

# MINUTES OF A GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD BY THE ROYAL SOLENT YACHT CLUB AT 17:00 ON FRIDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024

## Present:

In the Chair:

Martyn Collinson, Commodore  
Graham Fell, Vice Commodore (Zoom)  
John Poyner, Rear Commodore House  
Robert Quain, Hon Treasurer  
Susie Breare  
Peter Crowhurst  
Tom Symes (Zoom)  
Mark Lacey  
Richard Pierrepont

## Apologies:

Nick Bradley, Rear Commodore Sailing  
Katie Davies  
Catherine Holmes  
Caryl Terlezki-Thomas  
Lesley Tregear  
Hamish Fletcher, Guardian  
Mark Hall, Guardian

## In Attendance:

Claire Hallett, Secretary  
Dick Dawson, Guardian

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Commodore asked GC members to stand to observe a minute's silence for members Trevor Way and Barry Kenilworth who had sadly passed away since the last GC meeting.

**44/24 Apologies** As listed above.

**45/24 Approval of Minutes from 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024 Meeting** The minutes were approved as a true record.

**46/24 Matters Arising** Covered by agenda points.

## 47/24 Commodore's Update

Equality Act 2010 Policy. The Commodore re-iterated that the Equality Act 2010 is the law, and the Club has to abide by it. There is a separate gender neutral loo available and if a separate gender neutral shower was required in the future the disabled loo downstairs could be converted into a wet room.

Director Obligations. There were no further questions regarding director obligations, so the matter was closed.

South Sheds Project. The Club's storeroom is the priority. Two builders have been recommended to the Commodore and will be involved in a discussion with Henry Murray-Smith. They are not VAT registered so the Club will buy the materials required and it is hoped to keep to a budget of £34-40k. ex vat.

Richard Pierrepont asked whether the South Sheds working group would resume its meeting? The Commodore responded that it would, once Henry has met with the two builders. It was added that Acorn Interiors had provided a quote, but this was rather high at £50k + vat.

Member Complaint. The complaint from a member about a member is now resolved as a general apology was requested, provided and accepted.

## 48/24 Financial Report by Hon. Treasurer

April Results. The variance on budget column on the one-page summary shows a lot of figures in red, but the end result is a net surplus for the month of £1.8k. The year-to-date deficit is a lot better than budgeted at (£57k) against (£81k). We are beginning to come into the start of the main trading season so numbers should start to improve. The targets set for the bar and catering in April were challenging. Easter was in March rather than April this year, so the year-on-year figures aren't comparable. The Hon. Treasurer has noted the need to factor Easter into the relevant month in the budget next year. Staff costs are a lot lower than budgeted. The income from subscriptions is holding up well. There has been some re-adjustment of irrecoverable VAT as it was over-estimated at the end of last month. The cash flow is still strong, and the Hon. Treasurer is optimistic looking forwards. May's results will have been boosted by the RNLI Gala Ball which achieved £5k in catering and in the bar. The staff put a lot of effort into making this event a great success.

Quarterly Budget Review. The Hon. Treasurer had circulated a Budget Review via email in advance of the meeting, which summarises that there is no need to adjust the budget at this stage (see page 6).

Boat Fund. The Hon. Treasurer's proposal regarding the Club's boat fund had been emailed to the GC prior to the meeting, which was supported by all the Flag Officers (see page 7). Although parts and maintenance costs could come out of the working capital and are budgeted for annually, it makes sense to have a fund for new boats. If a call to members is needed in the future, a pre-existing boat fund will encourage them to donate. An amount equivalent to the depreciation of the Club's boats will be put into the boat fund annually, which equates to £12.5k. This would be money from the general reserves that would be allocated to the boat fund, although it could of course be used elsewhere if necessary. All present agreed the proposal, which Richard Pierrepont seconded.

Richard Pierrepont asked if there could be a scheme for the build fund. It was explained that a portion of the £150 Registration Fee for new members (£50 for a single member & £75 for a couple/family) goes to the Club's refurbishment fund.

