

MINUTES OF A GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD BY THE ROYAL SOLENT YACHT CLUB AT 17:00 ON THURSDAY 25TH JANUARY 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
Peter Crowhurst
Richard Pierrepont

Tom Symes
Caryl Terlezki-Thomas
Lesley Tregear (Zoom)
Apologies:
Katie Davies
Catherine Holmes
Mark Lacey
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 Adam Harding-Domeney, Sheilah Rengert and Pamela Rodwell who had sadly passed away since the last GC meeting.

1/24 Apologies As listed above.

2/24 Approval of Minutes from 24th November 2023 Meeting The minutes were approved as a true record.

3/24 Matters Arising

Club Patron. The Commodore plans to approach the Duke of Edinburgh regarding the role of Club Patron, however Sir Guy Acland had advised to delay as the Royal family is downsizing, [so the Commodore will revisit this in March](#).

Com

4/24 Commodore's Update

Bank House. The Commodore has been advised by Spence Willard that the sale of Bank House is still going ahead to "someone friendly to the Club".

Co-opted RCS & GC Members. It was confirmed that in mid December 2023, the GC approved via email the co-opting of Mark Lacey onto the GC. It was also confirmed that in early January 2024, following Tom Symes's resignation as RCS, the GC approved via email the co-opting of Nick Bradley as RCS and the co-opting of Tom Symes onto the GC. The corresponding nomination forms will be completed accordingly.

South Sheds Project. A democratic process is needed before a decision can be made on the future of the south sheds starting with a) what is best for the Club, then b) how it will be funded. It is necessary to go through an exercise to consider all options put forward, although there will be constraints as to what can be done. [The next Secretary's News email will ask for any responses from members and the Commodore will ask the past two Commodores and those members who commented previously for their thoughts, plus the Secretary will obtain input from the staff](#). As accommodation has been suggested, the ISC will be approached regarding their experiences. A gym has also been suggested, but Warners has recently installed new state of the art gym equipment down the road, for which the Commodore plans to request an RSYC members' discount. As Directors, the GC will make the final decision.

Com,
Sec

5/24 Financial Report by Hon. Treasurer

November & December. The results for November and December are well ahead of budget. There were some expenses which didn't come to fruition and strong trading from the Bar and Catering. The net loss in 2022 was (£75.4k) compared to (£8k) last year, which is a huge improvement (subject to audit). The aim last year was to make a small operational surplus, which has been achieved, as the net loss of (£8k) becomes an operational surplus of £30k when depreciation is deducted. So, a good result overall for 2023.

The Bar's year end turnover of £273k is significantly up on budget and £50k up on the previous year, whilst at the same time retaining a GPM of 63%. Catering's turnover is £30k up on the previous year and also retained a GPM of 68%. The results show that the Club was used a lot more in 2023.

The subscriptions target was not met last year but was very ambitious. This year's budget relating to income from subscriptions growth is less ambitious. The cash position at year end was £192,094 in the bank, £100k is tied into the deposit account and the bank balance is around £300k, so that's a good start to the year. The Hon.

Treasurer thanked the Accounts Administrator for producing the cash flow as it's a very useful document throughout the year. A meeting with the auditors, Harrison Black, is scheduled for 6th March.

The Commodore commented that it had taken a lot of effort from a lot of people to get members into the Club and this is definitely paying off and has kept us above the line. RCS concurred that a lot of hard work has been done by those in attendance.

6/24 Vice Commodore's Report

Membership Applications. There are 3 applications for 4 prospective members this month:

Applicant	Proposer	Seconder
1. Alexander & Sirikorn Wood	Martyn Collinson	Martin Palmer
2. Pauline Stone	James Meaning	Jeremy Willcock
3. Helen Willy	Stephen Willy	Joanna Conisbee

The Vice Commodore's Committee recommends all for approval to the GC, all present approved all the membership applications, with the Commodore abstaining from the vote for Alexander & Sirikorn Wood as they're relations so he has a vested interest.

Rules & Byelaws Review. The Vice Commodore's Committee will be carrying out a full review of the Club's rules and byelaws as a due diligence exercise. It is not anticipated that there will be many changes, although some changes may be proposed as a result of switching from a Club Premises Certificate to a Premises Licence.

