

Minutes

MBSA General Meeting

12-5-13

In attendance: MBSA Officers: Russ C, Lance R, Jim W, Maura P, Melissa V, Doug R, Ken A, Jody G, Chris Z. DELEGATES: Matthew W, Sue H, Ernie H, Susie S, Jim M, Hoff S, Len B, Kevin O, Ken B, Andy K, Jack C, Bob F, and Tom A via conference call.

Introductions and welcome from Russ

Report From Executive Committee:

Two Fold: 1) general expenses and 2) special expenses this year.

Financially: MBSA is in good shape

Typically the budget runs between 20-25K/yr. Income consists of membership and yearbook with additional income from advertising, pages, extra copies of book sold, and miscellaneous.

2013 Income is above 21K: membership was down. We'd like to address and remedy this.

- Junior Olympics: typically each junior is required to join MBSA as a prerequisite for competing. This income is then donated back to the event. The membership numbers are affected but not necessarily the income. This year the host did not require racers to join MBSA causing a drop in overall membership numbers.
- Online renewal: The renewal process changed from paper mailings to online renewal. Some members were not aware of the change and the site's readiness was late. Next year we are switching to Regatta Management Solutions (RMS- Regattaman) which will add the ability to register for events and MBSA membership all at once (one stop shopping). Skippers will be reminded to join if they haven't yet as they register for events. Plus the RMS system will automatically factor in MBSA discounts and verify memberships for discounts. The switch will cost the same not affecting the financial cost but will make joining easier.

Expenses: Awards -- We saved some money on cost but maintained quality trophies.

- Usual bank fees, US Sailing membership, entertainment, etc. Website expenses in keeping with normal \$2000/yr. Printing the yearbook \$5300 (overall creates some income).
- This year we will be in the RED due to legal items not part of the normal course of business. In the past we had \$200-300 for fees, but this year there was a new expense. Russ summarized:

Walter Murphy, the past treasurer, formed a business, Newbury Systems (NS), with Walter as sole operator and employee. NS was formed for sailing services to other organizations. From 2005 – 2012, NS charged MBSA about \$22K for services provided. The treasurer (Walter) paid them. The catch was that, from an IRS perspective, such payments are not allowed without an involved due process which is spelled out for 501c3 charities. The required proper process and approval never occurred. We were caught off guard. As we transitioned to the new treasurer, these amounts were discovered. No formal approval was ever given.

In November (2013), we filed our 2012 tax return and amended the 2005-2011 returns to call these payments "Excess Benefits". The issue is now in the hands of the IRS to determine appropriate next steps. We hope the money will be paid back to MBSA but if the IRS determines the payments are not Excess Benefits, the money may not be paid back.

Never Again: Anyone who does anything for MBSA will be doing it on a volunteer basis unless express approval is give from the board and all appropriate processes are followed.

There are two sides to this issue. MBSA sought legal and financial/CPA advice which clearly supported that the payments were Excess Benefits (EB). Walter also obtained advice that the payments were not EB. By reporting to the IRS, we, as an organization, are now absolved of responsibility. We are no longer responsible; we discovered, corrected, and reported the issue.

MBSA is now much more aware of proper systems of governance, rolls, and responsibilities. We have already taken steps to be more diligent. Now we wait for the IRS' determination.

Dues will stay the same as 2013.

The PHRF NEW ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIPS

Other Big Event News from the Executive Committee: this event is now going to be called “**The Offshore New England CHampionships**”

The PHRFNE Championship event in the past was run by the PHRF NE Organization which will no longer be hosting the event. MBSA was asked to become the Organizing Authority for the event in conjunction with the three Marblehead clubs. The board voted and agreed to do so.

Because there is a need for more expertise and we don't want to rely on the MH clubs too much, a search for event management ensued and we're now in final negotiations with Regatta Promotions / Carter White (from Maine). Carter did the J105 regatta in 2011, other Maine events. Pending final negotiations, CW will be the professional event management with MBSA as the Organizing Authority as a steering committee. The goal is for the whole organizing process to be more transparent. More info to come.

It is the desire of all of us at MBSA to do what we can to elevate and improve this event.

- Tap everyone (all possible leads) for sponsorship utilizing general good will and good word of mouth
- Get boats from distant areas to participate (ME, NH, RI, CT, NY) to rekindle participation.
- Reaching out to all for suggestions as to optimizing the race event.