#### 49/24 Vice Commodore's Report

Membership Applications. There are 13 applications for 23 prospective members directly from the Open Day on 4<sup>th</sup> May, and a total of 16 applications for 28 prospective members this month:

Applicant	Proposer	Secunder	Comments/Interests
1. Mr Martyn & Mrs Julia Court & Master George Court	Rupert Perkins	Penny Woodbridge	OPEN DAY. Martyn is a chartered surveyor, Julia a picture framer. George is 11 years old. Main home Yarmouth. Members of YSC. Interested in cruising, crewing, dinghy week, laser training, motorboat training & boat shed/mooring.
2. Mr Rob & Mrs Jax Sandford	Ingrid Watmough (prev Kelly)	David Fox	OPEN DAY. Rob & Jax are both Sales Directors in Telecoms. They live in Freshwater. No interests ticked. Family of Proposer.
3. Mr Kelly Williams & Ms Rachel Swaine	Graham Fell	Don Tregear	OPEN DAY. Kelly is a carpenter & Rachel is Head of Field in SAM market research. Their main home is Twickenham & 2 <sup>nd</sup> home Norton, IOW. They have a motorboat moored at Twickenham and interested in motorboat training and boat shed/mooring.
4. Mr Ross Graham & Miss Joanna Mockett	John Poyner	David Fox	OPEN DAY. Ross is a marine engineer and Joanna is an illustrator. They live in Yarmouth. Ross works with Jamie Allen at River Yar Boatyard. Interested in racing & cruising.
5. Mr Stephen Phillips	Martin Wannell	Martyn Collinson	OPEN DAY. Stephen is a solicitor & musician (Jack Russell). Lives in Freshwater. Interests are racing, dinghy week, crewing & laser training.
6. Mr Andrew Morris	Graham Fell	Alan Hans Hamilton	OPEN DAY. Andrew is a former pilot. Lives in Totland. Has a motorboat moored at River Yar Boatyard. In Slipshod choir. Interested in cruising & motorboat training.
7. Mr Chris Harridge	Martyn Collinson	Dick Dawson	OPEN DAY Chris is in marine sales and lives in Horleywood, Lymington. No interests ticked. Used to be the agent for Nimbus boats at the Yacht Haven. Long term friend of Martyn.
8. Mrs Debbie Conlin	Susie Breare	David Fox	OPEN DAY. Debbie is a civil servant in government. She lives in Thorley, Yarmouth and interested in onshore activities.
9. Mr Alan Pollitt	John Poyner	Martyn Collinson	OPEN DAY. Alan is Jen Allen's father (from Wight Marine) and lives in Wootton, Isle of Wight. Alan has been sailing with the Contessa 28 fleet for a couple of seasons and interested in racing.

10. Mr Peter, Mrs Megan Locke, Master James & Miss Amelia Locke	Ian Wellby	Henry Murray-Smith	OPEN DAY. Anthony is a Company Director for a marketing software co. and Megan is a fine art gallery Director. They live in Calbourne. Have a sailboat moored at Cowes and members of the Royal Thames YC. Interested in racing and onshore activities.
11. Mrs Anna Stolper	John Stolper	Julia Coulson	OPEN DAY. To join husbands' account: Mr J Stolper. Anna is an Art Gallery Director. They live in Yarmouth & London. Interested in onshore activities.
12. Mrs Valerie Clark	Adrian Bolton	John Poyner	Valerie's main home is Newton Blossomville, Bedford & 2 <sup>nd</sup> home Freshwater, IOW. Director of retail boutique. Husband will come as guest. Both RYA members and interested in motorboat training and onshore activities.
13. Mr Gareth & Mrs Louise Evans	Adrian Bolton	John Poyner	Main home Olney, Bucks & 2 <sup>nd</sup> home Freshwater, IOW. Gareth is a management consultant at a procurement co & Louise is charity worker at Citizens Advice. Friends of Valerie Clark. Interested in motorboat training and onshore activities
14. Mr Charles & Mrs Karen Edwards	Martyn Collinson	John Poyner	OPEN DAY. Charles & Karen live in Newport. Charles is a retired aeronautical engineer and Karen is a retired bank official. They have a sailboat moored at YSC and members of YSC. Interested in racing, crewing and onshore activities.
15. Mr Stephen & Mrs Deborah Granville-Hastings	Martyn Collinson	David Porter	Stephen & Deborah are seeking overseas membership (they initially sought this 2 years ago but did not meet the overseas membership requirements). They live in Spain and 2 <sup>nd</sup> home in Yarmouth. Stephen is a hotel proprietor/businessman & Deborah is a hotel proprietor/lawyer. Using supporting letters from last time.
16. Mr Simon Jenkins & Mr John Morton	Martyn Collinson	John Poyner	OPEN DAY. Seeking reinstatement of membership. Simon & John live in Freshwater. Simon is a former finance director & John former site manager. Seeking XOD racing and onshore activities.

