

# International Lightning Class Association

DRAFT - Minutes of the 2013 Midwinter Governing Board Meeting

March 14, 2013 – St Petersburg Yacht Club

## **Call to Order**

The Governing Board Meeting was called to order by President John Faus at 9:36 AM.

## **Roll Call**

In Attendance: John Faus, Debbie Probst, Bill Faude, Bill Clausen, Victor Lobos, Rob Ruhlman, Brian Hayes, James Taylor, Ian Edwards, Todd Wake, Jo Ann Jones, Terry Hamilton, David Starck, Valerie Holly-Tardif, Tom Allen Jr., George Koch, George Sipel, David Sprague, Kip Hamblet, Josh Goldman, Jan Davis, Steve Davis

## **Reading of the Minutes from the Last Meeting**

Brian Hayes made a motion to dispense with reading of the minutes, it was seconded by George Koch, and unanimously approved.

## **Reports of Officers**

### **President's Report – John Faus**

President Faus started off by thanking Jo Ann Jones and Terry Hamilton, Southern Circuit Co-Chairs, for organizing another successful Southern Circuit. These ladies have done an amazing job. Things are busy in the Class office with members gearing up for a busy summer sailing season here in the US and also for the World Championships coming up in June. Thank you to Laura Jeffers for helping to make things run smoothly.

This fall US Sailing is hosting their Championship of Champions regatta in Colombia, SC. The event will be sailed in Lightnings. The organizing committee is looking for boat owners that would like to help support this event. US Sailing will help with the transport of the boats.

### **Treasurers Report – Victor Lobos**

Treasurer Lobos gave an overview of the 2012 Year End Financials compared to 2011 figures. North American dues (Skipper, Associate and Crew) were down more than 23% or \$8,500.00 USD. South American dues were up 80% (\$1,305.00 USD) over last year. Europe was up 5% over last year's significant increase. Fleet dues were also down overall about 14% or \$400. Flashes Advertising continued to decrease. Sail and boat royalties were up for the year. Mast royalties and store merchandise sales were slightly less.

Expenses for the most part were all held lower than 2011. Flashes, website upgrades and regatta expense line items all saw a slight increase from 2011. Most notable was the increase in Flashes expense due to the return of the printed Flashes and it being mailed to all previous skipper members going back 5 years. The response to this mailing has been good which can be seen in our 2013 figures. Currently for 2013, income - namely membership dues are trending better than last year at this time. Please remember to encourage your Fleet Members to renew their dues. Discussion ensued. Brian Hayes noted deep concern for the significant decrease overall memberships. President Faus explained that Bill Fastiggi has taken on the task to work with the District Commodores in North America to communicate with each District to see how the Class can lend its support and to encourage increased participation in the ILCA. Other suggestions included developing a dues phone tree reminder system, sending paper reminders, increasing annual dues and collecting more fees from the top 10% users in the class (Southern Circuit, NA's and ACC's participants). Brian Hayes made a motion for the Executive Committee to explore a potential dues increase and report the findings back to the Governing Board prior to the next meeting so the Governing Board can review and provide further input regarding a potential dues increase proposal. David Sprague seconded and motion was approved. The 2013 budget was differed to the evening's Winter Meeting.

### **Chief Measurers report – Bill Clausen submitted written Report:**

I would like to thank Clarke Newman for a fantastic job of organizing the measurement team last summer in Houston. They were well prepared for the lineup of boats and sails to be measured in a somewhat high temperature environment. The measurement was thorough but moved smoothly.

I have published a ruling that I made last summer that says that for sanctioned Lightning regattas black numbers on a dark blue panel of the spinnaker is not permitted. This ruling came about because PRO's mark rounding boats and boats taking finishes could not read the numbers.

The simplified measurement control sheets that were used in Houston at the North Americans last year worked out very well and I intend to use them this years at the Worlds in Italy as well as the North Americans. I also want to thank All the boat owners for being available for and cooperative in the measurement process. I will have the class scale available throughout the regatta here as well as calipers to check centerboard thickness.

