

**SOUTHPORT YACHT CLUB  
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
JUNE 30, 2007**

**Officers Present: Leoni; Kershaw; Berne; Jacobs; Brinegar, W; Pollard; Grimes**

**Board Members Present: Carroll; Sherrill; Smith, David; Van Gundy**

**Committee Chairs Present: Brinegar, L; Heming; Smith, Diane**

Commodore Leoni called the meeting together at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed SYC members to the start of what promises to be an active and highly productive summer season.

Mr. Leoni announced the SYC recently “relaunched” its web site and invited members who have yet to visit to “check it out.” Minutes from all SYC General Membership and Annual Meetings will be available through the web site, starting with the minutes from the August 26, 2006 Annual Meeting. In light of the fact meeting minutes will now be broadly available to Club members, Mr. Leoni suggested the traditional “reading of the minutes” no longer be a regular feature of general membership gatherings. The convened SYC members moved to accept the change as well as the minutes from the August 26, 2006 Annual Meeting as posted.

**RACES:** Ted Smith announced that plans for the SYC sponsored GOMORA Sequin Island Trophy Race (SITR) are well underway but volunteers are still needed to ensure this year’s event is as successful as those of years past. Mr. Smith reminded those present that SYC is the smallest yacht club to sponsor a GOMORA event, yet SITR is one of the most highly regarded events of the circuit’s summer racing season. To reinforce this point he announced that last year GOMORA voted the SYC–SITR the “best run regatta” of the summer. Mr. Smith encouraged all who are able to do so to “get out on the water to watch the race” Saturday July 21 and Sunday July 22.

**ARTS AND CRAFTS FAIR:** Ms. Brinegar announced the Club’s annual arts and crafts fair will take place August 11 and 12<sup>th</sup> of this year. This event is an important fund raiser for the Club and Ms. Brinegar encouraged members to turn out for the event. Ms. Brinegar invited members who know of an artisan who has not participated in the past but whose work is worthy of inclusion to contact her “ASAP”. A legion of volunteers is needed to ensure the event’s success (i.e., to set up, break down, oversee, and record sales) and Ms. Brinegar asked members willing to give of their time to so note on various sign-up sheets she will post at the Club during up-coming events.

**TREASURER:** Mr. Brinegar announced the Club’s operations in 2006 produced an excess of \$13,000 in revenue over expenses; \$10,000 of this amount will be transferred to a Vanguard mutual fund with a safe but higher than average annual yield. Mr. Brinegar stated

he anticipates Club expenditures for FY 2007 will be close to those of FY 2006 with one notable exception. He anticipates administrative expenses to be higher this year due to the redesign, launch, and maintenance of the Club's web site.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Ms. Smith announced the Club has 240 paid memberships and has collected \$40,525 in dues. This includes 15 new members; in addition the Club has 10 honorary members. Ms. Smith has yet to hear from 19 former member families regarding their 2007 membership status. The membership renewal process has generated approximately \$1,700 in contributions to the Club and \$4,600 in contributions to the SYC Junior Foundation.

Commodore Leoni formally thanked Ms. Smith for agreeing to take on the Club's membership responsibilities from Ann Grimes, who did an outstanding job during her long tenure as the SYC Membership Chair. Mr. Leoni also asked members with e-mail access to make sure Ms. Smith has their correct address as the Club plans to make greater use of e-mail communication on a going forward basis.

On a sadder note, Commodore Leoni announced the recent loss of three members of the SYC community: Gus Pratt, Dallas Rayl, and Betty Hightower. Members observed a moment of silence in their honor.

**SAILING PROGRAM:** Will Jacobs thanked Ben Leoni, Assistant Director and head sailing instructor, for his hard work and attention to detail ensuring the Junior Building was ready for the start of the summer sailing program. The Club's fleet of Turnabouts, Optis, and 420s is in the water and ready to go. Mr. Jacobs noted enrollment in the morning program is at capacity (with as many as 5 individuals wait listed for some sessions) for the entire summer. The afternoon junior and senior programs are well subscribed, but spaces are available.

