s question, Chip said that the Rotnem Scholarship Fund was not included in the budget, but was maintained as a separate account. Tom noted that SMSKN has maintained the same membership dues payment for many years; John H. said he would make that an agenda item for an upcoming Board call.
   2. Skills Committee: Tom shared the Committee’s draft survey to members to ascertain what skills members would like to work on through SMSKN-organized or professional skills training. The Committee is proposing to distribute it to members who come to meetings, pool sessions, and other SMSKN in-person activities. John H. asked him to send the draft to Board members for their review.
   3. Payment for training sessions at MITA office: John H. referred to upcoming SMSKN training sessions with Tom Bergh at the office of the Maine Island Trail Association (MITA). It had been suggested to him that it would be appropriate to make a donation to MITA in thanks for the use of their offices. Janet pointed out that SMSKN has a business membership in MITA for $100 a year, which provides benefits including some free individual MITA memberships for SMSKN members. SMSKN could up its MITA membership to the next level ($250) as another way of showing its appreciation to MITA. John H. said he would call MITA to explore options.
   4. Board Transition: Board members had an extensive discussion of the Board’s composition and responsibilities, and candidates for the slate of Board members to be proposed at the December 17 AGM.
   5. New Year’s Day Paddle: John H. asked for Board members’ views on whether SMSKN should have a New Year’s Day paddle. Board members endorsed the idea, favoring a late morning starting time.
   6. Conversation with Richard Rotnem: John H. reported that he had talked recently with Richard Rotnem about SMSKN’s use of his donated equipment and establishment of a scholarship fund in his name. Rotnem said he was delighted with the club’s follow-up action on his donation.
   7. Joe Gugliemetti’s proposed Fund-Raising Paddle: After discussion, John H. said he would ask Joe to have a conversation with the Board in January or February about his proposal.
   8. Janet Robinson’s parting words: Janet thanked Board members for their work and support during her five years on the Board. She urged them to continue to set big-picture goals to keep the club moving forward and to remain vigilant about safety and liability issues. John H. thanked Janet on behalf of the Board for all she had done to revitalize SMSKN.
2. Closure and Action items:
   * The next SMSKN newsletter should include an article on the payment process, requesting that members contact the Board if they have any problems or stop receiving Meetup communications.
   * John H. to include member dues as an agenda item for an upcoming Board call.
   * Tom to send the Skills Committee’s draft survey to Board members for review.
   * John H. to call MITA to explore options for a donation for use of MITA’s office and/or an increase in SMSKN’s membership level in MITA.
   * John H. to ask Joe G. to have a conversation with the Board in January or February about his proposal for a fund-raising paddle.

The Board call concluded at 8:41pm.

**Next Call: Wednesday, January 3, 2024 at 7:00pm.**