



FINGER LAKES RUNNERS CLUB

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

December 14, 2011 5:30pm

708 Rhodes Hall, Cornell University

In attendance: Liz Brundige, Casey Carlstrom, Joel Cisne, Jill Cusack, Maria Costanzo, Nancy Kleinrock, Gary McCheyne, Chris Reynolds, Joe Reynolds, Bruce Roebal, Steve Shaum, Bob Talda, and Lorrie Tily

Meeting called to order at 5:38

5:38 Additions or deletions to the agenda

- Scholarships for 2012 (New Business - tabled)
- Hartshorne Memorial Volunteer Awards (Marketing)
- Finger Lakes Running Company Film night (Marketing)
- FLRC Member subscriptions for Trail Runner (Membership – Tabled)

5:40 Review + Approval of the November Meeting Minutes

- Minutes approved with minor corrections, moved by Gary, seconded by Bob.

5:41 Races & Activities:

- Turkey Trot—Bruce Roebal
 - Bruce reports that the number of participants this year was 373, up from 274 last year, which was up from 190 the previous year.
 - Registration went well. Six sign in sheets were passed around when lines were long and three when lines were short.
 - Bruce recommends that next year the race volunteers give the finishing runners their times and have them write it down. This year, it became hectic with 15 or so people finishing at the same time, and some recorded times did not include seconds.
 - Next year is the 40th Annual Turkey Trot, and Bruce would like to do something special. He anticipates more than 400 runners.
 - Bruce suggests offering a nice orange, long-sleeve shirt with an image of a turkey in sneakers. The shirt would not be dated but would not that the race was established in 1973, and it would be available for sale at cost. He will go ahead and figure out costs for producing shirts.
 - Bruce additionally notes that the pies weren't great. A shirt could feature Ithaca bakery and result in five very nice pies. Others suggest that it would be nice not to include sponsors on the shirts and that the number of pies needed is not very numerous, so perhaps Ithaca Bakery would be willing to donate the pies or they could be purchased by the club.
- December 4th track meet—Bruce Roebal
 - Bruce reports that the December track meet was constantly busy. They had good volunteers and a gun that worked, although it is running out of blanks. Joe suggests replacing the blanks at Home Depot.
 - Bruce notes one correction: the 60m was actually 55m due to a misplacement of the start line.
 - Joel had a chance to talk at the race with folks from the Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC). They were excited to participate: a great opportunity to get little kids moving.
 - Bruce notes that many kids need sneakers. He suggests that a shoe recycling program or a small amount of money could go a long way in providing sneakers for kids. Bob noted that shoes for kids do get passed around. Jill suggests that there could be a shoe recycling effort within the club. Nancy notes that Trumansburg Middle School had a running shoe initiative for kids; she offers to connect Bruce with the people who organized this.
- Club Members' Banquet Proposal

