

**Regular Session Board Meeting Minutes for October 4, 2022**

**STAR ISLAND CORPORATION**  
**Regular Session Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

October 4, 2022 at 7:05 p.m. EDT via Zoom

**Members Present**

Joni Abbadessa, Treasurer

Leon Dunkley

Debbie Duval, President

Elizabeth Erickson

Lucia Green-Weiskel

Tom Kennedy, Vice President

Keri Mattaliano (President, SIUCC)

Caroline Quijada

April Rosario

Topher Soltys

Arlyn Weeks, Clerk

**Members Absent**

Kyle Belmont

Patricia Coleman (President, ISA UU)

**Other**

Cary Cuiccio (Incoming President, SIUCC)

Sabine Michaud, Pelican Liaison

Joe Watts, CEO

**Opening Words** were offered by Lucia Green-Weiskel.

The meeting was called to order by Debbie Duval at 7:24 p.m.

**Minutes of August 29, 2022 Board Meeting**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED to approve the minutes of the August 29, 2022 regular session board meeting.

### **CEO's Report**

Joe Watts noted that Peter Squires' last report was sent to Board members after their last meeting. He highlighted that there may be more opportunity for fundraising than we may have thought, and shared portions of Peter's report.

As of September 30, the Annual Fund was at \$471,000, towards a goal of \$690,000. This is 68% of the goal. It should be noted that another \$24,000 has also been received or pledged. Joe continues to project that we will meet our goal. This is important given the significant deficit in budgeted room and board income.

Joe is in early discussion with Jack Farrell about renewing our professional services agreement with him. The two staff positions primarily responsible for Starry Night are now vacant; planning for the in-person event will be accomplished with existing staff but there will be no on-line auction this year.

We had 45 cases of COVID-19 during the conference season, 18 of which happened during the last week. We are expecting approximately \$35,000 in grants from FEMA related to COVID-19 expenses.

Tom Kennedy noted that the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Oceanic Hotel will occur in 2026 and that this could be the center of a targeted gift campaign, perhaps in conjunction with something related to climate change/sea level rise/adaptation planning.

### **Beloved Community Task Force Update**

April Rosario reported that the Task Force has not yet met since the end of the conference season but it will continue with the track model to get projects done in the coming year. The tracks will include monuments and physical structures, recruitment of staff and conferees, and financial aid and accessibility.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Joni Abbadessa referred members to the financial information in this month's Board packet. We are still waiting for the ERC payment for which we filed with the IRS in January. Spending on operations this year is lower than budget so far. Bed nights were 89% of budget, the shortfall largely attributable to COVID-19 related cancellations. The staff and Finance Committee have updated the reserve policy, which will be presented to the Board for approval in November. The Committee continues to work on the vendor scorecard and is talking about considerations for the 2023 budget. We have not borrowed against our line of credit this year.

### **Pelican Liaison Report**

Sabine Michaud reported that close-up has started and is ahead of schedule. The close-up crew is larger this year. Shut-down day went well. Most of the crew will be leaving on October 14. Others will stay until October 28. There are currently 2 cases of COVID on the Island. The issues raised during the Board retreat have not been resolved but are not dominant at this time.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED to accept the reports as given.

### **Committee on Appointments Report**

Lucia Green-Weiskel reported that Heidi Weiskel will become chair of the Rutledge Marine Lab Committee, that Jessica Ann Hessel, Annie Leamon and Jodi Prochaska will become members of the Health Committee, that Emily Cressy and Ruth James will be reappointed to the Health Committee, that Chloe Schoppmeyer will become chair of the Island Heritage Committee and that Garrett Hastings, Ellie Harrison-Beck and Sarah Aznive will become members of that committee.

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Appointments and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED to reappoint Rebecca Armstrong and Bob Cook to the Facilities Committee.

### **Pecuniary Benefit Transaction**

Because the vacancy caused by Ally Miner's departure from the staff will not be filled immediately, Kyle Belmont, a member of the Board, is prepared to step up to create the Blue Book and manage social media, as set forth in a memo in this month's Board packet. Following receipt of written notice provided on September 27, 2022, and in the absence of Kyle Belmont, upon a motion duly made and seconded, more than two-thirds of the disinterested members of the Board

VOTED to approve hiring Kyle Belmont as a part-time temporary employee through the end of this year for a total payment of not more than \$5,000.

### **Annual Committee Charge Review**

Debbie Duval reminded Board committee liaisons to raise this issue with their respective committee, with a goal of having all committee charges reviewed this year. This is the routine review; a more detailed review of committee charges will be part of our overarching Governance Review.

### **2023 Budget Considerations**

Joni Abbadessa noted that the Finance Committee has begun to discuss the possible impact of inflation and a potential recession on the 2023 budget. The current inflation rate is 8.1%. A draft budget document will be presented at the November meeting, when the Board has traditionally set room and board rates. In 2022 those rates were only raised by 3%. The federal cost-of-living adjustment for 2023 is approximately 10%. Pelican wages were increased 6.5% this year.

General discussion of these considerations ensued.

### **2022 Financial Grants Report**

A report in the Board packet lists financial grants totals by conference. The Corporation granted 88 applications and the conferences granted 119. Mike Bray will be asked to contact the conferences for total dollar figures. There was a significant increase this year, but no discounts were offered. A memo on this subject will be prepared for the November meeting.

### **2022 Discount Report**

Joe Watts noted that no discounts were given in 2022. We will discuss plans for 2023 at a future meeting.

### **Board Self-Evaluation**

Topher Soltys reported that the results of the survey, received yesterday, look useful. We will take a deeper look at the document during our November meeting. Some of the questions on the survey suggest what best practices might be, and some are not directly relevant to our organization.

### **Governance Task Force Update**

Tom Kennedy reported that the Committees and Constituent Organizations subgroup, including its new members, met in September and will meet on October 20. The Best Practices subgroup, also including its new members, met on October 3 and will meet again on October 24. The Membership subgroup will meet again on October 14 and will have proposals ready soon thereafter.

### **Board Liaison Reports**

*Health Committee:* Keri Mattaliano reported that the Committee focused this year on the pandemic and mental health. It accomplishes most of its work in the winter and spring. Mental health was an issue this year on the Island. An incident between the Committee chair and staff in the pre-season led to the resignation of the chair, and that position remains open. It was noted that plans for conflict resolution training will also help with Committee member interactions. An issue for the Committee in 2023 is possible changes in the staffing model for the First Aid Station.

*Island Heritage & Artifacts Committee:* Arlyn Weeks reported that the Committee met just before the start of the conference season and again approximately 10 days ago. The summer in Vaughn was successful, and the intern accomplished significant cataloguing and posting of artifacts. The posting is not yet available to the public, as issues concerning access and requests for reproduction of photos remain to be resolved. The Committee enthusiastically anticipates expansion of WiFi service to Vaughn in 2023 and has reviewed and updated its charge. Potential partnerships with the University of New Hampshire and the Portsmouth Athenaeum will be explored. It would like to employ two staffers during the 2023 season with somewhat revised job descriptions other than the curator and intern model that has been followed in recent years.

*Rutledge Marine Lab Committee:* Topher Soltys reported that the Committee has updated its charge and is working on a manual for the lab. The biggest challenge is keeping the water cold enough to maintain the marine life in the tanks.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED to enter into executive session at 8:46 p.m.

The Board returned from executive session at 9:10 p.m.

After brief discussion, upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board

VOTED to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 p.m.

All votes were unanimous.

Submitted by

Arlyn Weeks, Clerk