

Regular Session Board Meeting Minutes for August 26, 2019

STAR ISLAND CORPORATION Regular Session of the Board of Directors

MEETING MINUTES
August 26, 2019 at 7:30 pm
By Zoom meeting

Members in Attendance:

Kyle Belmont
Tom Coleman (Vice President of the Board)
Erik Cordes
Nick Dembsey (President of the Board)
Leon Dunkley
Debbie Duval
Gary Kunz
Jeff Loewer (Treasurer)
Celeste Magliocchetti (Pel Liaison)
Chris Palazzolo
Mary Trudeau (Clerk)
Arlyn Weeks
Louise Williams

Absent:

Nathaniel Soule (ISAUU President)

Other:

Joe Watts, Peter Squires

Opening Words – Tom Coleman gave the opening words, reading from a Theodore Roosevelt speech, known as “The Man in the Ring”. The text is as follows:

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

Check In – After a brief Board member check in, sharing milestones, the meeting was convened.

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Call to Order – Nick Dempsey called the meeting to order at approximately 9:05 am.

Executive Session – Based on a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted to enter into Executive Session to discuss legal updates and nd discuss the July 23, 2019 Executive Session Minutes. The Board returned to regular session at approximately 7:59 pm.

Approval of July 23, 2019 Meeting Minutes:

Nick Dempsey discussed the procedure used by the Board to approve minutes, noting that often does not have the opportunity to read the minutes, with any amendments or corrections that may have been proposed during the Board member review. Nick suggested that the Board implement a one month delay on approving the July 23, 2019 and subsequent minutes, to allow for edits to be incorporated into the notes of a meeting and then to be recirculated prior to approval by the Board. The Board agreed to defer the approval of the July 23, 2019 meeting minutes to allow for comments to be incorporated and reviewed.

REPORTS

CEO Report

Joe Watts updated his monthly report noting that he will be requesting Board approval of the submission of a grant application for 20K dollars to Citizen Private Bank and Trust, to benefit the Rutledge Marine Lab and Brookfield.

Gary noted that Joe’s report has language which erroneously depicts an apparent conflict between a few statements dealing with End of Season (EOS) staffing issues. He asked Joe to review his report and to clarify his statements for consistency. Joe noted that better EOS hiring and more strategic re assignment of staff had improved the tenor of the staffing in September. The Board noted that the current Pel model of staffing may not be sustainable. Suggestions included outreach to teachers to provide leadership roles, and improved Pel training.

Treasurers Report

Jeff Loewer reported that there have been minor budget adjustments, including increases in food services accounts. He noted that snack bar and grill revenues are up, and that bednights are strong. He noted that staff continues to manage the budget in real time, and that Joe is working on a five year plan for budget use.

Pel Report

Celeste updated her report with comments on the popularity of the new “Pelican” book published this summer. She noted that NH Chronicle had filmed a segment on the island, featuring staff, to accompany the book release.

Celeste noted that late arrivals resulted in fewer Pels at the initial Orientation sessions at the beginning of the summer. She reported that former Pels came out to the island to assist with

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training, and that this was helpful. She noted that the island continues to balance staffing needs with Pel availability. Celeste addressed the alleged “tone” of understaffing on the island this summer, noting that short handedness was not universal, and that changes to crews had been made during the season to address the unique start date issues; sick days; and next boated pels. She noted that there has been attention paid to supporting short handed crews, to reduce stress levels.

ACTION and DISCUSSION ITEMS

Board Development Session: Mary Ellen Jackson

Mary Ellen Jackson made a presentation on High Impact Volunteering to the Board. She discussed the history and habits conundrum that often plagues organizations, noting that doing things because they have always been done this way is not always the best use of resources. She noted that in moving a good organization to a great organization, history and habit need to become adaptive. She note that focusing on a few goals at any one time, with a crystal clear revenue generation model, is a productive platform. She noted that ideally culture builds on strengths and values.

Mary Ellen discussed transition planning, and forward thinking resource management with the Board. She noted that developing a strong, internal staff and prioritizing the internal capacity to “pivot” should be goals of any non profit.

Mary Ellen noted that Duty of Care; Duty of Obedience; and Duty of Loyalty represent the legal responsibilities of a Board. She commented that muddled loyalties can result in mediocrity, and that it is important the CEO and Board perform as a team. She noted that every group has a life cycle, and it is important to renew missions and objectives periodically, resetting the life cycle engine. She stressed that Purposeful Engagement is goal driven, and is more productive than conducting basic business or listening to reports. She noted that productive Boards act in three modes: Strategic; Fiduciary; and Generative, and that this synergy of organized effort leads to executed plans.

Beloved Community Project

Leon Dunklee and Celeste Magliocchetti discussed how to bring the Beloved Community Project into Pel life. Celeste noted that the Pel Community appreciates the Boards support on issues of gender, sexuality and race. She noted that the Board and Pel community appear committed to finding solutions, and that this is important and reassuring.

Leon noted that the project initially was a conversation on race, but has morphed and broadened to include other social issues. He noted that Star Island has been an excellent crucible for the Beloved Community Project, and that one of the work products (Now is the Time booklet) is being well received by a variety of communities as a tool for furthering important and difficult discussions. He noted that the potential for exporting our values is exciting.

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The Board discussed the need for diversity in the make up of the Board. It was noted that it is the responsibility of the Board to help the Membership Committee find “less obvious” candidates for Board and Committee roles.

Grant Approval:

Based on a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED to authorize staff to submit a grant application, for up to 20K dollars to the Citizens Private Bank and Trust, to benefit the Rutledge Marine Lab and Brookfield.

The vote was unanimously approved.

Council of Conferences Discussion:

Louise Williams, as the liaison to the Council of Conferences, asked the Board to assist in preparing questions for the Council. The Board formulated several inquiries, as follows:

1. Can the Council provide guidance to the Board on building, growing and managing conferences?
2. How can the SIC assist conferences in welcoming shoalers to the Island?
3. Does the Council have opinions on conference capacity
4. Can the Council of Conferences help facilitate the financial aid process, perhaps by creating a single application for use across all conferences and the Board financial aid programs?

Based on a Motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED to request that Louise Williams present the questions noted above to the Council of Conferences, on behalf of the Board of Directors

Feasibility Study Discussion:

The Board discussed the possibility of committing to a feasibility study to evaluate the case for developing a Capital Campaign to benefit the Star Island Corporation. The Board was not in consensus on this issue, and several Board members requested additional time to review the materials and consider the options. Based on the lack of consensus, and the unwillingness of the Board to commit to a vote at this time, a straw pole was taken to ascertain whether or not the Board would agree to allowing staff to proceed with work items moving towards a formal proposal to conduct a feasibility study, with a vote to be taken in October.

The straw poll indicated that most of the Board was in agreement with the statement allowing staff to proceed with work items, moving towards a formal proposal, to be vote upon at another time.

Meeting Reflections

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Reflections included praise for the free afternoon on Sunday of the retreat weekend. It was noted that several topics were deferred from this agenda, and that the free afternoon had cost the Board productivity.

Positive comments included praise for Mary Ellen Jackson's presentation, and an appreciation for Board development, particularly during a retreat.

VOTED To adjourn the meeting at 1:40 pm

Meeting Adjourned.

Submitted by:

Mary Trudeau, Clerk