



**FINGER LAKES RUNNERS CLUB**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

June 9, 2021 at 5:38 PM  
Meeting held at the Engst home

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**Attendance**

- **Present:** Heather Cobb, Adam Engst, Tonya Engst, Jullien Flynn, Nancy Kleinrock, Pete Kresock, Mickie Sanders-Jauquet, Steve Shaum, Charlie Trautmann, Bill Watson
  - **Absent:** Mike Allinger, Charlie Fay, Gary McCheyne
  - **Club members and guests:**
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**Reports & Discussion (5:38–8:04)**

***Welcome of the Board (Adam Engst)—5 minutes***

- Revisions to the agenda
  - No revisions.
- Acceptance of the [May meeting minutes](#)
  - Accepted.
- Acknowledgment of notable volunteer efforts
  - Thanks to Gary for his wonderful job pulling together Thom B with short notice, as well as to Dave K. and Eric S. for marking the course so well.
  - Thanks to Mickie for her wonderful job with Tortoise & Hare, including arranging to get volunteers together for drinks the night prior and putting out a Webscorer-based email blast the night before the race.
- Goodbye to Jullien Flynn and Pete Dady
  - Pete Dady has resigned from the board due to scheduling conflicts, although he will be staying on as co-RD of the FL50s and Forest Frolics; many thanks for his service.
  - Huge thanks to Jullien for her service on the board as she departs for her upcoming postdoc in Boston. Wishing her all good things.
- Note that the Skunk Cabbage race director position remains open.

***Finance (Adam in lieu of Mike Allinger)—10 minutes***

- Report on the [club's financial position](#) as of June 2021.
  - Funds have come in for the FL50s without much being spent yet; funds raised for the Friends of Hammond Hill yet to be transmitted to that group. Taken together, this leaves an artificially strong financial position.
- For other business, see the [Finance Committee meeting notes](#).
  - Years ago, when Katie Stettler was treasurer, a club investment policy was considered by the Finance Committee; this will be reviewed by the current committee and a draft will be brought to the board for consideration of acceptance as official policy.
- Adam hopes to have a discussion with the anonymous donor to see whether that individual is interested in moving forward at some point.

***Group Runs (Heather Cobb)—15 minutes***

- Update on past and future FLRC Challenge-focused group runs
  - Eight people participated in the Tortoise & Hare run-through.
  - Eighteen people participated in the Thom B run-through.
- Request for a budget line to purchase food for post-run snacks
  - Heather would like to offer some snacks (e.g., bagels/cream cheese) to encourage people to hang around and socialized post-run.
    - Budget should cover two runs per month, with a suggestion of 18 bagels/cream cheese per run; \$500 for the remainder of 2021 should serve as a generous budget for this purpose.

- **Motion:** Heather moves that the club budget \$500 for the remaining calendar year to purchase food and drink to be shared after public group runs.
    - Seconded; unanimously approved.
- Informal Twilight group run hosted by Mickie on June 16, 7 pm, at the Waterfront Trail.
  - Mickie will host this run as a nod to Twilight at the time that the race would have been held.
- Discussions have been taking place about conducting evening social group runs ending in drinks or dinner, including the possibility of a Juneteenth group run on June 19 that would end at a black-owned business in Ithaca.
  - Discussions among a select group of board members and Sarah Ridenour have taken place to consider organizing evening social runs that would look more like runs and less like drinking outings (pub crawls), although finishing at a bar or restaurant.
  - The first of these could be a Juneteenth evening run starting at 6 pm at MIX (a black-owned eatery); proceeding to the Zion Church/Southside Community Center; then loop around downtown and back to MIX. The total would be roughly three–four miles, ending at MIX for drinks.