Discussion followed with comments and questions:

KA: Speaking on behalf of the three clubs, we want to host this event but with a 3rd party OA like the model used for the NOODS. The NOODS group is the OA using the MH clubs to host.

DR: This is an opportunity for all of us at MBSA to further our mission to support sailing, to give more reason to join, to get others to know of us--more prestige to Mass Bay and the geographic area.

LB: The three clubs will continue social and race management aspects. Who ran this in the past that this now warrants professional? Answer came – three clubs and one professional manager, Nancy Sarles. MBSA previously had nothing to do with the event. However, the PHRFNE is really three individuals.

SS: Clarified that the three clubs take turns with race management and coordinating RC. The individuals did external stuff like registration, sponsorship, trophies, entertainment, etc. The host club allowed use of building and the race management.

MBSA relationship: In the past there was no relationship. If PHRFNE organization wants out, there needs to be a new entity to be an Organizing Authority. MBSA was asked because it already has 501c3 charity status, focused on sailing with a mission of promoting sailing.

Sue H was involved with the J105 event in 2011 which hired Carter W as event manager. She passed

on lots of info to Fred Denapoli which would be very helpful for MBSA to review -- financial and notes. CW only got 20% of the sponsorship with OA getting the rest. CW budget was not used and needed constant rehashing. He did website, trophies, T-shirts. Profits of 10% going to OA and 15% to CW. He got in-kind sponsorships but not enough cash. Delightful young man, new in the business, maybe he has a better handle on running event now than he had in 2011. Locals kept the J105 event going. His sailing interfered with his organization work. Stay on top of him!

Jody: We're used to doing the trophies, website. CW needs to get sponsorship. The description he gave "all in my power" but MBSA will be more successful because we know local businesses.

SH: PHRFNE already has a handle on some big, repeat sponsors. Should there be different % given to CW based on new and old sponsors?

Whoever is race management will rely some on local contacts etc. He's got materials, contracts.. to follow through on any leads we give him.

Jim M: How much we lose last year? Nothing. Is Nancy Sarles a viable alternative? No - her roll has been limited; her skill set is smaller scale. CW is more like Peter Craig.

JG: CW is asking Nancy to help him. Nancy has shirt contacts and contributions for the skipper bag. She could do a peripheral things. Walter and Blake did registration in the past. How we split % on sponsorship needs work -- perpetual sponsors, if they carry over, should be different from the split on new sponsors. CW gets a cut on T-shirts too.

NAMING of the Race: The overarching concept is to expand the regatta PHRF and to broaden the appeal. Of many suggested names, we may go with "The New Englands" as most of us call it. To call it championships might cause confusion for one design fleets who have different regattas as their regional championships.

We'll be reaching out to competitors who have ceased participating in hopes they will consider returning.

CZ: Changes in format? A committee was formed to evaluate, brainstorm, and recommend changes for the NE's. 1st thing: everything is up for grabs—the committee considered any and all aspects and came up with a lot of good notes from those meetings.

Committee to Oversee: We will have a committee to oversee the NE's and to be responsible to take all the input, distill and implement it. Some topics include whether we should add a day, a coastal race, change the configuration for spin and non spin classes, have a pursuit race? Consider single and double-handed categories...

MM: Suggestion for MBSA to reach out to one-design fleet captains (and other captains) as to what they might want—windward leeward, ocean race.

JC: One design: Good to bring in one design fleets but not to take away from NOODS. This would just be an addition. It was noted that the NEs would then offer opportunities for new one-design fleets (like J109) to have OD line. Last year there were 63 PHRF boats and one design fleets. The event needs to include more one design.

SH: Sport Boats: The committee is seriously looking at forming separate fleets for boats that are effected in similar ways—ie: making a sporty boat fleet of some type.

BS Limits to number of boats? The three clubs ibn MH can support up to 150 boats perhaps even 200 would be ok.

SEASON REVIEW:

Generally agreed that the season went well...

SCHEDULE: Primary task at hand:

Russ distributed a copy of last year's schedule modified by replacing dates with the nearest 2014 date. We went through the series of events and noted any conflicts, issues, changes. Most regattas are fine on the dates given. Some need to work out changes, for example: Great Chase will be on Sept 13 to accommodate for low tides. That caused Fall Regatta to move to the 6th. Solstice would like to move to the solstice on the 21st. CPYC will check calendar as to whether they can switch to the 7th or to later in the month. Phil Small will discuss with Cape Ann about possible date changes. Scorpion Bowl would like to swap to the 12th to avoid the holiday weekend – this poses conflict with Crocker but there may be enough difference in the fleets that its' not a problem. A couple of OA's asked if they could qualify for P status. Discussion ensued as to pro's and con's, what is required, benefits of giving a race a P to attract racers or waiting until a race has enough draw to earn a P.

