

**SDSPS ExCom Meeting
6 March 2007**

The meeting commenced at 1906. A quorum was present.

Attendees:

Cdr Ted Bowler
ExO Nancy Renzi
AO Mike Collins
SEO Mike Fontaine
Treas. Claudia Bowler
Asst. Sec'y Katharine Law
Mbr-at-Large John Isaksen
Mbr-at-Large Bob Gibbs

Guests

J. Brockway Clark

A motion to adopt the minutes of the 6 February 2007 Executive Committee meeting as published was seconded and passed unanimously.

Announcements: The general members' meeting will be held on Friday, 9 March, at Southwestern Yacht Club, with program by AO Michael Collins on his trip to Baja. The Sail Fleet race will be held on Saturday, March 10th, and the cruiser navigation contest will be held the following Saturday, March 17th.

Officer's Reports:

Commander: Ted Bowler reported on attending the USPS Annual Meeting in Jacksonville, FL. He and Treasurer Claudia Bowler were "1st Timers," and were greeted by all in a friendly manner and felt welcome. They were joined by four other squadron members at the meeting and felt the meeting and events were informative and well run. He was also impressed by the quality of the National leadership. Among actions taken at the meeting were:

- 1) The Governing Board voted to change policy on a provisional basis to accept all applicants which, in the opinion of the local squadron ExComs, were otherwise qualified for membership; the requirement to have taken a Boating, Boat Smart, or ABC exam will be waived during the trial period. Thus, USN retirees, holders of USCG Captain's Licenses and other qualified persons will be eligible for membership and welcomed to join. It is hoped that this will help expand membership in USPS.
- 2) National dues structure was changed from four categories to reflect only two classes: single members and single members with a "family unit." The old "additional active" member category will be eliminated. The new dues structure is expected to simplify recruiting and will include an increased initiation fee but will have no substantial overall financial impact on the National budget. USPS leadership suggests that individual squadrons offer a discount coupon or other accommodation to offset the increased fee.
- 3) The National Bridge discovered that USPS had been operating at a deficit for the past 10 years, with significant negative impact on overall corporate performance. To eliminate the "hole" in the budget, changes in headquarters have been mandated with

reduction in HQ staff and the change in publishing *The Ensign* from the previous 10 to 6 issues per year, with an electronic publication, "The Compass", offered to members. As a result, USPS has now achieved a balanced budget and is financially sound.

The commander also reported on the District 28 Spring Conference, which was held on the weekend of March 2-3 in San Diego. A new District Commander, Chuck Peterson, was installed and it is the intent to make District meetings more interesting and friendly, with possible presentations on membership retention and some of the new USPS University seminars. These programs are expected to attract more local squadron members to attend at the district level.

Executive Officer: Nancy Renzi noted that there have already been a number of VSCs performed and she received a request from Mission Bay Yacht Club for vessel examiners to offer the service to members there. [Elaine Townsend has been dropped for failure to perform the required 5 VSCs during the year 2006.] Mike Fontaine remarked that his Camaro newsletter warned owners of Canadian-built vessels that all fire extinguishers and PDFs must have "USCG approved" on the equipment to meet VSC qualifications.

Education Officer: Mike Fontaine reported that post cards for Seamanship (starting April 3) and Sail (April 11) have been mailed and e-announcements sent. The Seamanship manual cost has been raised to \$35, but more content is included; our price for the course will be \$45. An amended Ed schedule was forwarded to Tom Fota for posting on the website since both Piloting and AP were rescheduled because of new materials coming from the National Ed Department. As part of the cost-saving measures, free sample instruction manuals have been eliminated but Mike has ordered copies of the new materials, both for new courses and for four of the USPS University seminars. He has also bought 50 copies of the soon to be out-of-print Boat Smart manual, which Ed Mraz will need to do his instruction now, in May and the fall. Mike Sampsel, Steven Bakalis and/or Katie Law will teach the new JN course, when issued. (It promises to be much simplified, with a meridian transit sun sight as the only sextant requirement.)

