

What:

Regular Board Meeting of the St. Louis Rowing Club Board of Directors

Date:

January 8th, 2-19

Attendees:

Patrick O'Neal, Kristy Heffernan, Tom Albert, Deb Small, Roxanne Gaines-Barr, Laura Muhr, Tim Franck

Minutes:

The meeting was called to order at 8:07pm by Patrick O'Neal.

The primary purpose of the meeting was to re-start the discussion of Long Range Planning (LRP) and the creation of 2019 goals that can align to the LRP.

The discussion started with a reminder of the club's purpose as expressed in the bylaws:

***Section 1.4 Purpose:** The purpose of the Club is to foster national and international amateur sports competition and rowing educational programs, within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as now in force and as hereafter amended, by providing facilities, equipment, coaching, events and programs for competitive youth rowers, competitive and recreational adult rowers, and interested others in St. Louis. The expectation is that this will lead to life-long sweep and sculling rowing skills, fitness, and character building for all and opportunities for youth rowers to attend and continue to the highest ranks of national collegiate and international amateur rowing.*

It was agreed that Competitive Rowing is a primary focus of the purpose statement and therefore should be a focus of our objectives. The proceeding discussion built off of this.

Tim Franck talked about the possibility of expanding the middle school program to try and build a more robust pipeline of rowers. The intent of this would be to give Juniors more years of training and the possibility of engaging athletes before they are drawn into other athletic offerings (e.g. school programs). **Action Item:** Tim Frank is to build out a more detailed plan of what an implementation of this strategy might look like from a structure/coaching/squad point of view.

Deb Small made the point that money is one component of building a higher functioning program (e.g. equipment boats, etc.) and improving adult retention would not only give the club access to more adult rowers but also increase our numbers (noting that the Junior Program is at capacity) and revenue.

Tim Frank noted that adult retention from LTR to Intermediates seemed to be particularly low this year. Possible factors include lack of a permanent intermediates coach for most of the summer and not marketing to the correct audience. Patrick O'Neal asked if the club should spend money on professional LTR coaching rather than rely on volunteers but without more information (e.g. a survey of dropouts) it's difficult to answer the question.

Deb Small made the point that there has been significant interest in the novice/intermediate sculling but that these programs typically don't have enough equipment and have not benefitted from consistent coaching. Patrick O'Neal again asked if the club should spend money on professional sculling coaches rather than rely on volunteers. Patrick O'Neal also asked if the club should consolidate the intermediate

and advanced sculling groups as a way to focus energy and resources rather than spreading it across two groups. **Action Item:** Deb Small is going to talk with Brian Bartek who has experience as a sculling coach to get a better understanding of what other clubs have done and report back at the next board meeting.

As noted by the early conversation of adult retention, better marketing was identified as a need of the club. Several ideas were brought up to increase the club's profile such as a more proactive marketing strategy (e.g. Facebook Adds), hosting corporate team building, heightened social media profile (e.g. twitter, Instagram, etc.). **Action Item:** Kristy Heffernan will investigate options regarding social media including the cost of an add buy, the role of a social media manager, etc. and report back to the board.

As we were out of time, Patrick O'Neal asked if there was any other business to discuss.

Patrick O'Neal informed the board that the current boat solicitation had only brought in approximately \$3k and that additional effort would be needed to meet the 50% target set by the board.

Deb Small noted that Board Restricted Funds could be used for this purpose. Discussion turned to the accrual the club is doing for a new Truck and whether or not a truck is truly needed. Patrick O'Neal asked if it would be better to own a light duty truck for hauling ergs, boat motors, gas tanks, etc. but rent a truck when we travel to regattas. **Action Item:** Tom Albert will crunch some numbers regarding truck ownership vs. other strategies.

The Directors asked for an Erg-a-thon update. However, the necessary members were not present.

Action Item: Patrick O'Neal will follow up with Steve Dedrickson and provide an update to the board this week.

Tim Franck noted that more solicitation for large value donations is needed if the club is to raise large amounts of money. Roxanne Gaines-Barr mentioned that her husband has some experience in this area.

Action Item: Roxanne Gaines-Barr will connect Patrick, Steve, and Tim with her husband so further information/experience can be exchanged.

Action Item: Patrick O'Neal - The club needs to set the dates for the Learn to Row Workshops (one day sessions) to ensure they happen before our LTR sessions, so as to drive enrollment of our LTR sessions.

A motion to close the meeting was made by Patrick O'Neal and seconded by Tom Albert. All present voted in favor and the meeting closed at 9:45pm.