

MINUTES OF A GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD BY THE ROYAL SOLENT YACHT CLUB AT 17:00 ON FRIDAY 2ND AUGUST 2024

Present:

In the Chair: Martyn Collinson, Commodore
Graham Fell, Vice Commodore
John Poyner, Rear Commodore House
Nick Bradley, Rear Commodore Sailing
Robert Quain, Hon Treasurer
Susie Breare
Katie Davies
Catherine Holmes
Richard Pierrepont

Tom Symes (Zoom)
Caryl Terlezki-Thomas
Lesley Tregear

Apologies:

Peter Crowhurst
Mark Lacey
Hamish Fletcher, Guardian

In Attendance:

Dick Dawson, Guardian
Mark Hall, Guardian
Claire Hallett, Secretary

65/24 Apologies As listed above.

66/24 Approval of Minutes from 28th June 2024 Meeting The minutes were approved as a true record.

67/24 Matters Arising Covered by agenda points.

68/24 Commodore's Update

Bank House. A confidential circular on the Bank House situation has been shared with the GC via email in advance of this meeting. There has been further development as the Mandevilles have since insinuated that the Club is intentionally holding up the sale of the property, which is certainly not the case, we are merely trying to protect the Club moving forward. The only control to the right of way is the licence. The oddity of the Deed is that that right of way doesn't extend from the Bank House's car park to the house, which may seem nonsensical, but the land registry is pretty firm. The Commodore intends to meet with Rudi Fortson, Tom Symes, RCS and the Secretary on Monday morning to further discuss developments. It is important to keep this matter confidential. We should remember there is a commercial side as well as a legal side and we need to maintain good relations with our neighbours, whilst protecting the future of the Club.

South Sheds. RCH met with Henry Murray-Smith and the proposed builder (Ben Denyer). The best option we have, which is less than half the other quotes received, is to refurbish the sheds one step at a time, which also provides an opportunity to assess the quality of the work. Approval is being sought today for the first phase of the refurbishment which is £6k, plus a contingency of 10%. Ben Denyer is not VAT registered and the Club will open an account with a builder's merchant and will order the materials required. Fire-rated fibre cement cladding, similar to the cladding on the workshop, will be used on the back wall. The windows from the back wall will be recycled and put in the end wall. Three solid walls will be built for the store shed as this is a good basis for carrying the rest of the structure. Only the end gable will be enclosed by a series of panels gapped to allow for ventilation. The potential installation of solar panels will be addressed, when necessary, but won't affect phase 1. The VC queried the width of the bays beyond the store, which were going to be increased to 5.6m to enable boats to enter. RCH responded that this will be addressed once the store shed is in place. All present unanimously agreed to proceed with phase 1 (1a and 1b).

69/24 Financial Report by Hon. Treasurer

June Results. The results for June are disappointing, which is the first time that the Hon. Treasurer has used this word this year, as the bar and catering are down on budget and down on the same period last year. The net loss for the year to date is (£51k) versus (£39k) at the same point last year. Permanent staff costs are less than budget and last year due to employment gaps. The next 3 months are important and we need to keep a close eye on how we are trading and save on any unnecessary revenue costs. So far July's results also look to be down on last year. Katie Davies highlighted that it was great weather in June and July last year, whilst this year it's been terrible. It was agreed that there's a general downturn in hospitality, with Yarmouth and Cowes Week seemingly quieter than usual, perhaps due to people going abroad more this year. RCH emphasized that there had been 23 events over 30 days in June so the Club has been busy.

Ultimately, finances are holding up well and we are in a similar position to last year. A close eye will be kept on the budget and the July figures will be telling.

Taittinger RSYC Regatta. This year's regatta was a great event all round. In the first draft of analysis circulated to the GC, the same overall result has been delivered as last year, with a contribution of £32k compared to £33k

last year. It is a money spinner for the Club and it is important not to increase prices to the extent that we drive people away. It has been noted that Champagne costs are higher than last year by £800, which is being looked into, but it is probably due to the increased cost price and the increased size of the Taittinger glasses provided this year. Katie pointed out that entry fees were increased last year, but kept largely the same this year. Entries were down by about 20 boats, which might be attributed to a bad experience due to the weather last year. This year there was better weather and racing, and a very successful Towers Party with more tickets sold than ever before.