The Vice Commodore ran through the credentials of all the applicants, which the Vice Commodore's Committee recommended for approval. All those present approved all the applications.

Achelous. The test rig trial at the end of the jetty proved that there is insufficient power generated. Achelous would like to move the rig out to the furthest outhaul post for more trials and have successfully trialed the use of batteries to avoid the need for power cables. It is proposed that they return to carry out a second trial further out after the main sailing season has ended.

Green Agenda. The VC is keen to drive forward the green agenda and looking into solar panels with his committee. Sarah Turvill, who is Chair of the Yarmouth harbour Commissioners, has experience of the installation of solar panels by the harbour and has spoken to the Harbour Master, Tim Adams, who would be happy to come and discuss the matter with the Club. Mark Hall advised that his company owned a couple of acres of solar panels and receives substantial funding from the state. The VC confirmed that Tim has gone through this process so will be able to brief us accordingly. Three roof areas are potentially suitable – the workshop and south facing clubhouse roof, although the latter may present an issue aesthetically or with planning regulations, plus the north facing slope of the south sheds as the south side may get objections from neighbouring properties.

YC Monaco. Yacht Club Monaco has been approached for reciprocity; however, their next GC meeting is delayed due to the Grand Prix. Currently, Royal Solent members have been welcomed there with a letter of introduction from the Secretary.

Maintenance Work. There are a number of maintenance works required to the premises, the detail of which has been circulated to the GC ahead of this meeting:

1. East side staircase
2. Leaking gutter on North West side by bar door
3. Rot in the cover above the Main Entrance
4. Rotten section in Main Roof to the South East
5. Water ingress to the Members West Balcony and paved area below
6. Cracks in Sea Wall

Quotes have been requested for all works, one response has been received and others are awaited. The total cost could be approximately £30k. Separate quotes have been obtained for the sea wall repairs, of £650 from Dave Nicolle and £350 from Steve Carson. *It is recommended to proceed with Steve Carson, which all agreed to and which the Commodore seconded. It should be noted that as Steve Carson is a member this expenditure will need to be recorded or audit purposes.* The VC will confirm costs to the GC once further quotes have been received, but the work will need to be done in September/October before the onset of Winter. The issue with the water ingress into the Hudleston Bar ceiling is a priority issue and is due to the original design of the Members' Balcony sloping back towards the building. A guarantee that the proposed work will offer a permanent fix will be sought from the chosen builder.

VC  
Hon T

### **50/24 Update from Rear Commodore House**

The promotion of discounts for members using their payment cards and the Spring Special mid-week lunch offer has worked to increase attendance, plus there are also many outside groups still booking up to use the Club.

#### Past Events.

- 11<sup>th</sup> May, RNLI Gala Ball – 143 attendees. The service was phenomenal and the food excellent. Approximately £9k was raised by the RNLI.

#### Upcoming Events:

- 25<sup>th</sup> May, Commodore's Party – 62 signed up so far.
- 26<sup>th</sup> May, Member's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Lunch for 55 attendees
- 31<sup>st</sup> May – 2<sup>nd</sup> June, RSYC Contessa Regatta
- 8<sup>th</sup> June, Gin Tasting & Talk
- 15<sup>th</sup> June, Round the Island Race Breakfast
- 3<sup>rd</sup> August, Summer Party – being worked on by the House Committee

RCH stressed that it's important to get people in the bar and to keep them there, hence the Hudleston Bar being open on Wednesday evenings after sailing, as often as staffing facilitates.

