Hudson River Sloop Clearwater
America's Environmental Flagship

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc.
Wednesday, January 21, 2026 via Zoom

The board meeting was called to order by Samantha Hicks at 7:00pm.
Steve Stanne opened with 'This Island Earth' by Paul Cooper

Attendance:

Board Members

~~Sarah Armour,~~ Executive Comm. At Large
Peter Capek
Lindsey Cooper
~~Stuart Findlay~~
Joan Gaylord, Executive Comm. At Large
~~Peter Gregory~~
Samantha Hicks, President
Gareth Hougham
Arthur Jones, Vice-President
Aaron Mair
Neall Burger
L.A. Kauffman
Jillian Maresco
~~Jennifer McMillan~~
Tom Murphy, Treasurer
~~Liam Purvis~~
Jeremy Rainer
Dan Riesel
Larry Rothbart
~~Gabrielle Spielberg~~
Steve Stanne, Executive Comm. At Large
~~Adenike Bamgboye, Secretary~~
~~Julia Wilson~~
~~(strike-through~~ indicates absence)

Staff Members
David Toman, Executive Director
Jen Benson
Laura Freeman
Erin Macchiaroli
Emily Marcet

Public Attendees
Neil Gordon

Minutes Approval:

- 12/09/25 minutes tabled due to issues with timely distribution
- 01/07/26 minutes - Motion to approve by Tom Murphy, second by Larry Rothbart: approved- 10 yea, 3 abstentions, 0 nay

Special session: with Neall Burger and Rosemary Thomas regarding Gala Auction items:

- looking for board outreach to experiences (concerts, tours, etc.), small businesses & services (like restaurants, yoga classes, spa treatments, etc.); already have Olana, Hudson River Maritime Museum, Mohonk, and Hudson Valley Shakespeare
- Rosemary highlighted talking points that businesses introduced via Gala auction become regularly patronized.
- info goes out to 20k mailing list; items must be locked down for March 1, Gala ads are due 2/13/26

Financials: Presented by David

- 2025 FY is closed and almost ready for Auditor after a great job from Capital CFO; the Financial systems rebuild is largely complete & well done,
- Balances are in the black (before depreciation) and illustrate positive trend from prior years, despite 2 months lost revenue; this is due to a comparable reduction in expense and unanticipated windfall revenue (89% of budgeted revenue/88% of budgeted expense)- approximately $70k loss (from dock/sloop cancellations) + gain of $200k in bequests
- Finished FY2025 with cash at $54,000, in addition to a separate, sequestered balance of $46,000 that is our initial endowment investment.
- 2 Key points: an important part of positive financial outcome was bequests, which are not reliable; but much of cash income was utilized to pay down liabilities and significantly reduce the organization's debt load.
- If we can stabilize revenue and work towards the goal of 7% surplus, then windfalls like bequests can go into the endowment fund at the Community Foundation.
- Harvard Business School group reengaged with in a meeting that included David, Meg, Arthur, Tom and Bill Braine
- You can review details in the Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activities in the board document folder.

Year-End Data (Development, program, communications):

Presented by David, Laura, Emily, and Jen; Slides/Documents from staff presentations will be made available in board document folder.

- Development:
    - David shared the Development KPI Dashboard, which illustrates the current month and YTD progress against the budget on the various development vehicles, like grants, memberships, corporate giving and individual donations.
    - Year end appeal significantly higher than projection and previous year's performance, including an increase in the number of individual donors; December numbers indicate a strong start to FY2026.
    - We are up to 51 people (2 joining in December) in the Seeger society for Legacy giving (will & estate planning in support of Clearwater) ; will work to build this in 2026
    - David shared the grants pipeline status, which now also includes Choice Words, a contractor working on grants that is now starting to pick up.
    - Membership renewals, new members, and lapsed members rejoining are up.
    - Gala Invites going out; it's time to purchase your tickets/tables
- Restoration:
    - OPRHP grant awarded for $675,000 for the upcoming sloop restoration work; Tom and David also highlighted the work by Jen Benson to secure $500k in CREST funding from three legislators for sloop restoration; state sees value in the sloop/project and we will ensure that public access is incorporated into restoration work.
- Program:
    - Emily shared KPI's measured against prior years and 2025 budgeted expectations
    - Onboard programs also improved over prior years, but fell slightly short of budget due to sloop issues; budget would have been exceeded.
    - Public Sails - including popular Pay What You Can sails - exceeded budget, but charters fell short
    - Dock issues - loss of Brooklyn dock meant 400 fewer kids and impacting future opportunities
    - Highlights - 3 Youth Empowerment programs, crew was able to adapt to changing schedule, new programming(summer camp, homeschool programs) upcoming in 2026; Spring scheduling off to a good start
- Advocacy:

    - Docks - Staff are working on logistics/advocacy to promote and secure future docking at Newburgh, Portside (Brooklyn), and Beacon - sign-on letter going out soon to support usage, building on legislative relationships
    - EA - Jen is engaged on work with Newburgh PFAS, Friends of Clean Hudson re: PCB cleanup, public education around algae blooms, and funding advocacy for infrastructure and the National Estuarine Reserve, among other issues.
    - Engagement with legislators of Hudson River Delegation continues with success at additional $50k education grant award
    - Working with Scenic Hudson and Riverkeeper on Hudson River Advocacy Day
    - Jen addressed real-time partnerships between the sloop crew, her office, and community leaders regarding river observations that affect the health of river municipalities.
- Communications highlights: importance of storytelling, partnering with Radio Woodstock, Clearwater in a travel magazine, socials are up, marketing and donation swaps, review in 2026 of email management, conversion practices

Revival Asset/Museum update: Presented by David & Erin

- Historic Revival signs/artwork from trailers to be donated to NYS Museum for exhibit
- Museum officials are very enthusiastic about acquisition, see value in the pieces and are taking exhibit/interpretation seriously; offered use of future exhibit space for Clearwater's intermittent use
- Potential discussed to keep a few pieces for Gala Auction
- After details are reviewed and parameters established, a Resolution will be shared for board approval

Working Session:

- Gala Auction brainstorming resulted in auction item possibilities for follow-up and attendance commitments by some board members.
- Joan will be the youth award sponsor.

Meeting Adjourned at 2100hrs.