In addition to the written report Chief Measurer Clausen wanted to share a few comments that he has been hearing from various race committees. The first comment is that Lightning sailors typically don't protest and do not exonerate themselves (doing penalty turns) when rules are broken. We have rules, sailing is a sport. Please adhere to the rules. If this type of sailing continues the Class may be forced to add on the water umpires. It was also suggested by Kip Hamblet that the class entertain a specific rule where a sailor could not throw out a DSQ or something else to help this issue. Ian Edwards suggested using the new pre-hearing option. Clausen concluded the warning to both sides, the sailor fouling and not doing turns or the sailor letting a foul occur and not protesting. President Faus added that he will contact VP Rules, Darryl Waskow to see if he has anything to add regarding these rules discussions.

### **Secretaries Report – Debbie Probst**

Secretary Probst made a call for more reports and articles of interest for Flashes, Flash Blasts and the Yearbook. She is in the process of documenting the roles and responsibilities of all Vice Presidents and Officers so future transitions will be easier.

### **Vice Presidents and Committee Reports**

**Boat Grant – BG committee member Bill Faude** reported that Justin Coplan and Will Brown are doing a great job leading this group. This year's recipients have submitted possibly the best applications received to date. Mitch Hall from Charleston, SC (mentored by Chris Hamilton) and Colin Smith from Providence, RI (mentored by Jay Mueller) have been chosen as this year's recipients. Please welcome them to the Class when you see them about this summer.

Faude continued and noted that there have been some discussions about not getting enough applications to this program. While the number may not be very high, the strength of the applicants is. As a Class we have to realize that it is harder to keep an existing program going. We need the membership to help with suggesting and talking about this program in your local area. This type of grass roots approach is needed to help sustain this program. In addition the committee will be working on other avenues to spread the reach of this program. For example, have a Lightning available at a collegiate regattas for kids to see and possibly try. Attend events such as the Orange Bowl where colleges and classes are showing up to market to young sailors. Another option is to look into offering special events for young adults to come and experience what the Class has to offer. The Snipe Class has a program like this that is working well. The committee may be asking for help to organize additional opportunities like this in the future. If anyone has any suggestions for the committee please pass them along. Tom Allen Jr. added that the committee should consider letting younger foreign teams use the boat grant boats during the Southern Circuit or other off times to extend the reach of the program.

**VP Worlds – David Starck** reported that planning is going well in Italy for the June Worlds. He wanted to thank Rob & Abby Ruhlman for traveling over to Castiglione to preview the area and assist the local organizers with planning. He also thanked Tom Starck, Mark Schneider and Ian Edwards for their support with organizing the containers.

The 2014 Youth Worlds will be held at the Buffalo Canoe Club in Canada. The date has not been set yet, but it will be in July. Ian Jones is the chair for this event and the committee will be submitting a proposal to be voted on at the next meeting in Italy to increase the fleet size for this event.

**North American's Report - Josh Goldman** reported that planning for the 2013 NA's is going well. They are planning for 80+ boats. The NA's in 2014 will be in Sheboygan, WI and that regatta will act as the US qualifier for the 2015 World Championship that will be held at the Buffalo Canoe Club. The next two years should have a good showing. We will be announcing the call for 2015 bids soon. Discussion ensued around the topic of timing with the 2015 World Championship (BCC) and the 2015 NA's. Neither date has been set, but the organizers for the Worlds do not want to conflict with the NA's. President Faus asked Goldman to form a committee that would evaluate the length of the NA's and determine if a shorter time frame would be more desirable. If the timeframe was shortened the qualifying system would also need to be addressed; possibly a way to qualify through your District Championship or other District Regattas. Goldman will put together a committee and report the findings back to the Executive Committee.

**Lightning Labs – George Sipel** reported that two labs have been confirmed so far for 2013, July 12th in the Central Atlantic District and May 25 & 26 in the Michigan District. Thank you to Jody Lutz and Ernie Dieball for leading these labs. There is a lot of other interest for labs including Columbia, Lake Delta YC in NY, Vancouver Canada, Erie YC and San Diego YC. He is working on getting these confirmed and added to this year's schedule. A comment was made that these labs are very important for marketing efforts. Please be sure to take pictures and submit a short write up.

**Pan Am Games - President Faus** announced that the Country Qualifiers have been set for the 2015 Toronto games and they will be posted on the ILCA website soon. The Lighting has been switched to the Mixed category, meaning there has to be at least one woman and one man on board. Faus appointed Special Projects VP James Taylor to act as the Lightning Class contact with US Sailing and to organize the US portion of the trials.

**Atlantic Coast Championship - President Faus** announced that the 2013 ACC's will be held in Wrightsville Beach on July 26-28th. There has been a meeting notice posted and scheduled for this regatta. One of the agenda items includes the flexibility to change the dates for this regatta in the future.

