

**STAR ISLAND CORPORATION**  
**Board of Directors**

**MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday January 24, 2017  
Star Island Office and Conference Phone Call

Members in Attendance:

Lisa Braiterman  
John Bush (Treasurer)  
Tom Coleman (President of ISAUU)  
Nick Dembsey  
Debbie Duval (President of SIUCC)  
Roger Kellman  
Erik Cordes  
Gary Kunz (President of the Board)  
Suellen Peluso  
Hannah Swomley (Pel Liaison)  
Mary Trudeau (Clerk)  
Jordan Young (Vice President of the Board)  
Louise Williams

Other:

Joe Watts, CEO

Absent: Josh Davis

**Check In:**

After a brief check in where Board members briefly shared life's events with each other, John Bush was asked to give the Opening Words.

**Opening Words:**

John Bush offered the opening words, by reading words from a chapel done by his family in years past. The text was originally read by his mother, and described the changing perspectives of an aging mind. John also offered an excerpt from columnist Russell Baker's article: "No Place for Crybabies". The satirical article describes the perspectives of aging, noting that by your "69th: You're tired of being a liberal."

**Call to Order:**

Gary Kunz, President, called the meeting to order at 7:18 pm.  
Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

**VOTED** to enter Executive Session for the purpose of approving the minutes of the December 20, 2016 Executive Session, as well as to discuss the Bringer of Light Award nominations. Hannah Swomley did not attend the Executive Session, and Joe Watts remained in the meeting.

The Board returned to the regular Meeting at 7:22 pm..] Hannah Swomley returned to the meeting.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The Board reviewed the draft Minutes of the December 20, 2016 meeting.

**VOTED** To approve the December 20, 2016 minutes, as written.

**REPORTS :**

**Updates from the CEO:**

Joe reported that he recently attended a Unitarian Universalist Alliance of Camps and Conference Centers Retreat attended by a variety of UU Conference Center staff. He valued the opportunity to meet with groups with similar missions and issues, noting that his week was enlightening and valuable. He reported that he was able to informally survey wages paid by similar organizations, noting that he was surprised that Star Island pay was on the mid to low end of the wage spectrum.

Joe noted that the application deadline for Pel summer employment has passed, and that 163 applications have been received. He believed that this number was somewhat lower than in prior years. Noting that typically about 20 employment offers are declined, he is encouraging staff to develop new applicant pools. The Board questioned the composition of the Pels, with respect to new and returning staff. Joe estimated that 30-40 percent of the Pels are new, with the remainder returning. He noted that applications are usually evenly split between new Pels and returning Pels. The Board asked about reasons for Pels NOT returning, questioning whether wages were influential in decision making. Joe feels the reasons vary by employee, and did not generalize about factors influencing individual decisions. Joe also noted that staff intends to promote the Pel wage increase via social media starting tomorrow and extend the Pel application deadline from yesterday through January 30.

Joe discussed a recent working session with the NHDES, which has resulted in a new pathway to approval for the new wastewater treatment system. Joe noted that financing should not be affected by delays in finalizing the plans for the system.

Joe noted a new grant opportunity with the Seacoast Women's Giving Circle, which could provide funding for off island events.

### **Treasurers Report:**

John gave a positive summary of his report, noting that 2016 year to date actuals have no surprises, and that the Annual Fund was slightly higher than expected. John graciously offered to hold a "financial" tutoring session prior to the Board Meeting on February 26, noting that it might be better to have the session before, rather than after the meeting, to accommodate those with travel issues.

### **Pel Liaison Report:**

Due to the time of year, Hannah Swomley had little to report, but did mention that a Reunion was held on New Year's Eve. She felt the Pel wage increase was well received, and that the increase was greatly appreciated by the community.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

**VOTED** to approve the Pel Report, Treasurers report and CEO report.

### **Shorter Term Business**

#### **Reports for the Annual Meeting:**

Joe reported that some Committee reports for the Annual Meeting were included in the Board Packet this month, and that others are in process. He noted that Board member feedback on the reports is due by February 1, 2017.

#### **Board Evaluations:**

Debbie Duval noted that self evaluations are past due, and extended the deadline through the weekend to accommodate email issues.

#### **February Board Retreat:**

Gary reminded the Board that the February Retreat will be held on February 25 and 26, 2017. He noted that there are good reasons to be in Portsmouth that weekend, including a "Pirate Talk", to be given by Ann Beattie and Wendy Lull, on February 24, 2017. He reminded the Board that the retreat is on Saturday, February 25, and the February meeting held on the following day. Gary noted that David Boynton, the Acting CEO for portions of the 2017

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Conference Season, will be in attendance at the weekend retreat. Gary noted that as ISAUU and SIUCC leadership may be changing, any new members will be invited to the Retreat, as well.