#### **Events (Adam Engst)—15 minutes**

- The Annual Picnic will take place on Thursday evening, August 26, at Upper Buttermilk State Park with catering provided by Fitnell Farms. Volunteers will be given extra swag the club has on hand.
- Equipment:
  - It would be useful to conduct a storage room cleanup day to assess and organize the club's equipment.
- Discussion of the Volunteer Coordinator position and the volunteer experience. See [notes from the May 19 call](#).
  - It would be useful to rebuild a volunteer database, since what we have is considerably outdated.
  - Adam intends to use Google Forms to build a self-signup tool for current volunteers and, going forward, encourage potential volunteers to use it.
  - Tonya notes that it is important create an overtly welcoming environment for volunteers.
- Discussion of whether near-future board meetings should take place in person or via Zoom.
  - Straw poll of whether to meet in person at the Engst house or via Zoom in July: in-person, 6 votes; Zoom, 8 votes.
  - The July board meeting will take place over Zoom.
  - The matter will be revisited in August and thereafter.

#### **Diversity (Jullien Flynn)—10 minutes**

- The Diversity Committee will need a new chair to replace Jullien.
- Ved Gund has resigned from the committee for personal reasons.
- Pete Dady has been invited to stay on the committee after leaving the board.
- Jullien will reach out to Gabrielle Woo to join the committee; she will post an “announcement” on the forum to solicit committee members and a new chair.
- Charlie mentions The Village at Ithaca, founded by Cal Walker, a downtown-based nonprofit serving young people of color; he believes that that organization might provide an inroad for engaging with local people of color.

#### **Road, Trails, Track (Various)—15 minutes**

- Update on FLRC Challenge (Adam)
  - 161 participants in the FLRC Challenge
  - 51 kids in the FLRC Kids Challenge, with eight or nine over 25 miles and one over 50
  - 18 people have completed all ten FLRC Challenge courses
  - Jesse Canfield completed the FLRC 100K Ultra Challenge
- [Race report:](#) Thom B. on May 22 went off well with 79 finishers. (Adam in lieu of Gary)
- [Race report:](#) Tortoise & Hare on June 6 was a big success with 94 finishers. (Mickie)
  - Mickie provided an awards table, permitting people to choose their own prizes.
  - Mickie intends to stick with her new tradition of having her volunteers meet for drinks Friday night for the Sunday morning race (total costs ~\$60).

- Upcoming race: Finger Lakes 50s on July 3. Updates and status?
  - Pete has sent out request for volunteers, but only to a small number (20-ish) of folks.
  - It is suggested to set up a check-in meeting soon to make sure all is on track for a successful race; Mickie will attempt to set up a meeting.
- Upcoming race: Fillmore 5K on July 17. Updates and status? (Lorrie, via email)
  - “We have received permission to use the Moravia Track for the Fillmore 5K. At this time, they are not allowing use of the concession stand, however I believe that will change by the day of the race and if not we can work around that. We have requested the use of the streets of Moravia by the village board and expect to hear back from them after their June 17 meeting. Four Town First Aid Squad will be the benefactor of all profits from the race. As in the past, they will assist with volunteers for the race. Custom-made awards have been ordered and received. We are in good shape.”
- Upcoming races: Summer track in July and August. Updates and status? (Adam)
  - Adam has posted the webpages and opened registration for the two summer meets at Lansing High School.