**ILCA Fund Report - Fund Committee member Steve Davis** reported that the funds are currently held in multiple CD's that mature every 3-4 months. This allows for access to funds when they are needed. Committee member David Starck added that the committee is protecting these funds and therefore are making very small interest. These are not high risk investments. Committee member Todd Wake added that some alternatives are being discussed where maybe we take more of a risk with a small portion of these funds in the future. Davis added that the committee is discussing the renewal of the Boat Container Program and that it is fulfilling its mission of overseas growth. The committee is also open to other ideas.

**Limbaugh Fund Report - Committee Member Kip Hamblet** reported that they are looking to promote this fund. The committee has not met in some time and they will be getting reorganized soon.

**Marketing Report - VP Marketing and Executive Committee Member At-Large Bill Faude** submitted a written report:

As one of ILCA's two VP's of Marketing, I had opportunity to address the US Sailing One-Design Sailing Symposium in Cleveland in January. It was a great opportunity to meet sailors from more than 30 other classes and to share some of what we in Lightning sailing understand and programs/thinking we have been putting in practice for the past decade or so. At the end of the weekend, the Lightning came out looking pretty progressive.

Simply put, our job in marketing this class is continually finding new news to provide the sailing public about our class. To succeed in an improving economy where new classes are rapidly being launched, We must literally reintroduce our 75-year-old boat every year. We must always be finding ways to prevent the Lightning from appearing to be a traditional or a venerable or a time-tested class (AKA: Tame and Lame in the minds of our most important target market:

Sailors who already have experience racing who are looking for an opportunity to improve their skills by enjoying some of the most challenging racing in one design sailing.

Key Proof Points:

- Big fleets.
- Tactical racing where speed advantages are small.
- Some of the best sailors in one-design sailing.

Our Class has a wealth of other strengths. Yes, we're a family class. We're really inclusive and welcoming. We have good resale value. We have fleet sailing distributed over more areas and still stronger than most any class in sailing. Our boats trail really nicely behind even a smallish car. We have lovely hard chines. We have an active classic boat tribe. The boat is a wonderful design that digs in upwind and feels like a bigger boat when you drive it. It also planes thrillingly.

All true. But after much consideration, none of these possible selling points are as important to communicate to the key target as the message and the proof points above. If you're doing a personal selling job, use any of the other points. But if you have time to cede just one thing, go with the single primary message.

If we all work consistently, the impact of our common language will be multiplied. If anyone has any questions or comments on this, let's discuss.

### **Future Thinking:**

As part of our strategy of constant reintroduction, we're doing some visioning about how we can expand the opportunities for prospects to try the Lightning. The Boat Grant Program is a brilliant example. Teams not only get to sample the boat, they have a whole season to experience the small and large regattas and all the accompanying tribal aspects of Lightning sailing. The Championship of Champions is another sampling opportunity albeit one that impacts a group of sailors already very loyal to other classes and therefore slightly out of our key target. Moving forward we will be exploring how to augment these initiatives...one idea that's been advanced is an opportunity for sailors our members might identify in their areas, to bring one crew with them and sail a privately-provided boat in a "fleet within the fleet" at one of our best attended regional regattas. It's but a single idea, but it addresses our ongoing challenge—new news from the Lightning—always new news from the Lightning—the 75 year-old-class that acknowledges but doesn't act it's age.

**ISAF Report - David Sprague** commented that Classes such as the Lightning pay about 30% more than National Authorities and that these Classes do not have the same representation. He will be coming to the Executive Committee soon to work on some proposals to submit to ISAF.

**International Development - Ian Edwards** reported that there is some Lightning interest in the Middle East specifically in Doha, Qatar. He will continue to work on this interest.

**Southern Circuit - Terry Hamilton** thanked the sponsors and participants for coming. We are happy to include a new sponsor this year, SOAK, LLC. This year we added a mentor program and it has received good reviews. A special thank you to this year's mentors, Nick Turney, Todd Wake, Brian Hayes, David Starck and Dave Dellenbaugh. This year we had 41 boats in Savannah and 44 in Miami. It is projected to be about 51 here in St Pete. 26 boats are sailing in all three events. The dates for 2014 are Miami - March 16-18 and St Pete March 20-22. We are also pleased to report the John Porter and the Savannah YC are planning to continue to hold the Deep South Regatta a week or two prior to the circuit. We will have questionnaire ready to distribute immediately after next year's circuit to evaluate the two venue circuit and make a decision on the format for 2015. This decision will be decided very quickly after next year's circuit.

