

Commodore's Report – Jim Dutton

2023 has been a year that presented some interesting challenges for our club. The Seascope restaurant closure weeks before the Lasqueti Regatta, after catering arrangements had been made with the restaurant, created some difficulty for the Regatta committee. The new restaurant operator, Nanoose Bay Café, when approached, quickly took over the food arrangements for the Regatta and provided excellent service to us.

The cancellation of the lease for the Afterdeck took us by surprise and required a small team of members to facilitate it's disposal by the cut-off date of September 1st.

The Executive position of Vice Commodore remained unfilled throughout the year thereby creating extra work for the other Executive Committee members.

And finally, what a strange year for weather with strong Northwest winds blowing for weeks on end during the summer. Even with the above challenges the club Executive and volunteers delivered the following activities:

- Commodore's Ball at Tigh Na Mara Resort
- Christmas Boat Light Up and social at Nanoose Bay Café
- Sealion Cruise
- Pub Quiz Night
- Winter / Spring Rallies
- Wednesday Night Racing throughout the summer
- Northwest Bay Race
- Nanoose Bay Race
- Sail Past and reception at Nanoose Bay Café
- 2ndFriday@5 (while we still had the afterdeck)
- Annual Island Clean Up
- The Annual BMW Lasqueti Island Regatta
- Club Cruise to Vancouver Rowing Club
- Club Rendezvous and Pig Roast at Thetis Island
- The annual Fleet Regatta and awards ceremony at the Nanoose Bay Café
- Ladies and Men's Lunches
- Speaker Series with presentations by CFMETR and a presentation of their Antarctica adventure by Doug Herchmer and Jo McIlveen
- Managing the change from six cruising station to fifteen designated marinas
- Publication of the 2023 Yearbook
- A regular Scyline newsletter published each month
- A liaison with Fairwinds management has been maintained

I would also like to recognize the skippers and crews of the boats that participated in regattas up and down the coast from Malaspina to Salt Spring Island, John Collins and the crew of Spud, Ian Watson and the crew of Kestrel, Mike Norman and the crew of Early Dawn.

The excess in the Operating Budget and the excess of funds in the Operating Account is a significant departure from the historical figures. Much of this year's excess is from lower membership participation. Is this aberration because members are doing less boating post-Covid, and catching up on other travel activities? Could poor weather have reduced boating this year? Are members, as surveyed in 2021, beginning to wind down their boating activities? Do we need to know? Does it change things? Can we and do we want to do anything about the course of events, the natural progression of SCYC? These are questions for the entire membership to explore. Previous Executive leadership have stated the following:

The Executive Conclusions on March 30, 2021 based on the SCYC 2021 Survey Analysis: The greatest challenges facing SCYC are 'membership challenges and membership development. The club executive mandate is to continue to strive to support programs that ensure benefits are available to all members in a balanced way.' At about the same time, a 'Develop, Deliver and Execute the SCYC 2021 Strategic Plan' was formulated. From this document, 'The bottom-line is that, as an Executive we need to agree on the issue(s), develop a plan, deliver the plan to members at the 2021 Spring AGM and finally execute the plan.'

Given the uncertainty in a capital investment, i.e., club facility, an option mentioned is to draw down the Fund. Does the SCYC 2021 Strategic Plan need to be revised or revitalized? These are questions which need to be answered by the membership, such that the Executive can have a clear path to follow. These are questions that the incoming Executive will be pursuing in the coming year.

Attached at the end of this report are the recommendations of a small group of past Commodores formed after the 2023 SGM to recommend a path forward for the use of the club's reserve fund. I would like to thank Bob Delaney, Brian Stean, Ron Davis, Peter Milne and Ryan Laudien for their participation in this committee.

We owe all of our volunteers and Executive Committee members a big round of applause for achieving all of the above activities during the past year!

Path Forward

Following the 2023 Spring General meeting and at the request of the Executive Committee, a small group of Past Commodores have met to recommend a way forward for use of the existing fund.

As background, it is recognized that the fund was established with the best of intentions but with the uncertainty of the path forward regarding marina redevelopment, it was not considered wise to spend those funds on an upgrade of the Afterdeck or a new facility. We have and will continue to impress upon Fairwinds, and their leaseholders, our desire to explore options that provide, at the marina, a place for our members to gather and support the on-water activities we engage in. Regardless, this will not be resolved in the near future, and we need to be patient in our expectations.

As a result, we believe the best path forward, at this time, is to maintain the fund around its current level allowing it to increase with new membership initiation fees and interest. It should also be available as contingency for unexpected expenditures subject to membership approval. The annual operating budget should be developed on the principle of balancing expected revenues and costs, but the group recognizes, and the by-laws provide for, the Executive to recommend to the membership an annual draw on the fund to ensure benefits to members can be maintained and attract new members.

This path allows us to retain the option of a reconfigured “Afterdeck” or space in Fairwinds Landing. We recognize there have been questions raised related to a non-profit having a fund and how it should be invested. This recommended path remains consistent with what we have been doing for many years. We observe though that club faces an uncertain future given continuing membership decline and challenges filling leadership roles. As such the membership may want to embark on a different path, in which case an expert in non-profit organizations should be retained to review the options as well as respond to external inquiries, if required. We further recommend a conceptual plan, with potential costs, be developed for a “replacement” facility or other alternatives.