### **Governance (Charlie Trautmann)—20 minutes**

- Other ideas to add to our [working document](#) outlining skills, experiences, and backgrounds that we might want to see for future board members.
  - The purpose of the working document is to recognize holes in our wish list and recruit board members strategically.
  - Desirable attributes include skills in philanthropy, insurance, search and rescue, parks contacts, and trail maintenance.
  - Nancy suggests adding “connection with local trail organizations” (with Cat Massa as a model prospect) as an “experience.”
  - Anyone with additional suggestions is welcome to add their ideas to the Google Doc (in suggesting mode).
  - As an aside, Charlie notes that there is a regional/county-ish-level trail group that meets regularly.
- Discussion of switching FLRC from a membership structure to a board-driven structure. Some of the issues involved were outlined in [these Governance Committee meeting notes](#) but committee members will also share the pros and cons of each approach.
  - Charlie describes how the board is currently selected according to the in-place bylaws; alternatively, the board could select itself as a “self-perpetuating board,” with a slate proposed on which the current board would vote.
  - The question arises, with a bylaws revision, is whether to retain the current structure, modify it, or wholly replace it.
  - Charlie invites each individual to express thoughts on this issue, beginning with opinions of the Governance Committee members:
    - Bill: Bill sees no need for a membership election, considering it to be a waste of time and is in favor of a self-perpetuating board; alternatively, he would remove the opportunity of write-ins and implementing rules for what would happen if the board is voted down.
    - Adam: He largely agrees with Bill’s thoughts, adding that he believes that what we have been conducting is a “pretend election,” since the outcome is preordained; he sees the voting process as not representative of the club, since only a relatively small percentage of members actually vote (30–50 votes are received per election cycle). Were we to retain the current structure, we should do away with the write-in component to protect against the possibility of a hostile takeover of the board (recognizing that an automated attack is not especially viable).
    - Nancy: Nancy does not want to switch away from the membership structure, believing that the opportunity to vote connects those who choose to do so with the club, giving them a sense of belonging. Absent this structure, the only reason to join the club is to receive discounts, not to feel like part of a community. She is not averse to doing away with the write-in option, but thinks it would create an

unwelcoming environment to, in effect, insulate the board from the club's members.

- Tonya: One thing that bothered her in the past is not desiring to vote for the slate, but couldn't come up with a graceful way to vote against an individual on the slate. She would feel more comfortable to have an overt way to vote FOR the people she wants rather than omitting someone from the presented slate.
  - Pete: There is a conundrum regarding anonymous voting vis a vis checking membership status. He appreciates giving people the opportunity to feel included but believes that removing the opportunity for write-ins is good.
  - Jullien: She considers that the sense of inclusion provided by membership voting is good, but is in favor of removing the opportunity for write-ins.
  - Heather: She notes that sometimes change is necessary.
  - Mickie: She is in favor of a board-driven structure; it is what she is familiar with and finds it to make the business of the board "cleaner."
  - Steve: He is in favor of removing the write-in option. He is also strongly in favor of helping the members feel included. He notes that the representation of the club membership at our group runs, races, and other activities are also small (as is the case with voting). He does not see a reason to take away this opportunity for inclusivity.
  - Mickie suggests moving the annual meeting to coincide with voting for the board and hold an in-person secret ballot at the annual meeting.
  - Charlie suggests asking the individuals who Nancy suspects might object to the proposed structural change how they feel about it.
  - Steve suggests surveying the club members more broadly.
  - Adam notes that there is a thought to put out a broad-based survey that covers a wide variety of topics.
- Soliciting members for the Nominating Committee.
    - To get the desired board structure, the Nominating Committee should be beefed up, with additional contributions from other board members.

**Membership (Adam Engst)—5 minutes if time available**

- [Members](#): 473 members (up 21 from last month), down from 628 at this time last year
- Memberships: 291 memberships (up 10 from last month), down from 387 last year
- [Breakdown](#): 211 individual, 257 family members
- 14 usages of our offer of free membership to those hurt by the pandemic (up 4)

**Web/Tech Team (Adam Engst)—2 minutes if time available**

- Discourse community engagement report
  - Currently has 815 users (up 11), 366 posts in the past 30 days (up 46), and 18,000 pageviews (up 900)

**Communication (Adam Engst)**

- Full-page calendar and quarter-sheet calendars ready for printing and distribution.
- Any requests or suggestions for the June Footnotes?

**Equipment (Gary McCheyne)**

- No activity on which to report.

Heather moves to adjourn at 8:04 pm; seconded. Approved.

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**Upcoming Board Meeting Dates**

- July 14, 2021
- Aug 11, 2021
- Sep 8, 2021
- Oct 13, 2021
- Nov 10, 2021
- Dec 8, 2021