**Minutes**

**Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network**

**Board Call**

**Wednesday, February 7, 2024**

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

Members Participating:

John Haile, President

Glen Gordon, Vice President

Chip Woodman, Treasurer

Cathy Kimball

Ellen Gluckman

Nananda Col

Tom Allen

Greg Fergin, Recording Secretary

The Board call commenced at 7:01 p.m.

1. Welcome.
2. Approval of minutes from 1/3/2024 meeting: The Board unanimously approved the minutes of the January 3 Board call.
3. Ongoing business.
	1. Financial update: Chip said he needs new Board members’ addresses (Cathy, Ellen, Suzanne) to send to the Secretary of State’s office. With John’s concurrence, Chip said he would pay SMSKN’s membership contributions to the Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) and Maine Island Trail Association. (MITA).
	2. Pool session philosophy: The Board discussed issues with pool session attendance, including no-shows, waiting lists, and repeated attendance by the same people to the exclusion of others wanting to participate. John proposed to request the Skills Committee to discuss these issues and come up with an improved, more equitable system for pool sessions. The Board voted 6-2 in favor of this proposal.
	3. Pool session coverage: Vick will manage the February 18 session at Westbrook, and Ellen will manage the February 25 session at Bath. John and Nananda will work out coverage for the March 10 session at Bath pool.
	4. Joe Gugliemetti Fund-raising Paddle. John reported he had talked to Joe G., whose plan is to paddle non-stop from Boston to Portland in 24 hours. John proposed to suggest to Joe that SMSKN could support Joe’s plan by having a SMSKN group paddle out to meet Joe near the end of his quest and celebrate his journey with picnic on a beach. There would be no fund-raising component. The Board agreed unanimously to this proposal.
	5. MITA Membership Level: John reported that he had talked to MITA Membership Engagement Manager Jordi St. John about an appropriate level for SMSKN’s partnership with MITA. John said Jordi told him that a $250/yr. Business Membership would enable SMSKN to use MITA’s office for monthly membership programs. Tom proposed that the Board agree to a $250 membership in MITA, and the Board agreed unanimously.
4. New Business.
	1. Goals for 2024: John invited Board members to share their thoughts on specific goals that SMSKN should pursue this year, with an eye to utilizing its funds and other resources to achieve these goals. Board members proposed the following ideas:
* Pursuing prominent sea kayaking experts and explorers as speakers for monthly membership meetings, using SMSKN funds for enhanced honorariums as necessary;
* More pool sessions;
* SMSKN-organized camping trips, perhaps including a professional guide to offer instruction during a paddling trip;
* Having at least one paddle trip every week;
* A “try sea kayaking” day with a picnic, perhaps in partnership with a local recreation department;
* A SMSKN-organized long-range paddle, perhaps with stages that members could join;
* Inviting the Skills Committee to come up with a more ambitious schedule of training activities with an enhanced budget;
	1. Island Scouting for MITA: John passed on a message from MITA that it would like SMSKN to help survey damage to MITA islands. John praised Glen’s initiative to organize a survey trip to the Goslings and Little Whaleboat Island on February 11.
	2. Skills Committee Update: John asked if the Skills Committee had thanked Tom Bergh for his presentations on seamanship and navigation. John said he would contact Cheri Perry about this and write Tom a thank-you note.
	3. Gay Island Trip: John said that he had tabled this idea, as it would cost too much money for too few people who would be able to participate. He asked Board members to think about a way to have a multi-day SMSKN trip that would be able to accommodate more members at a reasonable cost.
1. Monthly Meeting Programs for 2024:
	1. What next?
		* Friends of Casco Bay: This program is set for the evening of February 28. John said he would contact Sara Freshley, the presenter, to finalize this.
		* March: Nananda will contact Lynda Doughty of Marine Mammals of Maine.
		* April: Joe Gugliemetti will do a session on kayak repair.
		* Water safety: Ellen said Suzanne Blackburn has good contacts on this subject. John said this could be a backup for March if Nananda is not able get Marine Mammals of Maine to do a program in March.
2. Closure and Action Items:
	* + Cathy, Ellen, and Suzanne to give their addresses to Chip, who will give them to the Secretary of State’s office.
		+ Chip to pay for SMSKN memberships in MCHT ($100) and MITA ($250).
		+ John to request the Skills Committee to develop a new, more equitable system for signups for pool sessions.
		+ John to contact Joe G. to suggest to Joe that SMSKN could support Joe’s planned Boston-Portland paddle by having a SMSKN group paddle out to meet Joe near the end of his quest and celebrate his journey with picnic on a beach.
		+ John to contact Cheri Perry about followup on Tom Bergh’s presentations and write Tom a thank-you note.
		+ Board members to come up with ideas for a multi-day SMSKN trip that would be able to accommodate a sizeable group of members at a reasonable cost.
		+ John to contact Sara Freshley to finalize the Friends of Casco Bay presentation on February 28.
		+ Nananda to contact Lynda Doughty of Marine Mammals of Maine about a possible presentation in March.
		+ Someone (who?) to follow up with Suzanne Blackburn about contacts for a presentation on water safety.

The Board call concluded at 8:28pm.

**Next Call: Wednesday, March 13 at 7:00pm.**