70/24 Vice Commodore's Report

Membership Applications. There are 4 applications for 7 prospective members this month:

	Applicant	Proposer	Seconder	Comments/Interests
1	1. Mr Derek Day 2. Ms Helen Edwards	Susie Breare	Stephen Carson	Derek & Helen are Directors of a marketing company (Passion brand). They reside in Bath, 2 nd home Yarmouth. No interests ticked. From the supporting letters it appears they are mainly interested in onshore activities.
2	3. Mrs Cheryl May 4. Mr Peter May	Kevin Shaw	Robert Quain	Cheryl is a retired learning mentor/writer and Peter is a retired retail manager. They reside in Freshwater and are interested in onshore activities.
3	5. Mr Brian Oliver 6. Mrs Angela Oliver	Catherine Holmes	David Porter	Brian and Angela live in Greece 6 months of the year (have done for the last 18 years and have citizenship there), 2 nd home Newport. Ideally seeking overseas membership; on their qualifying. Brian is a civil servant and Angela a cartographer. They have a Halberg Rassey 41 moored in Greece and a Beneteau 311 moored at Island harbour. Interested in cruising and onshore activities. NB: Proposer & Seconder did not have the opportunity to meet Mrs Oliver.
4	7. Miss Amelia Roberts	Susie Breare	Steve Carson	Amelia wants to join her parents' account. Since she is over 18, she requires going through the normal application process. She is interested in racing, cruising, crewing, dinghy week, laser training, motorboat training, onshore activities & race management.

The Vice Commodore's Committee recommended all the applications for approval and all present approved all the applications. It was highlighted that Mr & Mrs Oliver are seeking overseas membership, however as they reside in Greece and the UK for 6 months of the year equally, they do not meet the terms of Rule 20.5 which states that you must reside predominantly overseas to qualify. The VCC is therefore not recommending that overseas membership is granted to them. All present agreed to this recommendation.

Maintenance Projects. There are a number of maintenance projects pending – the east side staircase, leaking gutter on North West side by bar door, rot in the cover above the Main Entrance, rotten section in Main Roof to the South East, water ingress to the Members West Balcony and paved area below. Acorn Interiors and John Nicholson have quoted, the latter is more expensive by around £20-30k. A third quote has been provided in part by Duncan Waite, who's a member and former builder who has come out of retirement and is keen to do the work. His quote was less expensive than the others and won't include VAT. We are awaiting his additional quote for the east side staircase, so will come back to the GC with a final proposal once this is received. The VC and Secretary are confident that Duncan has the right skills and has a good reputation. The work would start in October with a timeline of 6 weeks. The VAT on the materials should be partially recoverable.

Solar Panels. The VC has distributed a solar panels assessment to the GC, which is in its early stages. Solar Solution has proposed 30 panels of 12.9kw on the south facing roof of the south sheds. An installation on the west facing roof of the workshop would result in a 30% loss of power, so it's not worth considering the north side. The saving could be £2.2k per year and save 2,796 kg of CO2, as well as presenting electricity back into the grid at an income of £84 a year, although our current provider doesn't offer this service. Installation costs would be £15k, the panels would need to be installed in conjunction with the refurbishment of the south sheds, but it will come down to a commercial decision if their installation will require further expenditure to strengthen the roof. Storage batteries aren't being proposed as they are very expensive and offer little benefit. It is felt the clubhouse roof contains too many angles and skylights to prove viable. The next stage, further down the line after the sheds refurbishment has progressed, would be to have an informal discussion with the planning department to get their feedback since the Club is in an AONB and Conservation Area. Susie recommended Victoria Harding-Domeney for pre-planning advice as she is very knowledgeable.

Honorary Membership. The Club has a tradition of awarding honorary membership to the local MP, previously Bob Seely. Should this now be offered to the new West Wight MP and also the East Wight MP, as together they represent the Island as a whole? The VCC feel that this tradition is out of date and could be construed as patronage, which is concerning as it would be declared in the MP's public register of interest. The list of ex officio members has been reviewed by the VC and no others are political appointees. All present agreed with the recommendation to no longer award honorary membership to the local MPs.

