

**MPSRA General Meeting  
January 9, 2010  
Duxbury Bay Maritime School**

**In Attendance:** Rick Stavros (Arlington-Belmont), Gillian Curran (Boston Latin), Holly Hatton (Bromfield-Acton-Boxboro), Joel Skaliotis (Brookline), Dale Wickenheiser (CRLS), (CRLS), Brett Fournier (Cape Cod Rowing), Kristen Marie McCarthy (Duxbury), Leigh Eubanks (G-Row), Rachele Pojednic (G-Row), Doug McCaig (Hingham), Kendra Bauer (Lowell), ??? (Malden), Pam Krause (Shrewsbury), Russ Krause (Shrewsbury), Matt Hanig (Wayland-Weston), Brian DeDominici (Wayland-Weston), Jenn Huntley (Medford), Ken Gifford (Westford), Eric Girard (Board), Angela Ruel (Board)

**Missing a representative:** Mystic Valley, Worcester

I. President's Update:

Two years ago, Provisional Rules were written to ensure a consistent and transparent process for operating the league. This past year, the first full year with these rules in place, has allowed us to adjust some of the points missed in the process of first writing them. Some pieces were refined and our hope is that our processes have now become clear, consistent and available to the league....

II. Treasurer's Update:

1. Currently \$14,700 in the bank;
2. Board voted for \$10,000 reserve – suggestion that Event Cancellation Insurance be purchased instead of holding \$\$ in reserve – Board will look into this
3. Fall regatta – no QRA fee; no port-o-potties (incorrectly delivered to DRC by the QRA) – this year only, but meant we made money!

III. Proposal votes listed in detail below. Some of the primary points of discussion summarized here:

1. Long discussion on Proposal C, Part 1: Championship Events – general agreement that it would be good to get programs all racing one another and some process to encourage newer programs to grow into the eight should be discussed; however, the difficulty arises in finding an appropriate way to do so without hindering teams' ability to adjust to their changing numbers and circumstances.
2. Discussion on Proposal C, Part 2 – suggestion that allowing double entries btwn 4 and 8 events could allow a program that primarily races 4's during the season to enter an 8 as a secondary race for its top athletes thus expanding the 8 event participation without preventing those used to racing small boats from competing in their best event. Concern over athletes without the fitness to row 4x1500m in one day being pushed to do so by coaches.
3. Proposal D - Concerns on future use of coaches poll centered around: 1) difficulty in collating results => a better method for posting in an accessible location would need to be worked on to make this viable; 2) coaches not having time to look at other teams' results during the season => counter-point that currently this burden falls on the shoulders of a few volunteers on the seeding committee – a fairer distribution of this time across all coaches, which could simultaneously yield a more accurate result, seems positive; 2<sup>nd</sup> counter-point – good for the league & growth to be aware of one another – certainly in line with league purpose. This year's vote is for a TEST poll only.
4. Proposal I – Hosting Responsibilities approved with one change to original document in adding President responsibility to oversee completion of tasks or appoint someone else to do so.

IV. Voting of Board Seats

1. 3 terms expired; 1 seat vacated with a 1-year term remaining.
2. Two additional vacated seats will not be replaced in order to decrease board size to 9 members
3. The following people were elected to board seats:
  1. Matt Hanig
  2. Angela Ruel
  3. KristenMarie McCarthy
  4. Eric Girard

## **FALL REGATTA PROPOSALS:**

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### Proposal A: Fall Regatta Date

Host Fall Championship on the Sunday of the last weekend in October.

**Vote: 12 for, 1 abstain => Approved**

### Proposal B: Fall Regatta – separate 1<sup>st</sup> Varsity 8 and Lower Boat/JV events

1<sup>st</sup> Varsity and JV/Lower Boats will be two (2) subcategories in the same event. Medals will be awarded to each subcategory, based on Procedural Rules.

**Vote: Unanimous in favor => Approved**

## **SPRING REGATTA PROPOSALS**

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### Proposal C, Part 1: Determining State Champions

All teams will race their top boat/athletes in the same first varsity event to fairly and accurately determine the state champion.

The Spring championship regatta will consist of the following events for boys and girls:

First through Third Varsity Eights; a Varsity Double and Four; First and Second Novice Eights; a Novice Four.

*(under current structure the only additional event in the 2010 championship would be a 2V4+)*

**Vote:**

*(to be voted separately)* Individual rowers and coxswains may only participate in one event. This rule does not apply to the Varsity 2x or 4+

### Proposal C, part 2: Athletes are allowed to enter 2 events.

**Vote: 5 for, 7 against, 1 abstain => Rejected**

Reasoning:

We are a coherent league because of the broad similarities in our programs as teams from public schools. This is a small league, which from its inception was designed for every public school program to pit its best athletes against the rest of the league. While there are many other regattas where coaches can pick and choose events to seek medals, this league was purposefully not set up this way but rather as the one opportunity for public school teams to race only one another and to declare a champion from their midst. To be a viable state championship, our responsibility is to provide a fair race through which we can accurately determine the state public school champion by racing all of our teams against one another.

A few points to note:

- 1) All crews competing in the same event would bring the Boys Varsity 8 from 5 entries in a straight final to 11 entries filling two heats and both a petite and grand final.
- 2) For “extra” athletes or teams too small to field a single eight, the four and double events will offer a venue for them to compete without racing the top athletes from programs large enough to field eights, thus providing an even better structure for our smaller new programs' first MPSRA competitions.
- 3) Petite finals, which are a traditional part of the schedule (see Proposal F below), will allow for every crew to race a final against its closest competition in the league, as determined by the heat results. This structure leads to great competition in both of the finals and provides an accurate championship. It also allows every team to know its own standing in the league, creating a ladder for teams to work their way up as they develop.
- 4) Average size of those teams (new and old) not participating in the Varsity 8 has steadily declined over the past 5 years on the boys side and held steady on the girls, while growth of programs prioritizing the Varsity 8 has increased on both the boys' and girls' sides.

