

HARLOW (BLACKWATER) SAILING CLUB
MINUTES FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 4th December 2022.



Mark Batt (Commodore) called the club's Annual General meeting to order at 12.00pm and welcomed those members present.

PRESENT: 40 members with voting rights signed the attendance register

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Apologies for Absence.

Lawrence Maudsley, Sandra & John Hockley, Rod Martin, Jack Mills.

2. Minutes of 2021 AGM (held from 28.11.2021)

These were agreed to be a true record.

Proposer: Marcus Wallace

Seconder: Barry Knights

Carried unanimously.

3. Annual report of the committee.

Mark Batt (Commodore) gave the committee report.

Firstly I would to thank the committee for their support this year and especially Tony Everitt as secretary and Jackie Everitt who has stepped in and run the galley when needed.

At the start of the year we purchased a new safety boat. I'd like to thank David Islin for sorting this out on behalf of the sailing Club and also Barry Knights for driving down and picking it up. But the amazing thing when buying the new safety boat was selling the old grey rib. Geoff Kent did an amazing job with his eBay skills and got us way more than any of us thought possible. Just a quick note to any Club members, don't buy a boat off Geoff in the dark on a winters evening.

In the summer we purchased 4 single kayaks and one double kayak. These are stored under the veranda and they have been a huge success bringing in a number of new memberships to the Club so please bring down your friends and family to try these out with the idea of growing the Club's membership further.

During the summer months we have put out the safety boat a number of times to cover non dinghy racing initiatives on the water on Saturday afternoons and this is to cover all aspects of on the water activities. Sailing and windsurfing taster sessions and training are offered on these afternoons as well use of the Club kayaks or bring your own SUP down with the knowledge that you are being looked after by the Club's safety boat. We intend to continue these sessions in next year's programme.

We also ran a very successful evening race series where Club members had the option to take race the wayfarer with a novice crew to give a taste of racing. For experienced helms this also counts as one of your duties so a win-win.

In the autumn we had a small group take part in the Club's in-house safety boat training and competency assessment. They are halfway through the assessment and will complete it in the spring. More training dates will be added in the next year so please put your name down as it is very important that members know how to drive both safety boats.

We introduced maintenance and gardening work parties on the last Friday of the month from May to October and I'd like to thank Barry Knights for running these work parties. The Club looks amazing.

The gents chaining room went through a huge improvement. During last winter Barry was busy painting everything that didn't move, also Barry and Bob Parsons laid the new tiled floor and recently

Barry, Martin Cross and David Islin fitted new led lighting and fans. We managed to obtain a 5k grant towards all this work which does include a boiler replacement and the installation of new showers. A special thanks goes to Robert Laurie for his guidance in obtaining the grant.

The old optimist flower bed at the front of the Club house was removed and replaced by Barry and Alan Seargent and again this is a huge improvement

The cadet hut has been renamed the sail loft and there is new racking for the storage of members kayaks and windsurfers and new and improved lighting.

The Club put out a short survey this year to help the Committee and it was helpful when putting on things like the Club's sailing week so that the membership got the sort of week they wanted.

Theresa Henderson has resigned as the Club's bar manager and Geoff Kent has now taken up the role. I would like to thank Theresa and Ian for all their hard work in the bar and the many years on the committee.

The galley has gone through a huge change and improvement this autumn after a lot of work by Barry we obtained a 5-star food hygiene rating. In order to comply with the new rating we can only have food preparation done by someone with a current level 2 food hygiene certificate and the Club is willing to cover the cost of this for any members. It can be done online and only takes a couple of hours. Jenny Say has left the galley so we will need members to volunteer on the galley rota next year

The plans for next year. We are looking into running a mid-week evening sessions when the Club will be open and the safety boat will be providing cover on the water.

If you have any questions or you have any ideas for next year then please speak up or contact me.

John Bowers expressed his thanks to the committee and commented that the Club is run by the members and any individual member can help out even if not on the committee. The Club grounds are looking great and John reminded members that they can help out by cutting grass around their dinghy space and taking their rubbish home.

4. Treasurer's Report.

Sandra Hockley (Treasurer) was not present but copies of her report and accounts prepared by Anthony Gray (Club Auditor) for the year ended 31st October 2022 were circulated to the meeting:

As of 31st October 2022, the Club's bank account stood at £23,038 in credit.

The Jetty Loan account stands at £6,168 in debit.

We obtained two micro grants of £5,500 from Essex Association of Councils which has enabled us to refurbish the gents changing room and purchase a new boiler.

We have also received £1,100 in donations and gift aid will apply. Family week did not attract many people this year but we still managed to make a modest profit.

Subscriptions were increased by 3% and due to a very successful Open Day (helped by perfect weather) our membership now includes several SUP and kayak users. To that end we have purchased 4x single handed kayaks + trollies for £1,699 and 1x 2-man kayak + trolley for £300 which are available for all members to use.

