

**STAR ISLAND CORPORATION
Board of Directors**

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday May 24, 2016
Go To Meeting and Conference Call

Members in Attendance:

John Bush, Treasurer
Tom Coleman
Erik Cordes
Josh Davis
Nick Dembsey
Debbie Duval (President of SIUCC)
Sharon Kennedy, President
Gary Kunz, Vice President
Roger Kellman
Mary Trudeau, Clerk
Louise Williams

Absent:

Dan Cassell, Pel Representative
Suellen Peluso

Other:

Joe Watts, CEO

Gary Kunz noted that Suellen Peluso's father in law passed away this week, and the Board marked the loss.

Opening Words:

Debbie Duval shared the following opening words: I have been thinking a lot about the fragility of life lately. I just finished a book called *When Breath Becomes Air*. If you haven't read it, I highly recommend it. This book coupled with the recent deaths of so many Shoalers and my dad's declining health has really caused me to pause. In that pause, I realize how blessed I am to watch my parents so lovingly learn a new way of being in the world. I offer this poem by Mary Oliver as a prayer for my parents, for the families that have recently lost someone and all of us on the Board who are keenly aware just how fragile a life can be.

THE SUMMER DAY

Who made the world?

Who made the swan, and the black bear?

Who made the grasshopper?

*This grasshopper, I mean--
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,*

*who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down--
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
With your one wild and precious life?*

After a brief sharing of life events between Board members, Gary Kunz, President, called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm. Gary noted that Board liaison assignments are typically discussed at the May Board meeting, but that he had postponed this discussion until the June Board meeting.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted to enter Executive Session for the purpose of reviewing the Executive Session minutes of April 26, 2016 and to discuss ongoing discussions with the Trust for Public Lands concerning the stewardship of Appledore Island.

The Board returned to the regular Meeting at 7:21 pm.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously

VOTED To approve the minutes of the April 26, 2016 Board Meeting

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously

VOTED To approve the minutes of the April 30, 2016 Board Meeting

REPORTS

CEO Report (including Development and Marketing; Facilities; and Registration Reports)

Joe prefaced his reports, with comments noting that a lot of good things are happening on the Island. Open Up is proceeding well, building projects are on schedule, and this energy continues off island. He noted that Alex de Steiguer will be speaking at an outreach event on May 25, 2016 in Kittery, and that based on ticket sales (which support the Island) he expects upwards of 80 attendees.

Development and Marketing: Joe began his report with a brief recap of our 2016 Annual Fund strategy, which better balances the need for Island fund raising with the need to respect conferee

time on the island. He noted that for most conferences, increasing off Island fund raising will result in less fundraising on Island, though some conferences will choose to continue with significant Island fundraising efforts.

Staff continues to pursue grant funding, with a long list of grants in process or under consideration. Joe reminded the Board that raising awareness, if not funds, makes each grant application a fruitful exercise, even if we are not awarded a grant. Joe noted that while the Board approves grant applications over 10K dollars, there are many smaller opportunities, approved by the CEO, that allow the island to raise its profile with funding agencies.

Joe announced the receipt of a large donor pledge designated for work on Vaughn Cottage. Joe noted that this project has been on the “radar” for several years, and that receipt of this gift will ensure the fulfillment of the proposed improvements. Work will include rehabilitation of the second floor of the cottage, allowing full use of the second floor, again. Joe noted that acceptance of this large grant will include convening the Gift Acceptance Committee to review such a large, restricted gift. He noted that this gift is an exciting opportunity for the Island, and that he believes there will be no onerous restrictions associated with the donation.

Facilities: Joe reported that the Open Up work is going well, and likely is ahead of schedule. The renovations to the Atlantic are progressing well, and should be completed in time for the conference season. Joe noted that plumbing improvements to the second floor Oceanic bathroom have been deferred until Fall, and that the work on the third and fourth floor Tower bathrooms is progressing well. Joe reported that during the removal of the old plumbing, it was, again, noted that lines have significant capacity reduction due to the accretion of sediment and deposits within the old pipes. He noted that the replacement lines will likely provide for marked improvement in the function of the systems.

Joe reported that the annual fire system inspection by the Rye Fire Department is scheduled for Thursday, May 26. Joe noted that staff is working hard to prepare for the visit. Joe noted that we are continuing to comply with the requirements set by the Fire Department, and that he expects a positive and productive inspection.

Registrations: As of May 15, the summer registration was at 85% percent of the summer goal, approximately 8% percent over last year’s numbers. Joe credits the “free room and board” raffle for helping to register more people earlier in the season, and noted that the full impact of the raffle on the total number of registrations received can’t be evaluated until the end of the summer registration process. Joe noted that staff continues to work with conference leadership to improve low registration within targeted conferences. He described changes to the strategy employed through the Ambassador program, noting that the office targeted specific churches and communities, including 1,600 UU and UCC churches. He reminded Board members that promotional materials are available for anyone interested in personalized recruitment.

Tom Coleman reported on the ongoing financial aid process. He noted that the SIC conference financial grants committee has met and adjudicated Round One of the 2016 applications. There were a total of 24 applicants for financial grants, and as of 24 May, eight applicants have accepted the SIC grant, twelve have declined in order to accept a more generous individual

conference award, and four applicants must still decide by 30 May. This Round One covers conferences through 15 July. It shows an early trend that this year's applicants are asking for less money, and that conferences are also able to offer robust financial assistance to their conferees. The next group, Round Two, covers conferences through 15 August, and covers the largest group of bed-nights during the season. The trend from Round One, combined with healthy registrations, shows encouraging signs of stronger conference financial viability.

