

## RI Sailing Events Commission

### Public Session

Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Herreshoff Marine Museum, Bristol, RI

**Members in Attendance:** Michael Keyworth (Chair), Amanda Callahan, Janet Coit, John Gibbons, Paul Harden, Chip Hawkins, Sally Helme, Dyer Jones, Sheila McCurdy, Tim Mills, John Mollicone, Karl Olsen, Bill Plumb, Brad Read, Skip Whyte

**Via teleconference:** Bill Doyle

**Guests:** Joe Dias (DEM), Kathryn Farrington (Discover Newport), Allan Megarry (Sail Newport), Vivian Spencer (Senator Whitehouse), & Jonathan Stevens (Governor Chafee's Office)

The first meeting of the Rhode Island Sailing Events Commission (RISEC) was called to order at 12:10 p.m. on Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

The Chair, Mr. Michael Keyworth, made some opening remarks in regards to the purpose and history of the State Sailing Commission and then introduced the various commission members in attendance. The Chair then thanked Jonathan Stevens for his efforts in the creation of the Commission by Executive Order. Mr. Stevens, on behalf of the Governor, thanked the Commission members in agreeing to serve and emphasized the important mission that the group has.

Next, Mr. Keyworth asked Dr. Robin Wallace to give a historical perspective of the preceding committee that lead to the creation of RISEC . The first gathering of a group to help promote sailing events was in 1975 in Newport. Over the years a group of dedicated individuals have worked to attract a wide range of events to Rhode Island. Dr. Wallace discussed how sailing events have evolved over the years and have become more public and larger. He also discussed the benefits of being able hold events in smaller markets such as RI and Newport.

The Chair also introduced Ms. Vivian Spencer from Senator Whitehouse's office and talked about her role in the Senator's office and the Senator's support of sailing events in RI.

Mr. Keyworth spoke of helping both the public and elected officials to understand economic benefits of these events and that one of the goals should be to encourage people, whether spectators or participants, to revisit the state in the future.

#### **New Business:**

Mr. Keyworth discussed some possible changes in appointments to the committee, but did not give specifics. The Chair then discussed the need for a vice chair; it will be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Mr. Bill Plumb agreed to serve as Treasurer and Mr. Paul Harden will serve as the Secretary.

#### **Volvo Ocean Race**

Mr. Brad Read of Sail Newport gave the commission an update of the Volvo Ocean race and said that there will probably be 8 teams from 6 countries when the event starts in October 2014. He also discussed the committee structure that is being developed to support the implementation of the event and need for sponsorship.

Ms. Janet Coit commented that one of the keys to success is making sure events are seen as RI events and not just Newport focused events. Also, the commission needs to work to spread the economic benefit from events throughout the state.

#### **Clipper Round the World Race**

Dr. Wallace told the commission that he recently received a proposal from the Clipper Round the World Race about a possible visit in 2016. With this event, the boats are crewed by individuals from every walk in life and as such it has broad appeal to a wide audience. Dr. Wallace and others will meet to review the proposal

#### **TransAT Race 2016**

They have not yet come out with a proposal for host ports.

## **OSTAR (need to add comments)**

### **Other Potential Events**

The group discussed other events such as the Newport to Bermuda Race and the Annapolis to Newport race and the economic benefits of these long-time events. Other events mentioned were the J70 worlds and the J24 Worlds.

### **Olympic Trials:**

Mr. John Mollicone said that there will be no trials to select the next US sailing team for the 2016 Olympics but team members will be selected based on their results from a number of regattas.

Mr. Skip Whyte suggested that it may be possible to hold an event for a single Olympic class in Rhode Island.

There was also a suggestion that a letter be sent to the Committee that is developing a proposal for Boston to host the 2024 Olympics suggesting Newport as a site for the sailing events.

### **Other comments**

Mr. Dyer Jones recommended that the commission work on a universal Calendar for all Rhode Island sailing events.

Ms. Sally Helme mentioned the need to communicate to the sailing community outside RI the creation of the Commission. Mr. Harden said that he would work with the Governor's office on drafting a press release.

Mr. Mollicone told the members that RI will be hosting the 2015 College Sailing National Championship from 5/25/15-6/4/15. The event is being hosted by Brown University, Salve Regina, NYYC, and Sail Newport. This will be an excellent opportunity to expose young sailors to RI and Newport.

Mr. Whyte reminded the Commission of the Wickford Regatta.

### **By-Laws and General Discussion**

The Chair asked the committee members to review the draft by-laws and be prepared to discuss them at the next meeting. There was also discussion about commission members appointed designees to serve in their place if they are not able to attend.

### **Adjournment and Final Comments**

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 pm.

The next meeting will be scheduled for mid-March at Rhode Island Commerce Corporation.