



**Minutes**  
**Governing Board Meeting, Cruising Club of America**  
**Tuesday, June 6, 2023 via Zoom**

1. Commodore Otorowski called the meeting to order at 1600 hours and welcomed attendees.

There were 22 people in attendance to start, constituting a quorum, ultimately reaching 26 participants including Commodore Chris Otorowski, Secretary Molly Barnes, Treasurer Kathleen O'Donnell, Historian Doug Adkins, Membership Chair Ernie Godshalk; the following Rear Commodores: Peter Balasubramanian, Steve Calhoun, Bev Crump, Ernest Hamilton, Atle Moe, Richard Schaper, David Utley, and Tom Wadlow; the following Elected Governors: Amanda Balasubramanian, Gretchen Biemesderfer, Dennis Durgan, Jeffrey Gonsalves, Spencer Kuhner, Mary Alice O'Neill, and Buddy Rego. Invited guests in attendance were: Post Captain Peter Driscoll, Webmaster Michael Moradzadeh, Financial Affairs Committee Chair Chace Anderson, Communications Committee Chair James Phyfe, Fall Meeting Chair Gretchen McCurdy, GAM Editor Phil Dickey, and NY Station Membership Chair Hiro Nakajima standing in for the RC.

2. There was a motion made and seconded to approve the minutes from the February 21, 2023 Meeting of the Board of Governors as presented with 2 minor edits to fix typographical errors. **The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.**

3. The Commodore began by giving his report. Immediately after the Annual Meeting in March, the Commodore and Shawn traveled to Geneva to attend the International Council of Yacht Clubs' European Conference in Gstaad, where he gave a presentation to leaders of other prestigious clubs. Chris and Shawn then joined the BVI cruise in process. They then attended the Annual Dinner for the Irish Cruising Club, where he presented the "Friendship Trophy" to their Commodore. Noting that the CCA has enjoyed a long relationship with the ICC and also the Royal Cruising Club, the Commodore and Shawn are looking forward to hosting the two respective commodores and their wives aboard *Aphrodite* during the CCA Mallorca cruise in September.

4. The Commodore then noted that Vice Commodore Jay Gowell is currently in Scotland, scouting the areas we might visit during the Scotland cruise in July 2025. He reminded us of the various upcoming cruises: Maine Cruise in July, Mallorca in September, Caribbean in March 2024, Baja in May 2024, Malta and Sicily in September 2024, and Scotland in July 2025. The question about diminishing returns with too many cruises per year was asked and the Commodore noted that he is not too concerned as historically two cruises have filled each year in addition to some regional cruises.

5. The Commodore called on Gretchen McCurdy, the Chair of the Fall Meeting Committee. Gretchen reminded us that the Fall Meetings will be held in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia on September 29 this year. They are encouraging members to arrive on Thursday, September 28 as the meetings will

begin on Friday morning, and plan to stay through Saturday afternoon or Sunday. She noted that Lunenburg is an historic community on the Nova Scotian south shore and has a strong fishing heritage and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. There will be a wonderful reception exclusively for CCA Members held at the Fisheries Museum on Friday night and will include the opportunity to tour the restored 1920s schooner, Blue Nose II, which will be at the dock for the event. While the Committee Meetings will be held at the School of Art, the larger meetings will be at different venues. The Welcome Center will be on Bras d'Or Lakes Station members' boats in the harbor. On Saturday, there will be a chance to sail either on Bras d'Or Lakes Station members' boats or on Blue Nose II. The registration is now available and online on the website. Gretchen noted that Lunenburg attracts a lot of tourists and thus encourages members to book their accommodations, which are listed on the events page of the CCA website, soon. The Commodore encouraged all of us to attend and noted that fall meetings tend to attract between 100-150 people, though we may be on the lower end of that range because the meeting is right up against the Mallorca cruise.

Ernest Hamilton noted that in addition to hosting the fall meeting, the Bras d'Or Station is also hosting a reception for CCA members participating in the Marblehead to Halifax race. The reception will be at the Royal Nova Scotian Yacht Squadron on July 13 at 1400 hrs, right before the Awards Ceremony which will be at 1630. They are also hosting a Station Cruise in company with the Royal Nova Scotian Squadron beginning on August 2<sup>nd</sup> in Shelburne and going to Yarmouth, in order to explore the Cape Sable area. All are welcome to reach out to Ernest if interested to learn more.

6. The Commodore called on Peter Driscoll who reported on the upcoming Maine Coast cruise. There are 17 boats with at least 40 people starting in Gloucester, Mass on July 22 and ending in Booth Bay Harbor Yacht Club the following Friday night. There are more details on the website. The cruise is now open for boats and people who are not members of the GMP because they can accommodate nearly double the boats currently enrolled.

