

OXFORD SAILING CLUB (OSC)

Minutes of 43rd AGM held on 10th October 2007 at 7.30 pm in the clubhouse.

Members attending: 59

1. Apologies for absence: Bob Ashby, Peter Gibbard, Rachel Miller, Geoff Worrall.

2. Approval of minutes of the last meeting:

- Proposed John Barker, 2nd Jane Middis. All in favour (none against, no abstentions).

3. Matters arising from the minutes: None.

- John Barker queried the variance in counts of votes reported in the minutes – Karen Hotchin replied it was due to people leaving the room when counts for votes were actually being taken and hence the variances occurred.

4. To approve the Commodore's Report:

- Chris Howe ran through the Commodore's report:

Team 15 have had a very successful year and reached 4th in the National finals – thanks to Chris Burrows, Richard Beardsley and Edd Thorne for all their hard work and keeping things on track. David Newton is having a busy year promoting the status of the Challengers and aiming for international recognition/Olympic class.

Sailing has had to work around Farmoor 1 being full of Barley Straw as part of a 3 year trial by Thames Water – they do not know if it has worked yet as there appears to be more algae on F1 with the bales than F2 without the bales. We are hoping that Thames Water will consider our request of grouping the hay bales in a more central/single location so we can sail around them, as they realise it is a problem for us.

The 'Go With The Flow' open day was very successful and will be repeated in June next year; many thanks are due to ODSSA for their boats and excellent instructors whose enthusiasm and help managed to raise £400 of donations to the Pontoon Project.

The Pontoon project has managed a successful fund raising campaign spearheaded by Bill Proctor who has now raised over £120,000. OSC has agreed in principle to underwrite a loan to the project so that it can start building the pontoon in order to complete it before next summer – it is likely that Thames Water will also underwrite the loan but the Committee are awaiting details from Bill Proctor about the amount required, at which point a formal decision will be made regarding the terms & conditions and acceptability of the request. Bill is trying to raise an additional £80k through ITV's People's Millions so that the electric lift can be installed as soon as possible too – he has entered the ITV competition to bid for funding – on the 31st October '07 we will know whether the Pontoon Project has made it to the Shortlist and then it will be a question of watching the program in w/c 26th November and voting to see which project wins the money.

Chris Howe extended his thanks on behalf of himself, the committee and the Club to Kay and Jeremy Gorbald for all their efforts as harbourmaster and assistant and to Geoff Worrall for the splendid job he has done as our Bosun over the Years.

- The vote was taken to approve the Commodore's report – All in favour (none against, no abstentions).

5. To receive the Sailing Secretary's Reports: published in the annual report.

- Reports submitted by Jane Middis and Russ Canning with no comments arising.

6. To receive the Treasurer's Report and approve the accounts: Published in the annual report:

£50k of income generated over expenditure, generally from membership contributions – sail training is holding up well and is a great feeder of members to the club. As we have a turnover of 20-25% of the membership each year we need to work hard to get more members in.

Questions arising – None specifically about the numerical contents of the accounts.

Other questions arising: Greg Kilkenny – was surprised to see that numbers of members were rising.

One Query asking when we are proposing to start improvements to the club and several members (Derek Buchanan, Lesley Hotchin, Geoff Barker, Jeremy Gorbold) mentioned the disagreeable state of the club and in particular the changing rooms across the last year – although it was discussed that this was not entirely due to OSC members and that the ODSSA schoolchildren were particularly bad at creating a mess on site.

Jeremy Gorbold did mention that as an OOD running races at OSC that he had noticed improvements in our equipment (such as radios and the better facilities available on the new committee boat) which had made that role easier to carry out.

Chris Howe explained that the club would like to make the changing rooms bigger and put an extension on the East end of the club but this was to be discussed in the open forum later in the evening; Robin Kemp pointed out that the members will need to decide if/how they want to fund the improved facilities that would help sort out some of the problems we had been discussing - Chris Howe concluded the discussion by expressing the aim of OSC would be to start the building work for the requisite improvements within the next year.

Proposed that the Accounts be accepted: Ian Campbell, 2nd John Baker, All in favour (None against, no abstentions).

7. To approve 2007 Subscription Levels:

Chris Howe explained that the changes to levels were a 5% increase across all the fees.

Greg Kilkenny expressed that he did not like the ratio of values between the single and family safety boat memberships and proposed that we raise the single value of the safety boat membership to the same proportion of a family membership as seen with the standard memberships. 2nd Mike Trueman. 2 for, 9 abstentions, 48 against – motion not carried.

Tim Williams asked if the membership in 2006 was larger than in 2007; Chris Howe explained that we are only part way through 2007 so the final numbers of members are not in yet but we expect the 2007 levels to end up at a level similar to 2006.

Kay Gorbold mentioned that as harbourmaster she did not feel that people had removed boats because of higher subscriptions and both John Barker and Phil King stated that they believe the club is still tremendous value for money compared to some of the other clubs.

Kerry Hastings queried that he thought the family/single membership ratio was disproportionate and that the locker fees had not been increased for a long time. He also thought that the open meeting fee of £7 was low.

