



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc.
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
Tuesday, August 8, 2023 at 7:00pm

Board Members

Sarah Armour
Peter Capek
~~Mitzi Elkes, Executive Committee At Large~~
~~Joan Gaylor~~
Neil Gordon, Treasurer
Scott Greathead
Samantha Hicks, Vice-President
~~Gareth Hougham~~
Arthur Jones, Executive Committee At Large
~~Steve Kielar~~
~~Aaron Mair~~
~~Jennifer McMillan~~

Tom Murphy
Henry Neale, Executive Committee At Large
~~Jeremy Rainer~~
Dan Riesel
Larry Rothbart
~~Steve Stanne, President, Chair~~
Donna Stein
Rosemary Thomas, Secretary
Sarah Underhill
Julia Wilson
(~~strike through~~ indicates absence)

Staff Members

Jen Benson
Ruthie Gold
Amali Knobloch

Erin Macchiaroli
Meg Mayo
David Toman, Executive Director

Members

Jeremy Baron
Joyce Hanson

Alan Thomas

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.
Mission Song sung by Sarah U., "Where Go The Boats"
Samantha Hicks chaired the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

The 07/13/23 Board meeting minutes were approved by voice vote.

Executive Director's Report

David said we are working with Congressman Ryan's office on an expedited reinstatement of our 501c3 status and are hopeful for some level of response within two weeks. David said Dan Riesel of Sive, Paget, Riesel is providing pro-bono legal advice and reviewing communications. Over 500 donors were notified, with a limited response of concern. David said our bank is aware. David said the majority of the work on

the 2021 audit is done. The importance of proper protocols to ensure timely filings was stressed by multiple individuals and discussed.

David continued with an education and sloop update. It was a busy month with the sold out July 4th ‘fireworks viewed from on-deck’, a bird watching public sail with Molly Adams of the Feminist Bird Club, TIDES (a DEC annual summer teen program), two weekends of community sails with the Tenafly Nature Center, two sails for the Newburgh community with Outdoor Promise, and participation in Waterfront Wednesday in Hudson with tabling and a public sail. Education programs up and coming include youth empowerment programs, YMATH and Queerwater, over the next two weeks, plus demonstrations and tabling at the Beacon Sloop Club Corn Festival on August 13th. The Fall Calendar is filling up with 18 education sails and 11 charters booked and 11 public sails scheduled to date.

For the sloop, David said long term winter maintenance schedules are being planned for the next four years, with a major project scheduled for the winter of 2025-26. There will be an upfront wood purchase for that project as the wood needs to dry and significant funding will be required.. Everyone was encouraged to think in terms of any connections to fund the sloop and the historic aspects of the sloop that might align with particular donors or grant opportunities.

Jen Benson, our new Environmental Action Director, started on 7/10 and is focused on creating a menu of potential campaigns, detailed memos on each of those issues to allow prioritizing, and engaging with each EA committee member through 1:1s and committee meetings. Project/issue prioritization and selection is coming in August.

Administratively, the Employee Retention Credit (ERC), originally anticipated as a single payment in the November to January timeframe, turns out to be processed and paid by quarters. Payment has been received for two of the seven quarters in our application. One was reduced by a late filing penalty for 2019 taxes, a penalty which we have been arguing against with the IRS and which they have been reviewing. Congressman Ryan’s office will assist us on this once the reinstatement is resolved.

David requested board focus on fundraising this fall, as discussed previously, as there is a gap. Opportunities mentioned include hosting small house or restaurant parties for potential donors, reserve a table at the Guy Davis concert at The Falcon and invite people who will donate, and help write Thank Yous to current donors. Contact Meg or David if you are available to help.

The 2024 budget, to be presented at the November Board meeting, will have an aggressive 20% increase in revenue, with ideas on how to accomplish that. David emphasized that a strong team effort will be needed and asked people to think about this ahead of time.

David spoke to broadening our donor base by increased community engagement with Clearwater. He gave the example of engaging community members via committee membership, bringing expertise and support which can enhance our delivery, while becoming donors and supporters. David asked us to think of people we know who are suitable. Larry suggested this be highlighted at the Annual Meeting to encourage membership involvement.

Development Report

Meg reported that 2023 YTD is 20% greater revenue than same period last year, without including a recent bequest or any government grant revenue

Looking ahead, Meg focused on the Guy Davis benefit on August 20th, the Fall Appeal, the 2nd annual Rosendale Benefit on November 12th, and the Holiday / End of Year appeal. Meg noted the bulk of the Holiday / End of Year appeal funds will fall in the next fiscal year.

Meg shared that Bob Ross (Robert Ross Foundation) gave a \$3k gift to support a planned giving campaign

and to seed a matching gift campaign for the Fall Appeal.

Meg spoke to bridging the fall revenue gap with smaller opportunities for donor involvement and cultivation, including the Guy Davis concert, the upcoming Pumpkin Sail events, or hosting events to welcome and introduce our new EA Director, Jen Benson. A cultivation event on 10/14 at Estuary BK is being planned around Pumpkin Sail and will include the opportunity to join a public sail. Donna said the NYC Friends of Clearwater sail is Friday, 10/13, at 3:30 with live music and potluck food and Donna's famous lentils. Donna said come both days!!

Legacy Society: board participation

Rosemary spoke to the role of legacy giving in achieving long term financial stability and shared our outreach plans for current Seeger Society members, long term donors, and then the general donor community. Much of this is being handled by Sarah Underhill (thank you Sarah!!). Rosemary said building the legacy society is a slow process and only 1 in 3 or 4 donors will even tell you. As our supporters receive this outreach, she asked board members to be ready to engage in donor-centric conversations should it come up and will send a follow-up email to Board members on key points. (The Seeger Society recognizes those who have included Clearwater in their estate plans, making Clearwater part of their legacy.)

Tom emphasized that while we have an immediate need for cash, this planned giving work is essential for creating and growing an endowment and meeting the long term needs of the organization.

Scott spoke to the benefits of monthly giving, for helping with immediate cash needs, and shared what he is doing.

Both David and Tom spoke to the increased engagement of people who become part of legacy giving programs, and how this helps. Tom added that having people in the society encourages others to join and shared how he made his decision with his family involved.

Responding to 'how to' questions about planned gifts and joining the Seeger Society, Sarah U. explained that it can be as simple as you remember Clearwater in your will or as a beneficiary and then notify us. You do not have to say what you've done, just that you have included Clearwater in your estate plan. David said there are additional ways to leave a gift, and individuals should consult with their professional advisors. Larry said there are ways of doing this can be beneficial to everybody. For example, using an IRA while alive, then leaving it to Clearwater as a beneficiary.

Logo Redesign

Meg shared plans for an HRSC logo refresh, drawing on a previously used logo. Meg went over why now, issues with the current logo, and the Raven & Crow design update plan. Scott and Sam both expressed support for the plan.

Nominating Committee

Arthur thanked the board for approving the final slate. Snail mail ballots will go out early next week, followed by the digital ballots. All members are given ballots and have the opportunity to vote.

The annual Board self-assessment will be covered next month.

Arthur said he attended a Board Lead webinar, at Amali's suggestion, and we will use them next year, in addition to Board Source. Both organizations connect non-profits with potential board candidates, expanding our pool of candidates.

Membership Committee

Arthur said Meg and the Communications Team plan a fall membership drive focused on young adults. The Membership Committee is also working with the Development Committee on coordinating a plan to develop sponsorship opportunities focused on small business throughout the valley. The idea is to create scripts and templates to allow people to recruit small business sponsors.

New Business

None

Executive Session

The board went into executive session at 8:28.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rosemary Thomas, Secretary