Hydrokinetic Trial. Peter Crowhurst is leading this project and has reported that Achelous will be carrying out a survey in the near future. The VC stressed that, if approved by the GC, the project won't go forward until all the necessary permissions and licences, e.g. from the MMO, harbour, Crown Estate etc, have been obtained.

7/24 Update from Rear Commodore House

Yarmouth is very quiet at the moment, so the Events Manager suggested changing the dates of some of the earlier functions, which was agreed to by the House Committee. Therefore, the S party silent disco will now take place in March instead of February and the karaoke has been postponed until the Summer.

The House Committee intends to organise 2 or 3 Ladies' Lunches during the year.

A junior members' or family day is under discussion, possibly on the water as well as ashore.

A second new members' evening will be held earlier in the year, as well as in November, to help ensure retention.

The band 'Wight Hot Pipes' has been booked for the Summer Party on 3rd August.

The Commodore's Party on 25th May will have an Italian theme in terms of menu, décor and dress code.

An opera evening is proposed at some point during this year.

It has been fed back that the amount of wine served at Wine Society should be no more than a tasting portion, which the Secretary has passed on to the Club Steward.

The New Year's Eve party was reportedly more subdued this year, with a more mature crowd in attendance. There were 96 attendees booked initially, but only 74 came which mirrors the attendance of 72 the previous year. Susie Breare was the only committee member who attended and commented that the food was delicious and the band was good, but the atmosphere felt flat. It is therefore proposed that we have a break from the usual party in the evening and, given the popularity of the Christmas Eve Brunch, we hold a New Year's Eve Brunch instead for one year only and re-launch the NYE party in 2025. All present agreed with the House Committee's proposal.

The Curry & Quiz Night on 20th January had 27 attendees.

Burns Night this evening has 31 booked.

There's a First Wednesday Talk on 7th February and a Film Night showing 'Our Souls at Night' on 8th February.

Wine Society on 22nd February with a Louis Jadot tasting by Mark Calver has over 40 booked so far.

With the pricing competition in local eateries and members wanting lower food prices, a new midweek Winter Warmer offer has been introduced this week and has proved popular. The members' 10% discount on food is also being emphasised more, including on informal Club events.

8/24 Update from Rear Commodore Sailing

The Commodore welcomed Nick Bradley as the Club's new Rear Commodore Sailing.

Nick thanked Tom Symes for all that he had achieved as the former RCS, adding that it is very sad that he has had to resign, and we are grateful that he is remaining on the GC. Tom in turn thanked Nick for stepping up and emphasised that he will be great in the role.

Sailing Update. The sailing programme is pretty much set now and much the same as last year. The main events are once again the Contessa Regatta, which it is hoped will be bigger this year once word gets around, the Taittinger RSYC Regatta and Folkboat Week. The Spring Series commences on 10th March. John Doerr has kindly reviewed the Sailing Instructions and suggested a number of amendments. The Winter Series concluded in December, with 5 boats doing the first part and 5 boast the second part. There were 3 Contessa 28s and 1 Contessa 32 in the Boxing Day Race; fewer than last year which is a shame as it was good weather and good fun. The Needles Relief was very windy, only 14 Lymington boats took part and no Yarmouth boats, but there were 110 back at the Club for lunch. Race Officer training is now underway with the first session last Friday, which went very well.

Tetradock Proposal. A member is willing to fund the planning application, purchase and installation of a Tetradock at the end of the jetty. It has recently been established that planning permission from the IOW Council will be required as the dock would form part of the structure of the jetty. The AONB has also indicated that it would object to any application submitted as it "considers the use of Tetradock to be contrary to the aims and polices of the AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 due to its artificial nature and visual impact." In light of this, the planning consultant employed by the member has advised that it would be a struggle to get the application through. There are a number of questions from the GC still to be answered, such as what to do in a north gale, cost of maintenance etc, which have not yet been looked into. Richard Pierrepont highlighted that one of the main reasons given for the Tetradock was due to the RIB being damaged on the outhaul by other users of the outhaul. Tom Symes emphasised that the proposal needed to be looked at step by step, with the first step being planning consent and the AONB's comment on the Lawful Development Certificate application is quite a strong set back. [The next step needs to be further discussion with the member donor and the Sailing Committee, before reporting back to the GC.](#)

Richard Pierrepont enquired whether the Contessa Regatta still had Louis Jadot sponsorship and whether the name of the regatta should include this, in the way that the Taittinger Regatta does? RCS responded that Jeremy Rogers is also a lead sponsor of the Contessa Regatta, plus it is not a mini Taittinger Regatta as it's less commercial and more a Club event for Contessas.