Chris Howe clarified that it was £7 per person per day; Dave Rollinson stated that he thought this was still good value compared to some of the other clubs' charges.

Derek Buchanan said it would be beneficial if Thames Water could change their policy and allow people to sleep over on the site; Chris Howe explained they were trying to set up a campsite just

up the road to that effect. Derek also asked for clarification on what the standard £7 rate included and the level of rescue cover/training boat use that was included for that fee as it had caused confusion over the last year.

Action: Chris Howe to improve the clarity behind what is included/excluded in OSC's £7 fee.

Proposed that the fees are accepted: David Rollinson, 2nd Phil King. For 52, against 4, abstentions 3 - carried.

8. Election of Officers of the Club and members of the General Committee:

Proposed Officers: Single nominations received:

Commodore – Chris Howe

Vice Commodore – Selina Ram

Rear Commodore – Mark Smithson

Treasurer – Philip Cresswell

Secretary – Arron Twamley

Sailing Secretary – Jane Middis

Cellarer – Karen Gosford

Harbour Master – Ann Latham

House Manager – Bob Ashby

Bosun – Tom Ballance

Board Sailing Secretary – Russ Canning

Committee Member – Chris Burrows

Committee Member – Sue Prattle

Committee Member – Bill Proctor

Committee Member – Robin Kemp

56 for, 0 against, 3 abstentions – Carried.

Two nominations for Affiliates Representative: David Newton and Nigel Vick.

A secret ballot was undertaken – poll results were Nigel Vick 13 votes and David Newton 32 votes, spoilt papers/abstentions 14; David Newton appointed as affiliates representative.

11. Re-appointment of Accountant and Verifier: Michele Johnson of Johnson & Johnson associates.

- Proposed Philip Cresswell, 2nd Ian Campbell; 58 for, 0 against, 1 abstention - Carried unanimously.

Formal Proceedings finished at 9.07pm and Chris Howe closed the meeting.

Summary of questions and answers from the informal session held after the AGM

Chris Howe led the informal discussion, commencing with a talk-through on how the committee are planning to take OSC forward in terms of improvements and the funding of those improvements.

Kerry Hastings queried the lease conditions; Robin Kemp explained we are aiming for a new 30 year lease with a 15 year extension where we pay for the land only (@ c. £11,200 pa.). Note that the Steventon reservoir is at least 15 years away (assuming it actually gets a go-ahead). In terms of conditions on the water, we have complete use of Farmoor 1 and 2 although this can be

stopped at any time for operational reasons, so Kerry stated that we require a preservation of sailing.

Derek Buchanan asked if we could speak to Hayling Island Sailing Club and see if we can learn from their recent experience of club building and its effect on members.

John Barker asked if we could approach local associations such as the Masons (who helped at Rutland) to gain funding and support.

Bill Proctor explained that we may not get funding from associations such as Sports England because we are a 'Single Sport' and private members club and they are generally giving money to multi-sport centres. He did say that there could be an opportunity to get OSC designated as the training centre for the 2012 Paralympics and by that cause we may be able to justify the development to Sports England and qualify for funding the new building.

David Bickerton asked about the level of space increase proposed for the changing rooms; Chris Howe explained it would be likely to be in the order of moving from a total of 97sq.m to 134sq.m and Arron Twamley explained that we could not increase the footprint beyond that which we have permission to do and we are constrained by that (so cannot increase the changing rooms beyond that amount).

Derek Buchanan expressed a preference for only doing the changing rooms and phasing or not doing the other improvements; Robin Kemp stated that it would be preferable to do all the changes in one go to minimise disruption to the members. Chris Howe ran through the breakdown of costs by area and explained that they are fairly well integrated although we could theoretically split the work into 2 parts; between the changing rooms/main hall area and the extension to the East side of the building, but once the initial work had been completed the rest of the club would look very tatty in comparison if it was not done.

Chris Howe explained that the committee feel that they need to offer options to the club members on how the money is to be raised and did say that it will not just be from hiking up the joining fee; we have options for each member to pay a lump sum up front (and hence avoid the interest rates on a loan) or for the club to take a loan and gather the money back from increased subscriptions/fundraising/donations. If necessary we can hold a general ballot to canvass opinion on the best way to proceed.

David Rollinson took us through his experience and learning from Bowmoor, where they have recently carried out a club modernisation: he said that as the OSC plans have been approved there is limited scope for changes and that at Bowmoor they took 3-4 years to go through the modernisation process, and whilst they did lose some of their members and put subscriptions up, they also managed to raise £300k of the funding through the members so only needed £200k as a loan. He recommended that we try and get all members onto the same scheme and to make it a simple one. If we do a Life Member scheme, it has to be limited in numbers and he suggested OSC might like to look at debentures as well. He explained that Bowmoor also loses about 20% of its membership every year and Bowmoor is a much smaller club relative to OSC so if Bowmoor can manage to complete the modernisation and funding, then OSC ought to be able to do so too.

Chris Howe closed the Q & A session at 10.17pm