*Points values for all events will be voted on separately.*

### Proposal D: Test Coaches Poll to Determine Spring Regatta Seeding

All programs will submit rankings for every crew entered in the 1<sup>st</sup> Varsity events at Spring States based on their

own assessments of the season results of each team. These will be sent to the seeding committee no later than the Monday before the Championship. The results of this test poll will be used to determine whether such a poll is a viable form of seeding in the future (to be voted on by the league next year, following the poll)

**Vote: 9 for, 4 against => Approved**

Proposal E: Seeding Guidelines for Spring Regatta

This year's seeding committee will come up with a set of seeding procedures to be sent out to the league and voted on on-line by April 1, 2010.

**Vote: Unanimous in favor => Approved**

Proposal F: Petite Finals will always run for 1<sup>st</sup> Varsity events with 9 or more competitors

Reasoning: Petite finals are a traditional part of the schedule for the 1<sup>st</sup> Varsity 8, but in recent years have been run sporadically at the discretion of each year's regatta organizers. This measure sets a consistent standard by which the decision to run or not run a petite final will be made.

**No vote taken – already approved by Board in May 2009**

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**PROPOSALS APPLYING TO BOTH REGATTAS**

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Proposal H: Approve list of hosting responsibilities for each regatta

Attached. Vote to approve these responsibilities.

**Vote: Unanimous in favor => Approved**

Proposal I: Vote to approve content of Fall & Spring regatta packets

**Tabled (redundant w/ Proposal H)**

Proposal J: Confirm championship regatta host compensation

Host compensation will be distributed such that 75% of all additional revenue (revenue outside of regatta fees, as defined in Procedural Rules) goes to the hosts; 25% goes to MPSRA.

**Vote: Unanimous in favor => Approved**

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**LEAGUE ORGANIZATION PROPOSALS – Discussed at Board Meeting Prior to General Meeting**

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Proposal K: Board's Role

Board's role will be to enforce Procedural Rules by holding hosts to those rules and interpreting any minor new situations/questions arising between league meeting and regatta (which should be infrequent). Any Board decisions implemented between the league meeting and one of the championship regattas will apply for that year only and must be ratified by a majority vote of the league at the next league meeting.

**=> Tabled for future board discussion.**

Proposal L: Shrink Board size

Board to consist of 5 to 7 members. Begin reduction in size by not replacing any vacated seats whose terms would not otherwise end this year.

Reasoning: Purpose of the board is to have a small group able to make quick decisions should the need arise. Given the role in Proposal K - any decisions made by the board will later be voted on by the league, so there's no need for a large board to represent the entire league. A small board can better react in a timely fashion.

**=> Vote: Board votes unanimously against permanently shrinking size from current 5 to 11 members; but takes a follow-up vote to change current board size to 9 members.**

*(This is a change in current operating policy but not a change in the By-Laws – the board will be free to increase or decrease its size between 5 and 11 members at any time through a board vote; until such a vote is taken, the Board will consist of 9 members.)*

## **CHANGES TO PROCEDURAL RULES: (Require 2/3 league majority or simple board majority)**

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**#1:**

CURRENTLY READS:

"Article II, Section 3. Sculling events may be entered by crews not affiliated with a Participant Program, subject to the following conditions:

1. all participants within the entry meet the stipulations of Article II, Section 1.
2. all participants are members of the same school system."

CHANGE:

Add the following:

- "3. no current MPSRA team serves said school system.
4. all participant crews abide by participant program rules stated in Article III including submission of signed roster and individual USRowing memberships."

**Board Vote: 7 for, 2 opposed, 1 abstain => Approved**

**#2:**

CURRENTLY:

"Article III, Section 3d.

1. submit roster postmarked by October 1 (fall season) and May 1 (spring season) signed by a principal or athletic director acknowledging that all athletes are bona fide public school students."

CHANGE:

Amend due dates to match registration deadlines: October 10 (fall season) and May 10 (spring season)

**Board Vote: Unanimous in favor => Approved**

**#3:**

CURRENTLY READS:

"Article V,

Section 5. Medals will be awarded as follows:

1. 2 boats = 1 medal
2. 3 boats = 2 medals
3. 4+ boats = 3 medals
4. This does not include scratched entries – the number of medals awarded depends on the number of boats physically present at the start for a particular race."

CHANGE:

Amend to read:

"Section 5. Medals will be awarded in all completed races as follows:

1. 2 or 3 boats = 1 medal
2. 4 boats = 2 medals
3. 5 or more boats = 3 medals
4. This does not include scratched entries – the number of medals awarded depends on the number of boats physically present at the start for a particular race."

**Board Vote: Unanimous in favor => Approved**

**#4:**

CHANGE:

Add a new "Article II: Definition of the Fall and Spring Seasons

Spring season begins January 1 and ends after USRowing's Youth National Championship Regatta. Fall season begins September 1 and ends after the MPSRA Fall Championship Regatta."

**Tabled for further discussion of Spring start date.**

#5 (Approved concurrently with Proposal A above)

CHANGE: Fall regatta date

Pursuant to date change discussion, the following addition to Article V, Section 1, which will now read:

"Section 1. The MPSRA will support one regatta during each of the spring and fall seasons. Spring regatta will be held the Sunday after the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday in May. Fall regatta will be held the Sunday of the last weekend in October."

**League Vote: Unanimous in favor => Approved**

#6 (Approved concurrently with Proposal H above)

Addition of regatta responsibility descriptions to the Hosting a Championship Regatta section.

**Approved by league with unanimous Proposal H vote.**