

Upper Valley Rowing Foundation
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2009
DMS Conference Room

Board Members Present:

Jen Friend, Paul Gross, Dick Grossman, Bob Haynes, Heidi Lange, Win Piper, Brenda Sirovich, Karen Sluzenski. Peter Davenport, Buzz Congram, Elizabeth Glenshaw, Liz Marshall

Board Members Absent: Deb Dufty, Steve Perry

Call to order: 5:50 PM

1. **Executive Committee report.** The EC met on August 4, content reviewed including many of the items on this evening's agenda. One financial decision was made: the club obligated funds for Dan Ruml's work on the sculling bay. The entire Board expressed its heartfelt appreciation for Dan's work on behalf of the club.
2. **Minutes of July 13 meeting.** Motion to approve, with appropriate revisions, by Elizabeth, seconded by Jen. Supporting documents for decisions made at the July meeting will be placed in confidential Board e-files.
3. **Budget Update.** (Jen Friend.) We have now completed our 2005 and 2006 tax returns. Our accountant has advised us that because the returns were not filed on time, the club could be liable for penalties of up to 12K. She advised us to include a cover letter outlining the mitigating circumstances behind the club's late filing and requesting an abatement of penalties. The facts that our late filings represented no willful intent on our part to defraud or delay, and that our 2007 and 2008 filings were submitted on time should help the club's case. The IRS has not contacted us. These are our 990's, and there is a public inspection copy, which Jen will forward to Karen S for online record keeping. We are keeping \$12K in the bank in order to cover this expense if we are turned down.

The New Hampshire Annual Reports are in; we still have to get the 2005 and 2006 annual reports.

In terms of this year's budget, we are on the cusp of breaking even, including \$9K payment on the loan extended to cover the Resolute purchase (2008). We have received \$3K in donations in response to our summer fundraising letter. At the end of the season, we can make a determination about repaying the Resolute loan.

On top of our priority purchase list is new sculling boats.

Regarding sculling blades – we received a donation to purchase four new sets of sculling blades. Where will they be kept? The group discussed that we must begin to do a better job of making sure that we can minimize thefts. A light has already been moved in the sculling bay to free up more room. Will we have enough sets of oars for every boat now? Close. Are the sculls coordinated with boats? We will plan on doing this after we get the 4-7 new sets of oars. We plan to ask Concept 2 to mark the oars UVRF for us. We should paint the blades, number with decal.

4. The Board went into **Executive session** regarding a membership issue.

A general policy was subsequently agreed upon that no substitute rowing is allowed unless the substitute rower is a member in good standing, who has passed the swim test, and has no outstanding unresolved debt.

5. **Fall rowing** – Brian Conley will coach for the competitive women. He is applying for head lightweight coaching position at Dartmouth, but plans to stay in the area even if he does not get the job, and does not anticipate increased difficulty fulfilling his masters coaching responsibilities if he does get the job. For the men: a combination of Dick Grossman / Rowan Carroll / Buzz Congram is being worked on. They may have 10 men, up to 16. There was extensive discussion about the men's HoCR entry, given its relevance for the upcoming fall racing season as well as its implications for the club for future sweep boats that wish to race "as is" under the UVRF banner. Board members expressed the importance of maintaining some flexibility in order to grow competitive sweep programs; other board members emphasized the importance of a community rowing club not being selective and avoiding special treatment for some members, or the appearance thereof. In the end, it was agreed that: 1) if a rower wants to do exactly as he/she wants, sculling is the appropriate activity, and 2) except in the case of pilot programs, we as a club will not make room for special cases in the sweep programs.
6. **Communication (201)** – We have improved as communicators is attending to email subject lines, ensuring that they reflect current content. However, there have been several emails that went around that caused a bit of a furor, regarding potentially sensitive or controversial issues. Three suggestions were offered: (1) It behooves us all to consider the audience; who needs to know (on the board); (2) Communications to the membership should not air dirty laundry; and (3) Criticism of fellow members should not be by email (if you don't want to see it on the front page of the newspaper). We will plan to write a set of email guidelines. When a member corresponds with the club via email and the topic is complicated or potentially sensitive, a quick reply should be sent: we've received your email. Further action should be referred either to the relevant director, or – if sensitive / controversial – to the Executive Committee. We do have to really be sensitive that emails are public documents.

Liz Marshall left the meeting at 7:10 PM

7. **Safety redux.** A competitive men's boat rowed one practice without coaching supervision, due to a personal emergency of the coach. A women's competitive four also rowed unsupervised one morning on the direction of the coach. The appropriateness of this was discussed at great length.

Unsupervised sweep practices. The discussion yielded the following: Rarely, unsupervised sweep rowing may be appropriate under the following circumstances: Warm water, daylight, experienced rowers, experienced coxswain, Fours but not Eights, at least one Coach (of another program) on the water; the practice is condoned by the group's Coach, and there are no minors. Even under these circumstances, we want to discourage it. Although a bow-coxed Four (with equivalent rowers) is safer than a Quad, and Double, it is not a practice to be encouraged at this time. The Programming Director should be notified in advance of any such practices.

PFD's in sculling boats. We need a Velcro system for club singles; otherwise the club-issued PFD's do not fit. We do have a PFD requirement specifically for when the water gets cold, but this applies only to boat owners. Since we are trying these requirements & guidelines for the first time, we need to be able to reassess and revise the rules as appropriate. A motion was made that we (Safety, Sculling directors) watch the water temperature daily – if 65 degrees or higher, a PFD is not an

absolute requirement; if under 65 degrees, a PFD is required in all boats. There is a thermometer off the sculling dock. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Swim tests. Some have not passed the swim test. Dick needs to approach at least one member of whom he is aware. Coaches need to be aware of the swim test requirement and enforce the requirement before boating rowers. We as a club also need to write up private coaching guidelines – in terms of ascertaining the lesson-takers are UVRF members in good standing and have passed their swim test.

Dick Grossman left the meeting at 7:25 PM

8. **The Resolute.** The issue of how well the Resolute is meeting the needs of the competitive program and the club in general was TABLED.

Elizabeth Glenshaw left the meeting at 7:33 PM

9. **Dartmouth contract** - The Dartmouth contract is still pending. Win needs to get the most recent version of the contract and arrange to meet with Shidara.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Sirovich
Secretary