Richard Pierrepont advised that he had heard complaints from members that the Sunday Roast had been withdrawn on a number of occasions, it's an institution and should be a basic requirement. *It was felt that it wasn't a regular issue so not a big problem, but that it would be discussed in House Committee.*

Peter Crowhurst commented that portion sizes on Thursday lunchtime were too large, *the Secretary would relay this to the Head Chef as it may need feeding back to the Second Chef.*

Mark Hall asked why the GP on food was down at 60% compared to the usual 67%? There has been increased promotion and more widespread application of the members' 10% discount on meals, plus the Spring Special on mid-week lunches and Light Bites offer on Wednesday evenings and in Happy Hour, which were expected to negatively impact the margins, though 60% is still good. The Spring Offer is coming to an end so the GP should increase soon. The Club is competing with many other local eateries, so we want members to come here and feel that it is good value for money.

It is proposed to reduce the margin on the more expensive wines on the Wine List in order to increase the amount purchased.

New Members' Evening. The Commodore commented that a lot of GC members are unfortunately not able to attend the new Members' Evening on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June. Susie Breare and Mark Lacey confirmed that they would be attending.

RCH  
Sec

### **51/24 Update from Rear Commodore Sailing (given by the Commodore)**

Club Racing. The Wednesday evening WER series is now well underway with 5 races sailed. Although winds have been light, the RO has done well to get 4 races completed, and there is good support from C1 and 2 cruisers,

XODs, YODs, Lasers. Weekend (Saturday and Sunday) racing has been well supported so far (approx. 7 XODs, 6 YOD's 6 FB's a good mattering of cruisers). However, they have had very tricky conditions, with v light/fickle winds. The Prince Consort Race took place on 1120 boats competed and all finished. Sadly, no Lasers yet racing on Sundays. In summary, a good start to the season despite the light winds, with good support from the sailors. RSYC Contessa Regatta. 31<sup>st</sup> May – 2<sup>nd</sup> June. After a very successful event last year, numbers are a bit down this year (currently 27), mainly amongst the 26's. We think it's just coincidental that a number of boats are doing different things, and they will hopefully be back next year.

Taittinger RSYC Regatta. 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> July. Looking like a strong entry list again (141 entries to date). Plans ongoing and on track, afloat and ashore.

Cruising. On 9th May, 21 members (including Mr and Mrs Commodore) attended at Royal Victoria YC. Also, Steven and Helen Willy took their new Targa. The next event is on 11<sup>th</sup> June at RORC. Then on 16<sup>th</sup> June, there will be the annual BBQ at Newtown Spit.

Club Boats. As mentioned at the last GC meeting, we are putting in place more structure around maintenance and budgeting for the Club boats. We held the first monthly meeting earlier this week, with the Head Boatman, Richard Pierrepont, RCS and Secretary. This was very useful, and we now have an outline schedule up and running for the year ahead in relation to work on the boats, racing marks, etc.

Mark Lacey, XOD Class Captain, added that 9 XOD sailors from the Club went to the Royal Anglesey at the end of May and won by 3 races to 2. There will be a return team racing event hosted at the Royal Solent in 2 years' time.

## **52/24 Secretary's Points**

Membership Statistics. Total membership, not including those approved today, stands at 1074 compared to 1032 at the same point last year, which is an increase year on year of 42 members. New & re-instated members this year are 35 compared to 27 last year. Following a successful Open Day, there are 28 member applications this month, now approved, which was identical to May last year. RCH pointed out that with these additional new members the membership will just exceed 1,100 from 1<sup>st</sup> June.

Staffing Update. A number of new part-time staff have been recruited – Erik on the bar, Monty and Emily in waiting, Hannah as KP and to do ironing. We are also interviewing a potential candidate for the Summer Boatman role next week. Recruitment is proving difficult as there is a lot of competition from many other businesses in the hospitality sector. A bar tender and a more mature waiting team member (to step into Danielle's shoes) are still being sought. The Secretary asked whether the introduction of a 10% service charge on the bills of non-members would be viable as a means to increase staff rates of pay to aid recruitment and retention? [The Commodore responded that this would be discussed in the next F&A meeting.](#)

Rainwater Drainage. Three rainwater planters have now been installed by Southern Water on the south side of the clubhouse, complete with plants, and they have also delivered three slow drain water butts which the Boatmen will install around the workshop and south sheds in the near future.

**53/24 Next Meeting** Friday 28th June at 1700 hours

Sec

## **2024 Budget Review at end of 1Q24**

20<sup>th</sup> May 2024

### **Introduction**

It was agreed that the 2024 Budget would be reviewed after the end of each quarter to see if it needed to be adjusted due to unforeseen income or unexpected expenditure. I have carried out this review for the RSYC GC, including April figures YTD and concluded that no adjustment needs to be made.