We have continued to improve the Club and buildings. The final payment £8,944 for the new support boat was paid off in March.

Our electric and gas contracts were renewed for 2 years at the end of July which hopefully will see us through the current Cost of Living crisis.

Our annual insurance has increased due to a valuation update which incorporates increased costs of rebuild materials in the event of any future claim.

*I would like to thank Anthony Gray for carrying out the independent review and annual accounts.
This concludes my report.*

John Wilmott asked about plans and timescale for repaying the jetty loan. Mark Batt replied that lump sums had been paid off the loan but the intention was not to entirely pay off the loan as the bank had agreed that additional money could be borrowed if required. A monthly repayment is still being made to pay off the loan within the loan period.

The Club accounts were agreed.

Proposer: John Wilmott Seconder: John Bowers Carried unanimously.

5. Election of Auditor and Trustees.

Anthony Gray was proposed to continue as auditor for the club accounts.

Proposer: Terri Sharman Seconder: Martin Tarling Carried unanimously.

The current trustees Mark Batt, Mike Bryant and Barry Knights are willing to continue.

Proposer: Ian Henderson Seconder: Vicky Riley Carried unanimously

6. Agreement of subscriptions for 2022.

The committee had recommended a 5% increase in subscriptions for 2022 to cover increases in clubs running costs (rates, insurance, energy etc.) and to assist with financing club improvements.

In addition, following feedback from members, the committee proposed that the dinghy road trailer fee would not be charged if the trailer is stored as part of a combi unit in the allocated dinghy storage space.

Annabel Jones-Laurie asked about comparison with other sailing Club fees. Tony Everitt replied that he wasn't aware of increases this year in other Clubs fees but a comparison last year showed that HBSC and MBSC had similar fees and were cheaper than Blackwater, Marconi and Stone sailing clubs. It was also pointed out that we are the only Club on the river that offers new members free membership for the year following their joining the Club.

Barry Knights commented that fees are due at the beginning of January but if members pay their fees by the end of February a 5% discount is applicable but not all members take advantage of this. Laura Suffield asked whether increase in fees is always linked to cost of living. Tony Everitt replied that the committee propose increases based on running costs and that last year's increase was lower at 3%. The committee thought that a 10% increase this year would be excessive and had therefore proposed a 5% increase.

Rob Laurie commented that further grants next year were unlikely and that we need to ensure that the membership fees would cover the Club's running costs. Tony Everitt reported that although it appears we had a deficit this year there was a large one-off capital expenditure of £13.5K this year and that membership fees provided a £2K surplus over running costs.

The proposal to raise Club fees by 5% and remove the dinghy road trailer storage charge if stored as part of a combi unit were agreed.

Proposer: Marcus Wallace Seconder: Terri Sharman Carried unanimously.

7. Election of Officers and Committee.

Tony Everitt explained that the notice for the AGM had names of members willing to stand for committee positions but this did not preclude other members being nominated.

Since the notice had been sent out a nomination for Lydia Knights as social secretary had been received. Mark Batt asked the meeting whether anybody would be prepared to stand as publicity officer. John Wilmott expressed interest but felt that he would not be suitable as he did not use social media. Tony Everitt explained that it was more important that we had a publicity officer to provide content and that he was prepared to send out MailChimp emails, Ron Suffield will post on Facebook and Keith Taft will post on twitter on behalf of the publicity officer. John Wilmott therefore agreed to stand as publicity officer and was proposed by John Case and seconded by David Islin.

The following were therefore the committee members willing to stand for a further term in their current role and new nominations received.

Position	Name	Nomination
Commodore	Mark Batt	Commodore elect (was Vice-Commodore).
Vice-Commodore	Clive Tarling	Willing to stand for a further term
Rear-Commodore	Bob Parsons	Nominated by the committee
Hon. Secretary	Tony Everitt	Willing to stand for a further term
Hon. Treasurer	Sandra Hockley	Willing to stand for a further term
Membership Sec.	Barry Knights	Willing to stand for a further term
Sailing Secretary	Neil Clark	Willing to stand for a further term
Cruiser Secretary	John Hockley	Willing to stand for a further term
House Secretary	Alan Serjeant	Willing to stand for a further term
Publicity Officer	John Wilmott	Proposer: John Case Secunder: David Islin
Social Secretary	Lydia Knights	Proposer: Tony Everitt Secunder: David Islin
Bar Manager	Geoff Kent	Willing to stand for a further term
Committee Member	Marcus Wallace	Willing to stand for a further term
Committee Member	Peter Hardie	Proposer: Mark Batt Secunder: Tony Everitt
Committee Member	Rob Laurie	Proposer: David Islin Secunder: Barry Knights

Since only one nomination per committee vacancy had been received it was proposed that the above nominations were elected. This was carried unanimously.

8. Any other business (AOB).

The Secretary had not received any further items for the agenda prior to the AGM.

Mark Batt thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 12.50.