

Long Island City Community Boathouse
Steering Council Meeting, January 9, 2011, 11AM-1PM

SC Members Present: Victoria, David, Jim, Monica, Robert, Steve, Ted, Wes
Guests: None
Scribe: Steve
Parliamentarian: Jim

- Agenda
- I. Chair's report on conversation with Owen Foote
 - II. Establish the priority topics for next meeting, including but not limited to:
 - (a) Halletts Cove program
 - (b) Fundraising
 - (c) Financial mgmt and accounting
 - (d) Conflict resolution
 - (e) Volunteer program
 - (f) Having fun
 - III. Date/time of next meeting

Topic

Chair's report on conversation with Owen Foote, Treasurer, Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club (GDCC)

Discussion

- Owen's main points, as reported by Victoria:
- (a) we are American Canoeing Association (ACA) members. ACA provides some insurance coverage
 - (b) GDCC goal is to put as many people on the water as possible
 - (c) GDCC's main concern is safety and liability
 - (d) Owen suggested we re-consider LICCB's mission
 - (e) LICCB must establish improved bookkeeping procedures
 - (f) LICCB can sponsor events, but we are not REQUIRED to hold any
 - (g) GDCC expects the LICCB Chair to be the sole contact/liaison with GDCC
 - (h) LICCB should put funding/sponsorship records on our website
 - (i) Owen suggested that we keep the status quo this season
 - (j) LICCB should decide how to use the funds raised for safety equipment and make those purchases
 - (k) LICCB is not required to raise funds, but may do so
 - (l) LICCB may hold an Open House or other type of party or fundraiser

SC Roundtable

What's Important to the newly elected SC members? All of the thoughts below were endorsed by a majority of the members:

-- Our most valuable resource is our Volunteers. We need to give them opportunity, training, rewards. Make things more comfortable and more fun for Volunteers. We don't have to re-invent systems, other volunteer organizations have been doing this very well for a long time. Reference: South Street Seaport Museum, Volunteer and Intern Handbook. We should create a LICCB handbook and give copies to all our Volunteers. It's important to have Volunteer standards and training, in order to maximize safety and prevent accidents. Having volunteers who are trained in their roles is essential to smooth Halletts Cove operations and safety.

-- Redefine our mission as "get people out on the water."

-- Go for quality of programs and experience, over quantity.

-- We must be concerned with safety, security, insurance.

-- Get busy with the low-hanging fruit, don't reinvent the wheel, perhaps not grow our programs. Focus on making things easier and more fun.

-- It is a priority to "clear the air". We have a new governance structure, a new season. Start out with a clean slate, focus on allowing each volunteer to contribute as much or as little as he or she chooses, as long as it's consistent with our mission. Emphasize and work within our new governance structure, with the SC is the decision-making group.

-- One of the roles of the SC is to hear and address ideas, suggestions, complaints, gripes. We have a duty to bring volunteers' issues to the SC and decide on them collectively and in a timely manner. We should encourage people to bring these to us individually if they wish but let them know that the SC as a group will address them. The SC must be unanimous and consistent in our handling of complaints and concerns. It's important to create channels of access.

-- Improve the utility, capacity and safety of our dock. Find a way to utilize the aluminum ramp (needs to be re-engineered to be put in use). This will require substantial expenditure. A capital campaign was suggested to raise the funding necessary to have a safe dock with sufficient capacity for our programs.

Facilities and Equipment Work parties are needed to address necessary cleaning and maintenance of the boathouse, dock, and equipment.

Suggestion Box We will place a physical suggestion box in a visible place in the boathouse. It will be locked, to encourage anonymous suggestions. Wes was commissioned to build or buy the box and a lock and to install it.

Mailboxes To facilitate communication with the SC as a whole or with individual members, Victoria will ask the Webmaster to create a general mailbox that all SC members will have access to, and individual mailboxes easily accessible via the Contacts page of the website, in the form of `firstname.lastname@licboathouse.org`.

Decision making	The SC is advisory to the Chair. We will endeavor to reach consensus on key decisions as a group, and vote if necessary. Five SC members will constitute a forum. The Chair has veto power over any SC recommendation. It was suggested that our decision-making process be delineated on the website. The SC can delegate authority for some decisions, to individual SC Members or designated Volunteers.
Website	Our website is our key vehicle for communication. It is a vital function and too important to be dependent on a the generosity of our landlord or on a sole webmaster. It was agreed that we will investigate migrating the site to a commercial host with guaranteed technical support, and will appoint a back-up webmaster.
Fundraiser	It was decided to have a Spring Open House/Block Party/Barbeque in lieu of a March fundraiser. Saturday June 11 was selected with June 12 as the rain date. The SC felt it is fitting to host this event "in our home" and to offering paddling in/around Anable Basin. It was noted that both days are "low tide in the middle of the day" days. Victoria, Wes and Steve volunteered to take the lead in organizing this event.
Hallets Cove	The Hallets Cove public walk-up paddling program will be run only on days when tidal currents are favorable to paddle both ways, eliminating the need to transport boats by car/trailer. These dates correspond to "high tide days" during Hallets hours. We will try running the program on some Saturdays. Opening Day will be Sunday May 22. We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- focus on safety -- recruit more volunteers and endeavor to provide role-based training -- enlist the support of stakeholders -- give volunteers special shirts so the public will know who the volunteers are -- qualify volunteers before they "get their shirts" Steve volunteered to head up the Hallets Cove program; Ted volunteered to assist on most days.
Volunteer Training	It was agreed that we need a training program for Volunteers working at Hallets, and for Volunteers assisting with trips or other boathouse functions. Monica agreed to organize a training program. Steve agreed to define Volunteer roles and responsibilities for Hallets Cove. May 8 and May 15 will be reserved for training events.
Volunteer Rewards	It was agreed that volunteering should be structured as "something you get to do", and that regular volunteers be rewarded with trip opportunities. It was suggested that we can recruit more volunteers with appropriate marketing in the LIC community.

Volunteer Recruitment Volunteers are our most important asset. Discussion of ways to find and secure volunteers included:

- mine last year's waivers for people who had checked off the "Interested in Volunteering" box. Contact them via email.
- create a special form on the website, and a paper version for Hallets Cove, for people interested in volunteering, to provide information and contact info
- have a laptop at Hallets Cove for legible capture of Volunteers' info
- have a generic LICCB business card to hand to prospective volunteers
- find volunteers with computer skills to tabulate waivers and harvest potential volunteers' info throughout the season

Next Meeting The next meeting was set for Tuesday Feb 1 at 7PM