## **Charters Ratified or Revoked**

Secretary Faus announced that we have three fleets seeking re-activation. The first is in Erie, PA, Fleet 24 "Erie Yacht Club". They have 6 registered Skipper Members. The second is in Grosse Isle, MI - Fleet 233 "Ford Yacht Club". The third is in Perugia, Italy - Fleet 453 "Flotta Del Trasimeno". The 2013 World Championships will be held here in June. Todd Wake moved to ratify these charters. David Sprague seconded, all approved.

## **Ratifications of Executive Committee Rulings**

President Faus reported that the Executive Committee has set the NA Ratio at 3:1, however the organizing authority has requested we lower it to 1:1. The facility can handle 90+ boats, so they would like to encourage participation and allow for people to make summer plans. Even with a 1:1 ratio, skippers still must qualify by participating in their District Championship Regatta. Where it is the committees hope that people will sail in their Districts, if for some reason they cannot make the regatta a skipper may participate by registering for the regatta. Todd Wake made a motion to ratify the revised 1:1 ratio; Bill Faude seconded, all approved.

## **Unfinished Business**

President Faus wanted to review the 2012 NA's proposal that was submitted by the Texas District. Ian Edwards reported that 10, good quality races were held. It was big fleet sailing and there seemed to be two opinions. Some liked sailing in the large fleet and others didn't prefer the large fleet. He continued and suggested Clarke Newman be part of the committee Josh Goldman is putting together. Discussion ensued. It was decided that we still need to work on the current rule and that Goldman's committee might be able to make some recommendations.

## **New Business**

### **Italian District Request for more Worlds Entries**

Secretary Probst reported that the Host Country for the 2013 Worlds has requested additional entries into the Worlds. They have teams that didn't sail their qualifier because they were in school. VP of Rules Darryl Waskow talked with President Faus about his interpretation of the rule (Document Governing, Articles Governing all World Championships, Section V, Article 3 - Secondary Selection), which is as follows: If there are open slots available after all rotational requests have been made, then any country can request additional slots. These additional slots should be allocated on the same rotational basis as regular allocations. Countries requesting additional slots must first go through their qualifying regatta list first, before opening it up to additional requests. Discussion ensued. David Sprague made a motion to approve their request, Todd Wake seconded. Two members opposed, all others approved. Request granted.

### **Interest in Used Boats**

Secretary Probst reported that she has received some interest from the Italian and Greek Districts for older, lower priced boats. Discussion ensued. If anyone has any ideas regarding these inquiries please let Debbie know.

### **Insurance for the ILCA**

President Faus announced that we are looking at getting insurance for the Class. We are getting a quote from Gowrie Group and also Allstate. If anyone has any ideas or would like to help with this issue please talk to John.

### **Legal Counsel for the ILCA**

President Faus asked the group if anyone had any contacts with legal council that would be willing to work with the ILCA on occasion. There is no immediate need, but the Executive Committee would like to be prepared for future needs. Rob Ruhlman reported that he could help, just let him know what is needed. A few other names were also suggested for the Executive Committee to explore.

## **VP Position for the USA**

President Faus reported that there have been a few instances where decisions have had to be made on behalf of the US fleets. Within the current class leadership there is no individual position that is responsible for making these types of decisions. All other Countries have representation. He asked the group if there a need for a new Governing Board Position. Discussion ensued. It was recommended that if the current President was from the US then they should be able to make those decisions without increasing the size of the Governing Board. If a non US President is in office, they can appoint a member of the Executive Committee to act in this capacity.

## **New US Sailing prescription to 2013-2016 Racing Rules of Sailing**

President Faus announced that the PRO here at SPYC would like to include the new rules that US Sailing has prescribed: Appendix T, section's X and X in the SI's here in St Petersburg. Discussion ensued. A motion was made to embrace these sections of Appendix T and incorporate these new rules in to as many regattas held in the US as possible and encourage others countries to consider adopting them as well. It was seconded and approved.

Next official meeting will be in June during the World Championships in Italy. We will also hold a special meeting during the North Americans in August.

Meeting adjourned at 12:28 PM.