

Regular Session Board Meeting Minutes for April 6, 2021

STAR ISLAND CORPORATION Regular Session of the Board of Directors

MEETING MINUTES
April 6, 2021 at 7:00 pm EST
Via Zoom

Members in Attendance:

Kyle Belmont
Patricia Coleman (ISAUU President)
Tom Coleman (Vice President of the Board)
Erik Cordes
Nick Dembsey (President of the Board)
Leon Dunkley
Debbie Duval
Tom Kennedy
Jeff Loewer (Treasurer)
Keri Mattaliano (SIUCC President)
Mary Trudeau (Clerk)
Arlyn Weeks
Louise Williams

Absent:

Other:

Joe Watts (CEO); John Bynum; Justina Maji
Celeste Magliocchetti (Pel Liaison to the Board)
Sarah Whalen (Island Nurse)
Elizabeth Erickson; Topher Soltys; Lucia Green-Weiskel (incoming Board members)

Opening Words: Leon Dunkley gave the opening words for the meeting, reading from the lyrics of Dave Wilcox's song, "Show Me the Way":

Call to Order – Nick Dembsey called the meeting to order at approximately 7:09 pm.

Based on a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED to enter Executive Session to review the minutes of the February 27, 2021 Executive Session meeting minutes.

The Board returned to Regular Session at approximately 7:15 pm.

Regular Session Board Meeting Minutes for April 6, 2021

REPORTS:

Reports from the CEO; Treasurer; and Pel Liaison were verbal this week, without an accompanying written text.

CEO Report:

Joe Watts reported that work continues with the Maine Coast Heritage Trust to evaluate options for Appledore Island. Discussions include a potential Conservation Restriction for the island, and include representation from Shoals Marine Lab.

Joe noted that a draft NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Service) permit has been issued by the US Environmental Protection Agency for the island's wastewater treatment facility. This permit application was submitted several years ago, and the recently received draft permit includes several new requirements. Joe noted that staff, our wastewater engineering firm, and a professional association are all submitting comments during the public comment period with the hope to reduce or eliminate some of the new permit requirements, which we feel are not applicable to SIC. Joe also reported that the \$1.3 million State Revolving Fund loan for the wastewater treatment/water reclamation system has been finalized with a fixed interest rate of 2.00%. The SIC has also been determined to be eligible for an additional 500K dollar loan to cover future improvements stemming from the pilot program we are currently engaged in with the NH Department of Environmental Services.

Staff and SIC's fire safety consultant met with representatives of the Rye Fire Department last week, and the meeting was productive. Joe also reminded the Board that the 2020 Audit is proceeding, and noted no issues at this point in the review.

Beloved Community Update:

Joe reported that a subset of staff and board members have been invited to join the Beloved Community Task Force, and that he expects this group to be formed by the end of this month. The task force will be chaired by April Rosario.

Treasurer's Report:

Jeff Loewer noted that our new CFO, Hope Coolidge, is off to a good start, and the recent financial statements were the first she has prepared for SIC. He noted that the financials are "staying the course" and are slightly better than anticipated. Jeff reported that "demand" weakness in registrations for the 2021 conference season may impact fiscal projections going forward.

Jeff noted that staff is looking at the IRS' "Employee Retention Credit" program, which will require an amended tax return, but could result in up to an 87K dollar refund on 2020 employment taxes paid by the SIC. Joe noted that the program is designed to reward retention of permanent staff, and the refund may even be higher than the amount of taxes paid.

Regular Session Board Meeting Minutes for April 6, 2021

Pel Liaison Report:

Celeste Magliocchetti reported that there has been good communication between summer Pels and island staff. She reported that there have been questions on various proposed protocols, and noted that expectations for the summer seem “balanced.” Sarah Whalen noted that a survey of Pels, confirming current vaccination status, had been performed. She noted that a significant portion of the Pel community anticipates being vaccinated prior to June. She noted that several Pels expressed an interest in vaccination and requested guidance on how to obtain a vaccine. She noted that advice had been provided. Sarah noted that there is a very strong recommendation for vaccination of both staff and overnight guests this season, and that the final decision on vaccine requirements will be made by May 1, 2021.

Based on a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED to accept the verbal reports from the CEO; Treasurer; and Pel Liaison.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

Annual Meeting:

Nick Dembsey noted that a draft agenda for the virtual Annual Meeting was included in the Board packet for this meeting, and asked for comments. Board members asked about panel discussions; question and answer sessions; and the need for interaction of SIC attendees. The consensus of the Board was that short, focused presentations, with time for questions was effective in a virtual meeting. Nick noted that the script for the meeting will continue to evolve as the Annual Meeting approaches.