**FLOATS:** Mr. Sherrill reminded members the new rules regarding use of the Club's floats and courtesy dinghies are in effect. Signs reminding members of the rules are posted at the entrance to the dock and floats and in other key locations. The inward side of the floats has been reserved for skiffs with motors and signs have been posted to this effect. Mr. Sherrill asked members who tie up in this area to leave their **motors down**. Several members of the audience questioned this policy and Mr. Sherrill said the float committee would take a second look at the policy.

**BUILDINGS & GROUNDS:** Mr. Van Gundy started his presentation by providing those present with a brief recap of the issues before the Club regarding the general condition of the Senior and Junior Building (see prior minutes). He also announced that considerable work has been done over the winter to substantially reduce, and with luck eliminate, the long-standing water run-off and foundation dampness problem in the NW corner of the Senior building. Necessary repairs to the sills and underpinnings in this section of the building remain to be done.

Mr. Van Gundy reported Mat Cole, a local builder, has reviewed the structural engineer's report and has looked at the building. He agrees the kitchen addition needs to be torn off and rebuilt, but is confident the remaining issues noted in the report can be addressed with moderate or in some instances limited intervention.

The Building and Grounds Committee is exploring three possible courses of action to fully address the major structural deficits in the Senior Building noted in the engineer's report:

- ✘ Undertake such measures as would be required to repair the building and maintain it in its current configuration.
- ✘ Demolish and rebuild the kitchen, repair the roof, and increase the overall size of the building by squaring-off the NW corner, using the added space to enlarge the main meeting room (i.e., filling in the space between the kitchen ell and the building's West wall).
- ✘ Tear the existing structure down and rebuild the facility, taking advantage of the full footprint current codes would allow the building to occupy.

Mr. Van Gundy did note the committee had determined it is unlikely the Club would be able to move the location of the building under current code and set-back requirements. The building committee plans to hire an architect to produce some preliminary renderings of what the Club could look like if it were to take full advantage of the "Thirty Percent Rule."

Mr. Van Gundy, in response to membership questions, stated the building committee plans to present the membership with a detailed plan setting forth exactly what could be accomplished under each of the options identified above, how much each would cost, and the means through which each could be funded (e.g., mounting a capitol campaign, taking on debt, restructuring dues, special assessments, etc.). The current goal is to have at least a rough draft of a plan in place by the end of the summer. The scope of the first two options ranges from roughly \$50,000 (option one) to \$100,000 (option two). The exact cost would depend on how much interior work is undertaken within the context of the effort and the nature of that work. The approximate cost of totally rebuilding the facility is not known at this time.

In response to a question from the audience regarding the composition of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, Commodore Leoni noted that while there has been a great deal of interest expressed within the Club's membership regarding the work of the Committee, the size of the Committee has been limited to five members as a way to facilitate the scheduling of meetings and ensure the quick turn around of matters before the Committee that are time sensitive. Henry Berne and Greg Van Gundy are leading the effort. Mr. Leoni then thanked the Buildings and Grounds Committee for its hard work over the winter. He also cautioned members to be careful when walking along the NW side of the building as an opening has been left along the foundation wall to provide ventilation over the summer in the hopes of drying out the building's underpinnings in that area.

Rear Commodore Jacobs announced the Junior Foundation has formed a Committee to explore the possibility of the Foundation purchasing the Pratt property adjacent to the Club.<sup>1</sup> The agent for Wayne Pratt, Gus Pratt's heir, approached the Club and the Town of Southport regarding the sale of the property in June; the asking price for the property is \$495,000.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Jacobs said he had no idea how long the Club's and the Town's "exclusivity window" will remain open. The Committee has sent a letter to Mr. Pratt stating the Foundation's interest in acquiring the property and asking whether he would be willing to donate it to the Foundation in whole or in part. Mr. Pratt has indicated he is not interested in considering this option.

According to Mr. Jacobs, the Junior Foundation considers acquisition of the Pratt property to be an important investment in the SYC sailing program's future. The added space would allow the program to grow by adding classroom and equipment storage space as well as ensuring continued access to parking for program parents. Ownership of the property would also improve the sailing program's access to the water by substantially expanding the pier, ramps, and floats space available for use by junior sailors. Mr. Jacobs did note that Club members and local lobstermen would be able to use the parking and dock space, but their principal use would be for the sailing program<sup>3</sup>.

