

Date: January 29, 2018
To: USS Board members
From: Bruce Burton, President
Subject: January 2018 President's Report

Dear USS Board members,

We have started the New Year with a full agenda of activities with the goal of completing existing projects without adding more initiatives until we are ready.

Over the transom

These are the key items that I have been working on:

National Sailing Hall of Fame

You probably read in Scuttlebutt about the NSHOF Board meeting on January 8th, which summarized the vote the NSHOF Board had, choosing to continue down the path of "bricks and mortar." This was highly probable as their whole purpose has been to "build the Hall." (Getting a Board of 20+ people to radically change their approach is hard to do.)

After 13 years Annapolis could not raise the funds and their Board voted to pursue Newport as a viable alternative. The vote was 21-3 in favor of having a physical space vs. the US Sailing proposal of "virtual Hall." The majority of Board members preferred Newport over Annapolis. As of today, the majority of the money donated to date for Annapolis will transfer to Newport; the money donated by the city of Annapolis will not. Remember that Annapolis is the capital of Maryland, so the MD Governor has visibility to this building project.

Some of the Newport details provided at the meeting:

- \$1.685M purchase price
- 50% financing from the city
- 3% interest rate with a 5 year balloon

There was unanimous support by the NSHOF Board to have a close relationship with US Sailing, much closer than we have now. Our proposal was very attractive to them: 46,000 US Sailing members all supporting their efforts. Our obvious concern is that US Sailing does not want to "make their problems our problems" meant-be a part of their fundraising mechanism, unless there is a financial benefit for US Sailing to do so.

Russ Lucas, Gary Gilbert and I will wait for the Hall to approach us with a proposal of how they would like to work with US Sailing. We do not expect any progress in the near future and will keep you posted.

Gulf Yachting Association Meetings

Jack and I traveled to New Orleans January 12-14 to support Chris Luppens' induction as Commodore of the GYA. It had been 3 years since Jack and I were there so it was a timely visit. We met at Southern YC in New Orleans and took over the second and third floors. All the rooms were used for meetings during the day. The entire ballroom was used for their annual awards banquet,

with many US Sailing awards being presented. They did a wonderful job of recognizing the accomplishments of the entire organization, the highlight being Southern's winning the New York YC Challenge Cup.

We sat in on Youth and Adult sailing meetings, a One Design council meeting. Participation was a key concern, as is everywhere. They did mention that they would like to see the youth progress up the boat ladder faster-meaning graduate from Laser Radials to full rig sooner. We were pleased to learn that they up to 17 boats in the Finn class circuit. We need more of their Finn sailors to train with us!

Comments noted with respect to Youth:

- Fleets are diluted.
- There are too many classes.
- There should be focus on youth sailing at clubs.
- Bay Waveland has a 3-year youth strategic plan.
- Social events are just as important as the sailing.
- Supply of Laser boats and spare parts is a big problem.
- Laser 4.7 should be used as soon as possible to move out of Optimists.
- They desire a US Sailing Center in Gulfport/Long Beach, MS area-central to GYA.
- **There should be a US Sailing Youth keelboat class and competition.**
- **They desire US Sailing support at regional clinics.**

A comment from some of their leaders: They desire GYA to be a US Sailing AREA.

Town Hall meeting with USS

Clerc Cooper, Jack Gierhart and I hosted a Town Hall meeting at the end of the day Saturday. Notes from that meeting were:

- Post College sailing is a problem-those youth sailors to not return.
- Access is a problem.
- A nurturing community is required.
- Everyone as other places to spend their money, unlike 40 years ago-cell phones, cable bills, other expensive youth sports (travel soccer, lacrosse, hockey, etc.).
- Personal communication is key-invite people to sail with you.

Bob Johnstone Meeting

Jack Gierhart and I travelled from New Orleans back to USS in Bristol late Sunday after the GYA meeting. I spent Monday in the office getting caught up. Tuesday Jack and I met with Bob Johnstone to discuss marketing of sailing, historical success of our sport and what we might do in the future. It was a wonderful meeting with Bob, who undoubtedly is the best marketer of sailing in the past 50 years. Bob agreed to help us in any way he can.

Coincidentally, the Scuttlebutt interview with Bob aired the night before. I could not believe that we were discussing it the next day-what a coincidence. Our next meeting with Bob will be in FLA in February.

This is the link to the Johnstone interview:

<http://www.sailingscuttlebutt.com/2018/01/15/change-boats-key-us-olympic-success/>

Website

Last month I reported that we wanted to Beta Test our new website at the Sailing Leadership Forum. At this point we will not do that-we have not sufficiently debugged it. It is coming soon.

Rolex Yachtsman and Yachtswoman of the Year

Jake Fish and staff did an excellent job of managing the process and phone calls with the industry experts to make this year's selections: Peter Duncan (J70 World Champion, who is on our Olympic Sailing committee) and Erika Reineke, Laser Radial champion.

Olympic Sailing Committee (OSC)

Budget

We continue to work on closing the budget gap described last month. The challenge is that our costs are certain once we commit to them and the revenue is highly variable. We believe that revenue will be higher than what we currently have pledged and realize that a new approach must be taken to mitigate cost overruns when income is variable. We will work with Malcolm to create a dynamic approach to managing our costs, so that we can react to the market funding available. Obviously prioritization is key in this effort. Steve Freitas is working closely with Malcolm Page, Meredith Brody, Brian Keane and Donna Kane to make closure next month.

Sailing World Cup-Miami

Last month I reported that World Sailing has continually increased the level of requirements for running the regatta, all of which add to cost. To that end, Malcolm Page and I met with Andrew Hunt (WS CEO) and Hugh Chambers (WS CMO) to lay the foundation of near term contract negotiations. USS has the opportunity to terminate for convenience by the end of March. We explained to them that the USS Board is unwilling to continue to subsidize this regatta to the level that we have been forced to.

We have formed a working party led by Gary Bode, along with JJ Fetter and Jack Gierhart to evaluate the cost/benefit proposition of the SWC-M as it is currently constituted. Gary has been involved for 10+ years and can tell us what can be changed to improve its value to us. We will also separate this event from the Olympic budget so that we have better visibility of its impact on the Olympic program and the Association. In some ways it could be another championship regatta, run to the rules required by World Sailing.

Starting Clinic for the Etchells class, hosted by 470W

We conducted a fundraising experiment on January 4 and 5 when the 470W hosted a two day starting clinic fundraiser for invited Etchells fleet competitors. We had 12 Etchells attend and raised approximately \$8,000 for the women. This could be an excellent way to form one-design partnerships with our Olympic classes as fundraisers. Everyone had a great time and learned a lot. Etchells sailors are asking for another clinic in February!

US Sailing Team Party

OSC member Steve Benjamin hosted a party in Coconut Grove Saturday January 20th. Jane and I drove down from Vero and met the entire team, who were sporting their new Helly Hansen gear. Spirits were good in anticipation of the regatta, which started Tuesday. Jennifer Daudlin is the Helly Hansen representative, who grew up in Grosse Pointe. I am impressed with Helly's generosity and commitment to the team.

Over the Bow

Projects and items in the next month will be:

1. Chief Marketing Officer hire-Jack will lead this with input from (too) many. This will take months.
2. Finishing the Olympic Budget and supporting Malcolm Page in his role.
3. Hosting the Rolex Awards Feb 28th.
4. Support revenue generation planning and execution.
5. Plan West Coast tour with Jack Gierhart (later in the year).
6. Work on Committee chair transitions.

Thank you for your continued support,



Bruce J. Burton,
President