Administrative Officer: Mike Collins expects over 60 people to attend the GMM on the 9th, at which he will present the program. Many of the new members are also expected to attend and should be welcomed. Mike and the Bowlers will supply stick-on nametags for them. John Isaksen will also bring membership applications, in view of the new USPS membership policy. The AO has confirmed the dates for all remaining GMM meetings with SWYC and is working on confirming speakers for these events.

Secretary: Because of her mother's illness, Diann Christensen was unable to attend. Katie Law expressed her appreciation to Tom Fota for posting *The Ship's Mail* on the website.

Treasurer: Claudia Bowler reported that the squadron finances were in good order, with all bills paid and receipts collected. She and John Isaksen had gone over the new National dues structure [effective 4/01/07] and both like the simplicity of the new plan, even though the initiation fees will be increased: single member fee = \$91; single

member with family unit (all additional family members) = \$126. Renewals for each class will be \$25 lower than the fee at joining: \$66 for single member and \$101 for member with family unit. This is only \$3 more than for current renewal and should not present a problem for retention.

Claudia mentioned the USPS-affinity credit card and suggested that anyone intending to acquire a new card consider this, which will offer income to both National and to local squadrons. She stated that Kathleen Romero will be selling new inventory (including mugs) at the GMM and urged anyone with ideas for new logo items to contact Kathy.

Old Business:

Advertising in *The Ship's Mail* is acceptable and other squadrons are including it in their publications, both printed and on line. Bob Gibbs will be soliciting advertisers and will get information from Katie Law. Printed copies will continue to be sent to all new members for at least two issues after joining, to accustom them to squadron activities.

Commander Bowler reminded the group that we still need a Membership Retention person and made several suggestions. P/C Bob Hubbard will be glad to assist the committee but is not able to serve as chairman. Ted sent "welcome letters" to all new members, but perhaps it would be helpful to assign sponsors to help integrate them into our activities. Claudia noted that ExCom members should arrange to sit with new members at the GMM and make special efforts to introduce them to others.

New Business:

Special recognition should be given to Dan and Trish Carlin for their efforts in recruiting Boating class students and Ed Mraz in Boat Smart students into membership. Moved, seconded and passed: that a certificate of appreciation and a \$50 gift certificate to West Marine or the Seabreeze shop will be awarded to all three at the May GMM.

John Isaksen suggested that an award to a long-time member who has made significant contributions to the squadron over the years be awarded annually at the Change of Watch. The award given at the January CoW to Ted and Julie Umland was most appreciated, and such an award seems long overdue. This award should consist of a plaque or other appropriate memento, costing about \$300, and would be a one-time award to recognize loyalty and service to SDSPS. The qualifications for this award would be described in the Policies and Procedures and provision for its cost be made in the annual budget. All agreed this would be an excellent idea but no action was taken on the suggestion.

A discussion of the making of squadron nametags ensued. Marie Baer now has custody of the District 28 tag-making machine used for many years by P/D/C Irwin Pascoe, who is no longer able to make them because of vision problems. Anyone needing a nametag should be asked to request one, and the new tags will be generated. An item to this effect will be placed in *The Ship's Mail*.

Claudia Bowler noted that USPS Squadron Development Committee member, P/R/C Marilyn Rose, will be coming to San Diego on April 12th to meet with interested members about forming a new squadron in the South Bay area. New boating activity in that area has caused National to feel that the time is ripe to start a provisional squadron in the Chula Vista area. John Isaksen stated that this idea has been mentioned many times in the past but that, in view of new residential development in that area, it may be time to reconsider the idea. Claudia and Ted will be glad to have anybody interested to join them in meeting with P/R/C Rose. SDSPS will have to provide instructors for the new squadron initially, particularly in giving Boating and Boat Smart classes.

Katie Law remarked that the Phoenix SPS has issued a new publication, a Members' Handbook, which will serve as an appropriate tool to acclimate new members and will also help with member retention. This booklet is copyrighted, and Katie noted that, if permission can be obtained, she would be willing to adapt the booklet for use by the San Diego squadron. Ted Bowler will investigate the copyright issue by contacting Bill Johnson, the Phoenix commander.

The meeting was adjourned at 2114. The next meeting will be Tuesday, 3 April 2007.

Respectfully submitted,
Katharine Law, Assistant Secretary
Secretary pro tem