- Gary discusses the proposal that he offered at the November FLRC meeting for a Club Members' banquet and elaborates on the written note and menu that he circulated in advance of the December meeting. The proposal is for Friday January 27th, 2012, dinner paid for by the club, but drinks paid for by individuals at the ballroom of Rogues Harbor Restaurant in Lansing. The space seats 45 and can hold 80. The event would include a speech by the FLRC president along with race reports by RDs, recognition of award winners, and door prizes. If 50 people attend, the total expense to the club would be \$1300, including rental of the room (\$250) and food for 50 people
 - Joel reads a note from Karen and Tim expressing their support for Gary's proposal. Jill expresses agreement with Karen and Tim.
 - Bob raises a concern about having a situation where all 200 members show up.
 - Lorrie notes that weather is unpredictable in January and it might be necessary to cancel at the last minute. Gary replies that this possibility is also a factor at races.
 - Chris expresses concern that people who respond will not be committed to coming if they are not required to pay.
 - Bob wonders whether we really want to provide a \$26 dinner to the person who never did anything for the club.
 - Lorrie points out that there are already many benefits of being a club member and lists some of them, including discounts at races, discounts at the running store, paper copy of the newsletter if desired. She spoke with Suzy Myette, whose club holds an annual banquet and always requires members to pay. Suzy said that instituting weekly training runs were what boosted their membership.
 - Gary states that the Board has been talking for a year about the problem of stagnating or declining membership and it seems that the list of benefits mentioned isn't valuable to many club members. He has heard a lot of members or potential members question why they should join or remain members of the club.
 - It is noted that subsidizing the banquet but charging a fee of \$10 or \$15 would give people an incentive to show up.
 - Maria suggests that the purpose of the banquet is not just to give back to members but to foster a sense of community.
 - Joe doesn't see how a meal builds membership. What's needed it to blow our own horn, in the newsletter, at races, and elsewhere. People don't see the value of the club because they don't know what we do.
 - Bob frames the issue not as building membership but as returning a benefit to members. Do we see value in returning to our members the benefit of a banquet. Would it increase their interest in being an active member of the club?
 - Liz expresses support for the banquet, particularly on community-building grounds. It could be an opportunity to come together as a club, including members who may not really feel that the club is a community or see themselves as active participants in it.
 - Gary notes that Sophia is in favor of the proposal.
 - Jill notes that she doesn't think people are that desperate for a free meal and suggests that it is classy to try to honor members and give them an opportunity to connect with other members. She suggests that it is worth trying this one year.
 - Nancy suggests that \$10 isn't much and feels more commitment-ish.
 - Bob makes a motion in accordance with Gary's emailed proposal to hold a one-time membership banquet at Rhodes Harbor on January 28th or February 5th, paid for by the club, for no more than 80 members at no more than \$26 a plate. Bruce seconds the motion.
 - Joe states that he opposes the motion. He thinks that it is the wrong approach to the FLRC, that it amounts to throwing money down the drain, and that the club won't gain anything from it.
 - Lorrie says that the menu is great and the date is good, but she doesn't think the cost is a good use of club resources.
 - Casey states that if he were a non-member participating in our races, he would be upset that he paid an entry fee to a nonprofit organization that then went to cover a meal for members. There was a suggestion that this might be a legal problem.
 - Gary replies that he doesn't see a legal problem: Nobody is being paid, the event is not just for board members but for all members, their participation limited only by space on a first-come first serve basis, and the club pays for various club expenses through our race fees.
 - Vote: 7 in favor (Bob, Bruce, Gary, Jill, Liz, Maria, Nancy); 4 against (Casey, Chris, Joe, Lorrie); 2 abstentions (Joel, Steve). The motion passes.
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- Remington Murder Mile—Bob Talda