Other: Joe noted that he and Gary are off to a productive start, and that the transition in Board leadership is going smoothly. Joe also reminded Board members to review the Star Island Permanent Trust Fund Investment Policy included in this month's informational packet. Joe noted that the policy is an elegant approach to value based investment, and reflects the core values of the UCC and UUA associations.

Joe updated the Board, noting that the 990 forms for the Star Island Corporation and the Permanent Trust have been filed. Joe noted that the SIC has received a preliminary legal opinion that confirms we are filing where we need to file, and John Bush noted that the SIC should continue to review where we file over the next year.

Treasurer's Report: John presented the Treasurer's Report, pointing out that monthly cash flow projections should be viewed through actual year to date numbers, and that monthly reports may have variations. John reported that Insource reporting to the Finance Committee is meeting expectations.

John continued his comments on the filing of the 990 report, noting that SIC will be looking at related issues in the fall. . John also noted that he had insignificant issues with the information contained in the form, this year, and that he has a short list of thoughts to be considered in future preparations.

Lisa Braiterman shared her insights into 990 filings, and the Board agreed to continue this discussion later in the year.

Pel Report: Dan Cassell did not submit a formal report, though he provided Gary with an update to share with the Board. Gary reported that there is little pre season news from the Pel Community, and that we will have a new Pel liaison as soon as the Pel Community convenes and elects a new delegate. Dan hopes to join the Board at its June meeting.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED To accept the CEO Report (including Development and Marketing, Facilities and Registration) and the Treasurer's Report.

Shorter Term Business:

Annual Meeting Debriefing: Gary asked the Board to comment on the Annual Meeting proceedings. Comments included praise for a well organized meeting, and compliments to the staff for the pre meeting arrangements and structure of the day.

The Board reviewed the success of the “break out” discussions designed to elicit commentary and suggestions from the Corporation membership in the rewriting of the next Strategic Plan. Comments from the Board noted positive engagement was balanced through many good suggestions for tactics. The theme of “frugality versus opportunity” was observed in several of the break out sessions, and it was acknowledged that this theme is familiar to the Board. The break out sessions were generally considered helpful and engaging for the membership of the Corporation, as well as to the Board in drafting the plan to reflect the community at large.

Gary noted that the work group is updating a draft of the 2017-2020 strategic plan, based on excellent input received from Corporation members.

Council of Conferences Meeting Report : Nick Dembsey reported on a successful meeting, noting the theme of “Sharing the Island” was well received. He reminded the Board that the theme for this year’s meeting was a reflection of the desire to promote positive relationships within a shared conference center. He felt the discussion was well received, and that much good will currently exists between those conferences which are sharing resources.

Nick reported that there were no nominations from the audience for leadership in the Council, and that this could reflect a worrisome position for the Council. Noting that the Board believes that leadership in the Council can increase participation from conferences across the summer, this dearth could be limiting to the future success of the Council. The Board discussed the need to balance the autonomy of each Conference with the interests of the Council of Conferences. Suggestions from the Board included strategies for recruiting leadership; assigning the Council specific tasks designed to raise the profile of the group; and promoting the Council to smaller (and unrepresented) conferences.

June 25, 2016 Board Meeting Logistics: Joe announced that the meeting will be held in the Portsmouth office this year, noting that for a variety of reasons, this was logistically preferable. He noted that Board members are invited to spend Friday and/or Saturday nights on the Island, and that Board members should contact Mike Bray by June 11 to make reservations. Jordan noted that the June Board meeting is being held during the UUA General Assembly, and that this may pose a challenge for some members. It was noted that this should be considered in future scheduling of the June Board meeting.

Longer Term Business:

Property Standards Committee: Jordan Young briefly discussed the role of the Property Standards Committee, noting that a primary goal for the Committee is to ensure consistent design standards are maintained across the various development and redevelopment projects on the Island. He presented a revised flow chart showing the function of the Property Standards Committee within construction and redevelopment projects on the Island. Joe commented that formalizing the review process will reduce uncertainty in the process of approving new work on

the Island, and should be helpful in ensuring compliance with design standards across the Island. Joe noted that the flow chart ensures a process to facilitate the functions of the Facilities Director. The process emphasizes the collaborative nature of an ideal project, and is not adversarial. The Committee chose a simplistic approach, assuming that a detailed flow path would be onerous, and not likely advantageous to ensuring timeliness. Joe noted that weather and the length of the conference season often influences the window of opportunity for projects, and that a timely review is often necessary to allow for important work to occur. Routine/smaller projects will not even be subject to review – the key will be to work collaboratively on which projects rise to the level of needing a review. Interior spaces were held up as an example – projects in most spaces would not need a review, whereas a review might be needed for some spaces on the island which are often considered “sacred”.

Other Business: There was no other business.

Reflections: The Board noted that the meeting was well paced, and the shorter duration welcomed. Several members noted that the Property Standards discussion, and the Council on Conference discussions were useful and productive, and that incorporating discussion into the virtual meeting kept members engaged throughout the call.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED To adjourn the meeting at 8:42 pm.

Submitted by:

Mary Trudeau, Clerk