Dress Code. A member had complained to the Commodore recently about a young female visitor being inappropriately dressed in a crop top and very short shorts, so the VCC had been asked to review the dress code. At the time the visitor wasn't challenged as they were dining with a large group of members on the balcony. The current bye-laws state that when eating or drinking in the bars or dining rooms the smart casual dress code must be observed. It is felt that this bye-law is sufficient, but the VCC recommend that it should be extended to the Club's balconies in order to cover the entire first floor. As a wet bar the Hudleston Bar should be excluded, as well as the lawn and colonnade. It is also suggested that there's a notice regarding the dress code in the foyer and on the landing and that staff have a copy behind the bar to refer to. It was agreed that we don't want to discourage younger members or appear stuffy, which is why the dress code is not being tightened, merely extended to the balconies and discretion must be used in dealing with any breaches. RCS suggested that the notices were unnecessary as there are already a lot of notices on display. It was suggested that in future a reminder could go out to members before the school holidays. All present agreed to extend the smart casual dress code to the balconies, but not to put up any notices. [The relevant bye-laws would be updated accordingly and circulated to the membership:](#)

VC, Sec

BEFORE:

B 5.3 The dress code for eating and drinking in the dining rooms or bars is Smart Casual (See B 5.5) or as stated in the notice for a particular event.

AFTER:

B 5.3 The dress code for eating and drinking anywhere on the first floor (including the dining rooms, bar and balconies, is Smart Casual (See B 5.5) or as stated in the notice for a particular event.

BEFORE

B 5.4 The following are examples of inappropriate dress:

- a. Wet, dirty or torn clothing, overalls, overcoats and oilskins.
- b. Singlets or sleeveless shirts (male) or clothing with inappropriate slogans.
- c. Swimming clothing or naked torsos.
- d. Bare feet or inappropriate footwear.
- e. Hats or caps for gentlemen or non-dress hats for ladies.
- f. Coats should be left on the secure hangers provided in the cloakrooms. They are not to be piled on tables upstairs nor heaped on the floor, but the owner may leave their own on the back of the chair on which they are sitting. This rule may be relaxed during the winter weather when the wearing of coats upstairs may be necessary.

AFTER:

B 5.4 The following are examples of inappropriate dress:

- a. Wet, dirty or torn clothing, overalls, overcoats and oilskins.
- b. Singlets or sleeveless shirts (male) or clothing with inappropriate slogans.
- c. Swimming clothing or naked torsos.
- d. Bare feet or inappropriate footwear.

e. Hats or caps for gentlemen or non-dress hats for ladies (applies inside the Clubhouse, excluding the balconies, lawn and colonnade)

f. Coats should be left on the secure hangers provided in the cloakrooms. They are not to be piled on tables upstairs nor heaped on the floor, but the owner may leave their own on the back of the chair on which they are sitting. This rule may be relaxed during the winter weather when the wearing of coats upstairs may be necessary.

Open Day. Lesley Tregear thanked all who have volunteered to help at the next Open Day on Saturday 31st August from 11am – 2pm. All volunteers should have received their duties via email now and are asked to wear club regalia. [All present were asked to encourage anyone who might be interested in joining to come along.](#)

All

71/24 Update from Rear Commodore House

Past Events. Several outside clubs have visited including the Royal Lymington and Poole Yacht Clubs. The Gents' Lunch, in honour of Geoff Horsnell, was well attended by 36 members and guests.

Upcoming Events. The Summer Party is fully booked at 143 attendees; next week we are holding the Fandango Charity Fun Race and Derek Sandy Supper on Wednesday and hosting a Wet Wheels Fundraising BBQ on Thursday. Folkboat Week starts on 17th August; the postponed Gin & Literature Evening is on 24th August with 25 signed up so far; the XOD class is holding a dog show at The Towers on 25th August, but the Club isn't directly involved in this. The Summer Open Day is on Saturday 31st July and there's a Ladies' Lunch planned for September.