9/24 Secretary's Points

Membership Statistics. Circulated to the GC ahead of the meeting:

ANNUAL STATS AT:	YR END 2023	YR END 2022	YR END 2021	YR END 2020	YR END 2019	YR END 2018	YR END 2017
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP (at end Dec, pre year end resignations)	1098	1079	1031	1000	1026	1048	1054
NEW MEMBERS	108	129	104	43	71	86	114
DEATHS	10	8	11	14	7	8	4
TOTAL RESIGNATIONS	71	75	55	64	56	84	85

Please find below monthly membership statistics:

MONTHLY STATS AT:	END JAN 2024	END JAN 2023	END JAN 2022	END JAN 2021	END JAN 2020
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP (as of 24/1)	1050	1022	988	959	994
NEW MEMBERS (approved month before)	7	5	0	0	4
DEATHS (as of 24/1)	1	1	0	1	2
TOTAL RESIGNATIONS (as of 24/1)	50	53	39	38	35

To date, 52 members have resigned their 2024 membership effective from 1st January, compared to 53 at the same point in time last year, as shown above. In spite of this, at 1,050 the active membership is still looking very strong compared to previous years. The main reasons for resignations are low usage, poor health, moving away or financial reasons. Most members are sorry to go and stress that it's nothing to do with anything the Club has done, which is reassuring.

Staffing Update. Nathan working well ashore so far with Thomas as new Assistant Boatman. Hamish and Cara have left the waiting team and have been replaced by Natasha.

RSYC Magazine. This year's edition of the Club magazine is progressing well, Jane has done an excellent job securing £5,235 of advertising, which covers the printing and graphic design costs.

January Closure Work. A lot of work carried out by a skeleton team of staff over 9 days - all carpets, curtains, blinds & chair upholstery, woodwork, floors and windows were deep cleaned. The Hudleston Bar walls, skirting & window sills were re-painted.

New Furniture Store. One of the original objectives of the shed project was to create additional Club storage for the tables and chairs being stored in the Members' Room and to allow the Member's Lounge to be returned to a comfortable sitting room. Phase 1 of the shed project was limited to the east shed which didn't provide for additional dry storage facilities for the Club's spare tables and chairs. To move the storage requirement forward the Flag Officers approved the creation of additional storage cupboard in the lift lobby area on the first floor which Thomas, assisted by Nathan, constructed last week and which is now storing all the spare chairs and tables that were in the Members' Lounge. The book shelves have been re-located to the Members' Lounge and we now have a comfortable Members' lounge/library once again. Thomas had the idea to re-purpose the unused bi-fold doors that were between no-man's land and the west bar which saved about £300-400, and we plan to either paint or apply an opaque film to the glass windows in bi-fold doors and add the with the RSYC logo in gold. The total spend was £437, cost of materials used was £270, with £167 worth of materials leftover to use elsewhere. Many thanks to Thomas and Nathan who have saved the Club several thousand pounds by completing the work in house.

Wetwheels Fundraising. Hatch Mansfield chose Wetwheels as the charity to receive the proceeds of the sales of Taittinger RSYC Regatta caps over the regatta weekend and in the time since. All the caps have now been sold and £1490 has now been donated to Wetwheels, which is a great result.

10/24 AOB

Succession Planning. The Commodore stated that, in addition to a drive on new members this year, there also needs to be a drive on succession planning. Those present should start thinking about who will take over from them at the end of their term? The GC needs a balance of different ages and genders. The "what if?" question also needs to be asked – who can cover me if I am unable to carry out my role? This goes into all areas of the Club, including Race Officers and especially any vulnerable positions. The Flag Officers' terms are becoming more staggered of late, which is a good thing.

11/24 Next Meeting Friday 23rd February 2024 at 1700 hours (in the Solent Room)

All