Discussion of 2021 Conference Season:

Joe began the discussion by reporting on current registrations for the conferences scheduled prior to August 28, 2021. Despite a slow start to the registrations, Joe noted that data is difficult to compare to past season registrations, but that he is not too concerned at this point in the process. He noted that registrations for the September conferences are scheduled to open on May 10.

He also noted that staff, the Health Committee and the Crisis Response Team have been working on strategies for the summer opening. He noted that primary efforts are being directed towards the “yellow light scenario” (cap of 170 guests, and 78 employees), and noted if we needed to shift to a more restrictive scenario, we would switch to the “orange light scenario” (day trips only, with no overnight options). Joe noted that the “lime” (less restrictive plan, though only to be implemented in a methodical and operationally feasible way) is not being fleshed out at this point in time. Joe expanded his remarks on the three things the Board has asked to know more about: (1) how we will address on-island symptoms/cases; (2) what are our “thresholds” for the season and how would we pivot between them; and (3) what is the status of our testing program for employees.

Regular Session Board Meeting Minutes for April 6, 2021

Joe stated that approximately 91K dollars has been earmarked for testing, noting that costs will drop if we are able to partner with UNH. Additional issues addressed included discussions on the enforcement and compliance with the various protocols in place for the summer conferences. Noting that compliance is an exercise in predicting human behavior, Joe noted that there is confidence within the staff that we can set up good protocols and adjust to bumps as we go – the question is more about compliance and the degree to which people will follow our protocols.

Keri Mattaliano reported that the Health Committee has issued a statement of support for the yellow light scenario, with the caveat that additional information may change the recommendations of the Health Committee.

Sarah Whalen reviewed, in greater detail, the results of the vaccine survey sent to the Pel community. Noting that she had 61 responses, to date, there are 48 Pels who anticipate being vaccinated by the start of the season. She noted that of the 13 Pels without a vaccination plan, only two were unsure whether they would be vaccinated at all, and the remaining 11 Pels have plans to be vaccinated, but no appointment scheduled.

Sarah discussed what an outbreak might look like on the island, noting that everyone who comes to the island is encouraged to have an off-island quarantine plan. She noted that there are no firm numbers that would mandate an island closure, and that the SIC needs to take a holistic approach with flexibility and the ability to make situational decisions. Sarah noted that Cottage D and Founders will be dedicated to managing exposed Shoalers, and that a positive test will mandate off island quarantine. Leon asked whether conference fees will be refunded for those leaving the island as a result of Covid 19 issues, and Joe noted that we will make these decisions on a situational basis.

The Board discussed the option of mandating vaccination for all eligible persons on the island, versus the current strategy of strongly recommending vaccination for all eligible persons. Keri noted that the Health Committee continues to review vaccination policy, noting that specific cohorts, such as children, are unlikely to be eligible for vaccination. Kyle asked about vaccination requirement for day visitors, noting that this is a separate community without the protocols imposed by overnight guests. Tricia noted that while the difference between a mandated vaccination and a strong recommendation for vaccination may be negligible, the point of concern is to protect the community. Leon noted that we do not have the capacity to offer safety, and that health is a personal responsibility. Sarah stated that mandating vaccination could provide a false sense of security, and she noted that we WILL have to deal with Covid cases this summer. Tom Kennedy commented that we need to encourage reopening, that we are in the business of hosting conferences.

Based on a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED to endorse and support the Yellow Light Scenario, as currently outlined at www.starisland.org and supported by the FY2021 provisional budget to commence the 2021 conference season on Star Island, with the understanding that

Regular Session Board Meeting Minutes for April 6, 2021

we will continue to assess the situation, and to support the staff on a regular basis both now and throughout the season.

The motion passed unanimously.

Walk Through for the Annual Meeting:

Nick reminded Board members that there will be a walk through prior to the Annual Meeting. The dry run will be held on the evening of April 20, 2021, and all Board members with speaking roles are encouraged to attend.

Meeting Reflections

Louise Williams noted that the meeting was reassuring, and that she believes we can not be more prepared for the upcoming conference season.

Based on a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 pm.

Meeting Adjourned.

Submitted by:

Mary Trudeau, Clerk