

**USRowing Board of Directors**  
**San Diego, California**  
**March 28 2015**

**“We are USRowing, fostering community, cultivating excellence and developing Olympic Champions.”**

**First Quarter 2015**

Called to Order 7:40AM

**Attending:** O’Connell, Horvat, Caldwell, Herbert, Lofgren, Gault, Townley, Mennone, Hall.

**Absences:** O’Leary, Acosta, Newman, Dietz, Liwski- excused.

**Annual Officer Elections**

President: Mennone motions for O’Connell, all in favor

Secretary: O’Connell motions for Mennone, all in favor

Treasurer: Lofgren needs to step down due to AAC rules and training attendance conflicts. The Board thanks Esther for her service. O’Connell nominates Gary Caldwell, all in favor.

**Strategic Initiatives: Internal Systems; Aligning the HQ**

**Current Membership Growth; Informational Session and Discussion**

Susan Smith, Membership Services Director (see meeting handout).

Smith presents a comprehensive plan with regard to the upgrading and refreshing the current membership approach with individual and organizational memberships. A key tool is newly created managed registration and database systems and through Regatta Central.

- Paul Horvat suggested outreach to organizations around safesport and to pursue membership.
- Sohier Hall asks for clarity for what Membership phase 1 looks like
- Erin asks for when automatic renewal will start. That is phase 2.
- Discussion ensues around our continued and supportive relationship with Regatta Central.
- Susan and Glenn are working on strategies to adeptly react to conversion rates targets.
- Susan talks about the confusion around confusing membership names.
- Susan closes with a discussion regarding the shift in membership to a ‘sales and marketing’ program.

**Strategic Initiatives: Marketing & Branding**

Beth Kohl, Marketing Director

Glenn acknowledges Beth’s work on the Liberty Mutual sponsorship. The board thanks Beth for her hard work on this effort.

**Aligning Current Marketing Efforts:** Beth presents a comprehensive update on the marketing projects surrounding the Row to Rio launch.

- Alison Townley asks encouraging we can leverage current support for other support or from a grassroots standpoint.
- Beth moves to discussion a little bit about how she leverages support and discusses corporations that are in the pipe.
- Sohier Hall asks what is holding sponsors back from converting. Beth asks... It is our membership number.
- Beth Kohl also says that TV is holding us back from sponsors signing on.
- Alison Townley suggests shift the discussion from 'quantity to quality'
- Sohier Hall suggests ways to close on existing leads.
- Gary Caldwell suggests leveraging rowing's ability to provide educated labor access via corporate human resources. Sohier Hall highlights the average industry cost of recruiting personnel into the workforce. Discussion ensues regarding our inherent network and value.
- Gary Caldwell suggests asking John Hillenbiddle about their experiences recruiting athletes. How did that work out for them.
- Dan Herbert inquires about Liberty Mutual and we they aren't our insurance carrier. Glenn Merry explains that Liberty Mutual is not in sports insurance business.
- Discussion ensues regarding the plans for the Boys and the Boat attention.

**Future Marketing & Branding Analysis.** Beth shifts discussion to Dwight Jewson's work with the 'USRowing' Branding group. Alison Townley is a committee member. She also highlights the progress with regard to the USRowing brand refresh project.

- Esther Lofgren wants this to be shared with the "legends" and athletes that talk to sponsors.
- Alison Townley acknowledges that the committee is going well.
- Frances Mennone suggests a promo piece about the branding effort.
- Glenn Merry inserts that we are working on hiring someone to assist Beth as a Marketing Manager.

Beth Kohl speaks to the renewed foundation and grant writing efforts.

### **Strategic Initiatives Membership Growth Long term Strategies, Working Lunch**

Glenn describes the framework around our existing membership structure. Erin speaks to the need to align our current model with our strategic initiatives.

- General discussion ensues regarding various barriers to growth. Glenn highlights the basic membership needs.
- Glenn Merry and Susan Smith that potential new membership growth areas could be: friends and family, indoor rowing, coastal
- Discussions focused ideas around registered regatta fees and organizational memberships
- Dan Herbert suggests we need to have this discussion now.
- Gary Caldwell and Paul Horvat address groups and populations that are challenged by individual memberships.

- Gary Caldwell offers suggestions on how to align regarding the collegiate age group.

Frances Mennone motions: To authorize staff to create an administration fee plan for approval at the May board meeting (call). All in Favor. Motion Passes.

This may get approved in May or not depending upon the details suggested by the staff.

12:30PM Frances Mennone motions to descend into executive session. All in favor. Motion passes.

### **Executive Session**

2:50PM Erin O'Connell motion to arise from executive session. All in favor. Motion passes

*Meeting Pauses for Announcement Events*

#### **1) Liberty Mutual Sponsorship Announcement and Row to Rio Campaign Kick Off 3PM**

Beth Kohl announces and welcomes partners from Liberty Mutual. Various parties are in attendance, including; Charlie Hamlin with the National Rowing Foundation, the USRowing spokes people 'legends', various women's national team reunion teams, current men's team, national team coaching staff, USRowing staff and Board.

#### **2) National Rowing Foundation Beer and Brat's Fundraiser 3:45PM**

Open to all and attended and hosted by the Men's National Team, Charlie Hamlin with the National Rowing Foundation, USRowing Board of Directors, former national team members. Donations are collected at the door.

### **Strategic Initiatives: Internal Systems; Committees & Bylaws**

(Tabled. Will discuss on April 14 at 8:30PM Eastern)

New items added to Internal Systems table; Para rowing NGB establishment, ensure proper reflection of newly forming USOC 3<sup>rd</sup> party Safe Sport organization, consider consultation with Benita Fitzgerald Mosley of the USOC with regard to USRowing bylaw work.

### **Casitas Fund Appointment**

Discussion was tabled with regard to the reappointed/appointment of a Casitas Fund steward.

### **2015 Meeting Dates & Locations**

Dates/Times were discussed for our next meetings.

Q2 Seattle June 20<sup>th</sup>

Q3 Chicago September 18<sup>th</sup>

Q4 Philadelphia (Convention) December 5<sup>t</sup>