72/24 Update from Rear Commodore Sailing

Sailing. The sailing season continues to go well. Taittinger was a fantastic regatta this year, the feedback has been very positive, competitors loved it and the weather made it. The wash-up meeting has highlighted a few improvements to make. Entry numbers were down this year, but should improve next year. The Commodore enquired as to whether Katie would be Regatta Chair again next year and Katie agreed that she would. The WER second series has just finished, Miles Norris won the Laser class, Susie Breare won Class 3, John Poyner in *Margarita* won Class 1 & 2 and *Mix* won the XOD class. Laser Training has taken place this week with 14 attendees, run by Claudia and Henry Olmi, winds were fairly light throughout. Dinghy Week is next week with 12 attendees, sponsors Harwoods have donated some very good prizes including a paddleboard. Folkboat Week is the next big event.

Gold Cup. There will be a presentation of the Gold Cup to the Royal Solent at the beginning of Folkboat Week. It was won by Ed Donald sailing under the RSYC burgee and it's the first time anyone outside the Nordic countries has won it so it's a fantastic achievement. The presentation will be at 6:30pm before the Welcome Dinner. [It has been covered by the yachting press, but a press release for the local press would also be a good idea, Ollie Dewar will be approached accordingly.](#)

RYA Inspection. The annual RYA inspection took place on 5th July, it was successful with only a few minor changes required, which have now been completed, so the Sailing Secretary and Head Boatman did a great job in facilitating this.

RCS, Sec

Countdown. The Commodore has sent out an email to the GC regarding a generous offer that has been received, confidentially, from Wight Marine to pay for a much needed new engine for Countdown. The additional cost of the installation and other work required is approximately £40k, which would need to be borne by the Club. This crystallises the discussion about whether Countdown should be refurbished or sold so we can invest in a more modern boat. There are strong views on both sides as a replacement boat may also still require work. The right thing to do is get an independent survey, which will cost about £800, as it is important that everyone feels comfortable and able to make an informed decision. Richard Pierrepont asked whether the offer was restricted to a new engine for Countdown and it was felt that it was as it would be a Volvo engine that the yard would provide and fit, which would be a win-win situation for the Club, the yard and Wight Marine as the installers. [All were happy to proceed with the independent survey towards the end of the season.](#)

Crown Estate Moorings. RCS circulated a note yesterday detailing a proposal for the Crown Estate moorings agreement, which it is hoped to negotiate with Crown Estate on the GC's authority. The position is that we can either agree to a turnover rent or arrange a flat rate of a maximum of £100 per mooring (which was their best offer in our last meeting) and there will be no backdating of the mooring fees. RCS recommends a flat rate; although it is more cost upfront it will be better to navigate over the next 5 years or potentially longer. The 10% of turnover they have proposed is low and could potentially increase to 35% based on what other clubs are paying. [In summary, it is proposed to say yes to a flat rate and hopefully negotiate this down to £70-£80, or £100 max and to ask for rent reviews every 10 years rather than 5.](#) All agreed and the Commodore thanked RCS, Tom Symes and Rudi Fortson for all their input into this matter.

RCS

RCS, Sec

73/24 Secretary's Points

Membership Statistics. Total membership, not including those approved today, stands at 1,106 compared to 1,062 at the same point last year, which is an increase year on year of 44 members. New & re-instated members this year are 69 compared to 65 last year. There have been 56 resignations compared to 65 last year. So all in all a positive result.

Staffing Update. There have been several recent additions to the bar team and the waiting team in terms of casual staff for the remainder of the summer. Nataliia has been with us almost 2 years since coming to the UK from Ukraine, but only works one day a week and has now handed in her notice as she'd like to pursue other things.

74/24 AOB

Member Conduct Issue. The Secretary hasn't yet had a response from the member concerned regarding the issue with their conduct. At this stage their identity should remain confidential. Catherine advised if it's who she thinks it is they don't often check their email, so a recorded letter may be required. A further update will follow once a response has been received from the member in question.

75/24 Next Meeting Friday 27th September 2024 at 1700 hours