OA will finalize date scheduling and confirm race dates by January 22, 2014!

Points of Issue

MBSA Season Championship: Pros and Cons of several ideas were proposed and discussed to alter the format of the overall championship with the goals of increasing participation, encouraging boats from different areas to race in the same regattas against each other (encourage travel), and to regionalize championships.

Raise participation in events by allowing each region to designate one of their Q races as being worth 1.25 points to draw traveling boats. Should the 1.25 be given just to traveling boats or to all?

Increase travel requirements in race fleets A-C. Years ago they had to travel to three races, now it's one. Some concerns were that some boats hardly come out to their local races so to add requirements might lose them altogether. (not as much so in fleets A-C). How can we incentivize boats to travel?

Champions of Champions: Have each region represented by one boat per class to compete in a championship race. Each class would have a boat from each area. Could lead to match race format. Could be a club championship.

Revolving Host of championships: Each summer have a different area host a large regatta (either more points than one regatta or champion of champions type race). Ultimate Rumble!

Lance, as new VP Offshore, offered to look into the possibility of a revolving regatta.

Russ will ask RMS about scoring options to see what options are viable.

Other Points of Issue:

Technology Advances - RMS

RMS emailed courses for some events. Some thought this was not good; others thought it was great.

Russ pointed out many new tools, MBSA supports as benefits to OA so long as traditional ways are maintained as well. Courses need to be posted on the RC according to SI's – emailing courses can be in addition to this if OA allows it. Start times sent to smart phones (pursuit races) are okay, but traditional methods of starting should be maintained as well.

Check in: Some races allow for electronic check in which allows check in before a boat arrives to the start area. Since boats who don't race are scored differently if they don't show at all, check in

but don't start, start and withdraw... boats must check in on the water. This will effect what points are given for MBSA season championships.

Rules and SI's: Comments solicited for new GSI's

Ken B: Raised concern about ways to exonerate oneself on and off the water. The rules allow on-water exoneration via doing circles and/or using the I flag for percent penalty. In addition, rule T2 allows racers to wait until after the race to decide if they've committed an infraction. A racer can wait to see if he/she is protested before taking a penalty. This creates a bad environment and behavior not conducive to good sportsmanship. Racers can push the rules and declare a penalty only if they must.

RC: Benefit of the T2: The rule lessens the onus of on-water decision making: a racer can continue with the race and on the way back to the dock, consult with rules and possibly realize his mistake. He can take the penalty after considering rules.

Perhaps there can be a pro-rated exoneration: on water exoneration as is. If a racer waits until after the race, they might get partially exonerated, not fully.

No consensus reached.

Protests: SH raised issue of out of town boats not staying for protests. Her OA will allow protests to be filed electronically within 24 hours of the event with protests held at a later date—as is how other OA's have started handling protests.

Website: Ways to improve MBSA site and its value.

Maintaining a site with frequent updates requires a web master which we don't have (it's expensive). The possibilities of having participants post to blog area, post updates on events, outcomes, review of the day... Russ will send an email to OA to ask if they will post blurbs to the site (and a 'how to' post).

OTHER BUSINESS:

To improve regattas in the area and to promote best practices:

EYC is hosting a Club Level Judge seminar January 12, 2014. The event is posted on US Sailing.

BYC will host a Club Level Race Officer seminar in April.

Suggestion for ESI's for fee structuring:

Rather than use one fee up until a certain date then use a "late fee," Russ suggested that OA describe it as an early registration discount up to a certain date after which a regular rate is charged.

Scoring: Time-on-Time versus Time-on-Distance

MBSA will have a chart for each boat that considers its rating and will make rough corrected times easily obtainable for Time-on-Time. Using T-on-T or T-on-D is up to the OA.

The Rumble: a Wednesday race between Constitution YC, Boston Harbor PHRF, and Hingham Bay PHRF will be a MBSA qualifier and open to any/all boats. Two are held each summer: one starts at President Roads and the other at Hospital Shoals.