- Gary Williams plans to organize a road mile race up Remington Road in Ithaca, from the bottom near Boynton School to the very top, crossing Sunset and Cayuga Heights Roads and finishing on Berkshire. The race would be 1 mile in length and have 400 feet of climbing. Bob would like to invite Gary W. to come to a meeting. One of his thoughts is that it might have advantages as a club event. Gary M. notes that, as he wrote to Gary W., there is a concern about the Cayuga Heights crossing, which would require stopping traffic. It was agreed for Bob to invite Gary W.
 - Tily Holiday Open House (Saturday, Dec. 17, 4-9 p.m., 4 Corners, Locke)—Lorrie Tily
 - Lorrie says that all are invited to come, bring a dish and beverage, and share in cookies and holiday cheer.
 - Hartshorne Volunteer Award—Lorrie Tily
 - This has historically been awarded each year to one or two outstanding volunteers in honor of their community service (which doesn't have to be related to the FLRC).
 - The club has not given the award in the past few years, perhaps since Diane Sherrer's death. It was an important initiative to Diane.
 - Lorrie suggests reinstating the award. The Club Secretary would advertise it to the mailing list, put it in the newsletter, and include a mail-in ballot. The Secretary would collect the ballots. Club members could write in anyone they want, just not someone who has won the award in the past ten years. The prize used to be a running quilt and then became a cash stipend that often was donated.
 - There was general agreement to reinstate this award and to ask Shelly Marino, as the 2012 Secretary, to take this up in January.
- 6:48 Finances—Sophia Darling (*in absentia*)
- Total income for 2011 is \$76,000. \$22,000 of this is from membership dues. Total expenses amount to \$69,000, Net income is \$3632.
 - Nancy suggested that next year it would be a good idea to have team shirts for cross-country. They could be available through pre-ordering only.
 - Gary asked for clarification. If every race made money, where did the high expenses come from? Others noted that Sophia would be in the best position to answer this question.
- 6:50 Membership items are tabled until the next meeting due to time constraints.
- 6:51 Newsletter Update—Liz Brundige
- Liz is still planning to get out an end-of-year issue.
 - Joel offers to collect numbers (e.g. of total miles run, fastest times, donations) by Monday, Dec. 19th to include in the newsletter.
 - Chris suggests that the member profile feature of the newsletter is valuable and should be used to showcase members whom people may not know well. Liz notes that she doesn't have anyone lined up for this issue and asks for recommendations. John Dutcher's name is suggested. Liz will try to contact him.
- 6:53 Marketing
- FLRC Resolution Series—Joel Cisne
 - Joel is working on a New Year's Resolution 5K Series, which will include three races at Cass Park on Sundays – Jan. 15, Jan. 22, and Feb. 5 – tentatively at 12 noon. He would like the first to be a 1.5 mile showshoe race out and back. The races will be free to FLRC members. Non-members can run for \$15, which would also be good for FLRC membership.
 - Lorrie notes that it will be important to make sure that the course is marked properly and that the permit and insurance are taken care of. Joel states that an advantage of the enclosed course at Cass Park is that you don't need to have a permit, so long as you don't put anything in the ground.
 - Gary and Bob offer assistance.
 - Casey cautions that black ice can be very dangerous and should be watched for.
 - Gary suggests moving the time of the races to 1 p.m. Joel agrees.
 - With the support of the Board, Joel will go ahead in organizing the series and an announcement will be forthcoming.
 - Johnson Board Fellows—Kim Szpiro (*in absentia*)
 - The committee will be meeting in late January, and Kim will provide an update then.

- Finger Lakes Running Company Film night—Lorrie Tily
 - Ian would be interested in partnering with the FLRC to do two showings each of two films at Cinemopolis, probably on two Thursdays in March, of Ride the Divide and Unbreakable.
 - If the club were to sponsor, it would be around \$250. Lorrie wasn't sure if this figure was the amount for each film or for both together. The idea would be to meet around 5:30/6; then go to the movies. Ian suggested charging a \$5 fee.
 - Lorrie moves that the FLRC co-sponsor the film series. Bob seconds the motion. Gary proposes an amendment to the motion, which is accepted, that the co-sponsorship be capped at \$500 for both films. The motion is unanimously approved.

6:59 Webpage update—Maria Costanzo

- Maria reports that the web person the club hired made some needed changes. Within a few weeks, the new website will be ready to launch.

7:00 Equipment—Chris Reynolds

- All there, nothing to report.

7:00 Vice President's Business—Joe Reynolds

- Nothing to report.

7:01 New Business

- USATF Sanctioning and Representation—Lorrie Tily, Bob Talda
 - Lorrie explains that the USATF Sanctioning process for competitive road races has changed its fee structure. She isn't sure what the fees will be but they could amount to \$1500 if you need insurance. This is a considerable expense but it has to be done; people want their times to be recognized. The process has been started for Skunk Cabbage.
 - Gary questions whether this expense is worth it for Twilight since the appearance of the train can throw times completely off.
 - Bob notes that we should probably have someone to represent the club at USATF regional. This is a very messy, political fora but it may be important to try to understand what is going on.
 - Joel agrees to attend and keep up with the regional proceedings.
- Fruit basket—Lorrie Tily
 - Sophia fell and severely broke her ankle. She is out of commission and will need to have surgery. Lorrie proposes that the club send a fruit basket. There is enthusiastic agreement.

7:11 Old Business

- Elections—Jill Cusack
 - Jill notes that votes are coming in. When voting closes after December 15, she will send the list of elected officers to the listserv, welcoming the new officers.
 - Nancy notes that it should also go in the newsletter.

Adjourned at 7:15 pm

Next Board Meeting: *Wednesday, January 11, 2011*