**Special Nominating Committee:**

Suellen Peluso reminded the Board that a Special Nominating Committee is convened each year to review the President and Vice Presidents, and to make recommendations for those roles in the following year. The Committee is made up of the Chair of the Nominating Committee; the Clerk; the ISAUU and SIUCC representatives; as well as an additional board member. Roger Kellman volunteered to fill the Board member position, and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

**VOTED** to appoint Roger Kellman to the at large position of the Special Nominating Committee.

Roger abstained from voting, the remainder of the votes were in support of the motion.

Suellen noted that Annie Stewart, as incoming chair of the Nominating Committee, will also observe the Special Nominating Committee.

**2017 Budget Presentation:**

Joe Watts noted that after rich discussions at the last meeting, the budget was sent back to staff to consider adjustments that would allow for a significant increase in Pel wages. After thoughtful reconsideration of several line items, staff is currently proposing a \$1.00 (one dollar) per hour raise for returning Pels.

In line with earlier comments, Joe reported that his recent UUACCC retreat allowed him to discuss wages with other UU camps and conference centers. Joe noted that he had collected wage information from 8 of the UUACCC's 11 member organizations. He noted that on average, similar institutions are paying over \$9.00 dollars per hour (plus an accommodation for room and board). Excluding outliers brings the average down slightly, to approximately \$8.74 per hour. With these numbers in mind, Joe noted that SIC is NOT the highest paying employer, as had been previously assumed, but falls on the low side of the wage curve.

John Bush noted that in light of this new information, he is now supporting the proposed Pel wage increase, noting that we should not be paying less than similar institutions. He noted that room and board rates may need to be reconsidered in future budgets to accommodate wage increases.

Tom Coleman remarked that he was glad that Joe was able to attend the recent UUACCC retreat, and expressed concern with line item reductions that could limit future conferences and travel. Joe noted that the UU conference was very inexpensive, and that the budget will still allow for professional development. He noted that he will tweak the budget, as necessary, to ensure that training and educational opportunities remain available to staff as they arise.

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Tom also commented on static or lower food costs in the budget. He reminded the Board that we are in the hospitality business, and need to provide pleasing and nourishing meals. He encouraged continued review of food costs. Joe noted that we could modify the proposed budget to allow for an additional expenditure on food, particularly in the Pel food budget, but that he remains comfortable with the amount budgeted for food supplies.

Lisa Braiterman noted that while food costs may have increased, economic purchasing, including correct pricing and suppliers, may not be reflected in the budget. She reiterated that we should not assume that quality drops when expenditures drop.

Tom urged the Board to consider long range discussions on food, with automatic increases in funding each year.

Roger noted that comments from conferees should help shape the food budget.

Gary, speaking as a former food service professional, noted that there is not a straight-line correlation between quality and cost. He believes this topic is a discussion for committee, rather than a Board discussion.

A motion was made to approve the budget, and was seconded. Additional discussion of the motion ensued.

The Board requested clarification of the \$137K "Other Island Operation Items" line in the budget. Joe explained that this referred to income from various categories, including day visitor fees; profits from the grill; waterfront income; FAS fees and massage fees.

John called the question, and the Board unanimously

**VOTED:** to approve the 2017 budget presented to the Board.

**Other Business:** There was none

**Longer Term Business:**

**Annual Policy Review :** Consolidate Policies and Conflict of Interest Policies.

Debbie Duval presented the Consolidated Policies for an annual review by the Board. The discussion included the new proposed requirement mandating a SORI review for any children's program staff member. Joe noted that he has discussed this requirement with legal counsel, and that the SIC will be taking a firm position on mandating proof that any conference offering a children's program conducts SORI checks on their youth program volunteers. Mary Trudeau questioned the "strong suggestion" for CORI review, noting that it was not mandated in the current proposed policy. Joe noted that "strongly suggesting" is more practical than mandating, and it better protects SIC from a liability perspective.. He noted that the SIC may move towards

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requiring conferences to conduct criminal background checks in the future, after we see how mandated SORI checks work out this year.

Based on a motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously

**VOTED** to approve the Consolidated Policies.

**Board Meetings:**

Louise Williams asked the Board to begin thinking about the value of monthly meetings. Noting that this will be discussed at the February Retreat, Louise asked that comments be sent to her prior to the Retreat.

**Other:**

There was no other long term business.

**Reflections:**

The Board noted that the meeting was shorter than usual, and that this was appreciated. Gary noted that the Budget work was protracted this year, and that the extra effort was appreciated. Joe noted that he is thankful for a well functioning Board!

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

**VOTED** To adjourn the meeting at 8:53 pm.

Submitted by:

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Mary Trudeau, Clerk