Mr. Jacobs assured SYC members the Foundation intends to preserve the building if at all possible. He did note, however, the building is not in good shape and will need considerable work to make it useable as a classroom facility (i.e., new electrical, new roof, possibly new underpinnings, and new interior partitions and finishes). In addition, the wharf is in terrible shape and will need to be completely rebuilt. In response to a question from the audience regarding the property's use history and possible lack of "environmental cleanness," Mr. Jacobs noted the Foundation plans to have the soils thoroughly evaluated as a condition of sale. Several years ago the Maine Department of Environmental Protection did supervise and signed-off on the removal of the gas tanks that had been on the property but no assessment of the surrounding soil was performed as part of that remediation.

The full cost of the acquisition is expected to be in excess of \$700,000 (i.e., purchase of the property, improvements to the building and dock, and establishment of an endowment fund to cover future maintenance and operating costs). The committee has yet to define the full funding strategy the Foundation will use for the purchase, but a capital campaign will be a central component of the effort. Mr. Jacobs noted all campaign contributions will be tax deductible as the Foundation is a 501c3 entity. The Foundation may also consider taking out a loan to cover part of the expense.

In response to a question from the audience regarding the Town of Southport's interest in the property, Vice Commodore Berne summarized the key themes from a Town Meeting held the middle of June to discuss the feasibility of the Town purchasing the property. The

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<sup>1</sup> The committee consists of Chris Jacobs, chair, Fred Best, John O'Shea, and Phil Smith.

<sup>2</sup> The property is on the tax maps as two parcels but has been priced and is being offered for sale as a single unit.

<sup>3</sup> Because the property would be owned by the Foundation, the SYC would be charged a fee for use of the parking lot and dock.

Town's primary interest seems to be in establishing a 'working waterfront' for Southport's lobstering and fishing industry. The selectmen are looking into the possible availability of State grant money to support the purchase. If it were to acquire the property, the Town would tear down the building and expand the pier and dock space to improve access to the water.

Several members expressed concern that future Club operations could be adversely impacted if the Town or an unknown third party were to purchase the property. Mr. Leoni observed the possible uses to which the building could be put are somewhat limited (i.e., art studio and gallery, antique or other type of store, possibly a restaurant, as well as marine services and the working waterfront proposed by the Town). Commodore Leoni acknowledged that Town or third party ownership could result in loss of access to the parking area on the Pratt property currently used by the Club members and their guests. In addition, Mr. Leoni noted that if the property were to be purchased for commercial use the number of cars that drive through the area on a daily basis could greatly increase, potentially placing children enrolled in the sailing school at risk of injury. Sale or consumption of alcohol on the premises would have a clear negative impact on the sailing school as well. Mr. Leoni stated it is unlikely the property could be turned into a private residence.

Commodore Leoni suggested it would be helpful to the committee if the Club's members present at the meeting indicated their level of support for the Foundation's efforts to acquire the Pratt property. **MOTION: The Southport Yacht Club membership, as represented by those members present at the June 30, 2007 membership meeting, support the efforts of the Junior Foundation to acquire the Pratt property in the manner described by the acquisition committee.** Members were asked to indicate their support by hand vote; the motion carried, with 6 individuals voting against.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Chris Jacobs noted that the Club is still looking for individuals to help run the various SYC sail boat races scheduled throughout the summer for both the Junior and Senior programs. He encouraged individuals willing to help with one or more races to indicate their interest by placing their name on the sign-up sheet posted on the Club's bulletin board.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Commodore Leoni announce that Diane Smith would be stepping down as Treasurer of the SYC Junior Foundation due to the substantial responsibility she has agreed to take on as the Club's new Membership Chair. The Foundation is in the process of mounting a search for her replacement. Mr. Leoni encouraged members who might be interested in taking on the position or know of someone who would be willing to do so to step forward.

There being no further business before the membership, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Penny Pollard  
Secretary