### **Income**

Income YTD is slightly ahead of the budget at £240,813 v £233,526. In detail, subscription income (including apportioning of annual income) is on track. Bar and catering income is ahead of budget which is good news but not excessively ahead and it reflects relatively low budget targets for the less busy period of trading. Summer months trading targets are more demanding, so this is likely to lead to a return to budget, possibly by end of Q3. Sailing income is small YTD as we await the start of the regatta season.

### **Expenditure**

Actual expenditure YTD, before tax and interest is running about 5% under budget; £298,920 v £313,591. Most salaries across the board are largely on track except for Catering which is c£15,000 under budget, due to staffing gaps. Temporary salaries are also much lower than budget; by almost £9,000. This may be a timing point and I expect temporary salary expenditure to increase in our busy season ahead. Noted for 2025 budget planning.

Bar stocks and general house costs/utility bills etc. are on track. Sailing expenditure is on budget YTD with the increase in boat maintenance YTD offset by a reduced cost of moorings largely as a result of less moorings being laid.

### **Interest & Tax**

Interest payment for the 1 year bond was received in 1Q. This plus the running monthly interest on our cash deposits resulted in additional income of £3,836 against a budget of £2,000 YTD. Not enough of a difference to change although with the 90-day rate on the £100,000 this might mean a wider differential come 3Q. I will watch out for this.

Irrecoverable VAT was on track with the budget YTD. Depreciation was similarly accurate.

### **Summary**

The agreed budget reflects the current trading position within bounds and my recommendation is that we do not change it now. If we carry on trading according to budget, the Club will end the year in a better position financially than the budget. However, there is no guarantee of this.

Robert Quain  
Treasurer

2024

**Introduction.**

The Club owns and maintains three boats: Countdown, Marksman and Solent RIB. Solent RIB is still relatively new, Marksman is currently sound and has been well maintained with some major part replacements this year. Countdown is the oldest boat, indeed very old with an engine that is hard to find spare parts for.

Replacing Countdown in time is desirable and may well become necessitous in the not too distant future if the Club wishes to conduct regattas and club racing the way we do now. This will be expensive, perhaps over £100,000 new, although there are possibly less expensive options. A catastrophic engine failure may make it uneconomic to repair Countdown, even if we could source the parts.

While the Club does have cash reserves and could possibly fund a new Countdown out of its own funds now, it would make sense to build up our Boat Fund for this purpose. The Club does not normally fund assets though bank loans it should be noted.

**Boat Fund.**

Currently the Boat Fund has a zero balance.

Current annual depreciation of the Club's sailing assets and boats is c£12,500.

**Options**

1. Raise funds for the Boat Fund from a call to the membership of the Club.
2. Ask for a loan from our bank to fund a purchase or lease payments when needed.
3. Build up the fund with annual funding from working capital or surpluses to match the annual depreciation of all our boats in order to provide the cash needed over time.

The first option may not be palatable to the membership. Timing might not be right now. They have been very generous very recently in donations to the rebuild of the Boatman's Workshop and may not wish to contribute to a fund which may not have an immediate need. In addition, many members don't race so might be less inclined to fund an asset of need to a relatively small group within the club.

Bank loans/Leases would need a special general meeting to approve. While it may make sense to lease a new boat over say 10-20 years, interest rates are high currently and may not drop significantly in the short to medium term. The Club might, therefore, be committed to high interest payments over a long period.

Building up the Boat Fund from Club reserves is attractive for a number of reasons. We can afford to set aside and pay in the sum of the total depreciation of the boats etc. annually. The membership won't be asked to fund, at least until it has built up a reasonable balance. Nor will they be asked to approve loans.

Once the Boat Fund has grown, should the need to replace one of our boats arise, members could then be asked if they are willing to add to the balance at the time of need.

**Summary**

While Countdown works now, it remains likely to need replacing at some stage, perhaps sooner than any of us desires. Refunding the Boat Fund now will kick start efforts in that direction and demonstrate good planning.

I therefore propose that the Boat Fund is refloated with £12,500 immediately and the annual depreciation of our boats and other Sailing assets be added at the start of each year should our finances allow.

Robert Quain  
Treasurer