7. Treasurer Kathleen O'Donnell gave her report. She reported the following balances: \$164,000 in the checking account and \$55,000 in the money market account. There are some outstanding bills, including one for approximately \$43,000 for the yearbook, which is on budget. She also noted that our P&L numbers would be a lot worse without the Safety at Sea seminars, which are highly profitable. Kathleen thanked that team for filling the programs, as that makes a big difference to the bottom line. There was an epic improvement in dues collection this year. All members are now paid and we only dropped 8 for non-payment. Kathleen thanked Molly, Ernie, and Michael, and especially the Rear Commodores for all their help. She noted that our insurance is going to be double what we had budgeted, something like \$66,000 in premiums and will be billing approximately 33% of that to the Bermuda Race which is co-insured with us. Kathleen will be sending emails to all of the Committee Chairs and responsible parties with their updated numbers for the first 6 months of the year and a request for their numbers for next year. Kathleen noted that they will be sending out the station allotment checks once Chace makes the Financial Affairs Committee report

The Commodore reminded us that we had concluded that it may be useful to change the fiscal year to match the calendar year. Because this requires a change to the Bylaws, we will need to bring that vote before the membership in the fall. The Commodore proposed that the governing board review and endorse the proposal so that we can present it as such in the fall. This change will put us in sync with the BRC and also change the timing of the budget planning process so that we are not trying to pull it all together in the middle of the summer cruising season. A motion was made and seconded to endorse the

Financial Affairs Committee's proposal to change the fiscal year to start on January 1<sup>st</sup>. The motion passes unanimously.

Chace then raised the issue of the station allotment. In the budget, we had designated \$1,000 per station plus \$15 per member of that station. Kathleen noted that historically, it has been \$1,000 per station plus \$15 per member, however, because there was no clear written record of the allotment, Kathleen had budgeted for a flat \$50/member, which is not enough for the small stations in particular. Kathleen noted that she and the Financial Affairs Committee would like the board to approve the allocation at \$1,000 per station plus \$15 per member, which will be about \$5,000 more than had been budgeted. There was a suggestion that the Financial Affairs Committee look into the possibility of making the allocation in the future based on a percentage of the dues so that the station allocations automatically increase as the dues go up. There was a motion made and seconded to set the station allocation at \$1,000 per station plus \$15 per member of that station. The motion passed unanimously.

The Commodore raised the question about getting a credit card for the club in order to facilitate things like securing venues for the fall meeting. Right now, the CCA has a debit card and individuals use their personal credit cards to secure meeting rooms. A motion was made and seconded to have the CCA secure a credit card for the purpose of securing venues for meetings. The motion passed unanimously. The Commodore asked the Financial Affairs Committee and the Treasurer to spend some time developing a proposed policy for how and when the CCA credit card could be used, to bring before the board in the fall.

8. The Club Historian, Doug Adkins, gave his report. With his classic dry humor, Doug noted that he is learning that being the Club Historian is fraught with peril, lest you forget to mention a certain member's name that begins with Ernie and ends with Godshalk, or if you misspell a member's name, you must be ready with apology and supplication. Doug invited us to send him ideas for his Waypoints articles. He also encouraged RCs to remind their station historians to continue to bolster the record of each station and post when appropriate. Doug noted that there is a well-dispersed collection of CCA archives at Mystic, in our archives, at IYRS, at the individual stations. With the Commodore's efforts to catalog the yearbooks, it has gotten easier to conduct research but it is difficult to dig through the archives at Mystic.

9. Ernie Godshalk gave the Membership Committee report that included three updates and one other topic. First, there are now 17 members designated with seafarer status (Board of Governor's approved status that allows us to waive the dues for members with financial or health challenges), which represents 1.2% of the club and is thus under the approved maximum of 2% of the membership. He also noted that Boston, with 8 seafarers, has 1.7% of that station's members, which is still in compliance too. Ernie believes that the program is being used effectively. The Governing Board authorized one-year waivers, renewable for up to 3 years. As we approach our 2<sup>nd</sup> year, Ernie is starting to wonder if we may want to permit members to be granted seafarer status indefinitely. The Membership Committee may return to the Governing Board in the coming months with that proposal.

Ernie's second topic was resignations. He noted that he has been collecting data about club resignations and most individuals identified lack of participation as their primary reason for withdrawing from the club, though they were usually prompted by the dues notification. There have been 21 resignations from 7 stations. When contacted for an exit interview, 2 withdrew their resignation, 4 were granted seafarer status, and the remaining 15 maintained their resignations. Ernie did not identify a trend to address

except for to encourage participation by all members, especially new members. He noted that the Membership Committee and the Long Range Planning Committee are both addressing member engagement.

Third was the topic of Member engagement. Included in the board packet was a proposed New Member Interest Checklist. The idea is that RCs can use the template and adapt it to for their own use with new station members. Sending it to new members might be a way to engage the new members.

Finally, Ernie raised the topic of the Membership Proposal System. He gave a brief history of the process and system used in the past. In 2017, the CCA Membership Committee retained Live Icom to develop and support our member proposal program separate from the CCA website.

The CCA paid approximately \$6,000 in development of the program and have paid a fixed fee of about \$1,700 per year for hosting, IT support and license fees. Amortizing those expenses over the life of the system, it has cost us just under \$3,000/year for the last 5 years. Ernie noted that the system works well and that Live Icom also built and oversees a similar program for the Ocean Cruising Club website.

Unfortunately, the system was built on a Microsoft platform that is no longer supported so we need to make a change. Live Icom proposes to port the system onto a new Microsoft platform and make some changes to the user interface that Ernie and the membership Committee believe will be good improvements based on the demonstration they saw by Live Icom at a recent meeting. Live Icom also propose to charge the CCA on a “software as a service” basis, which would be an annual fee.

Changing the platform to an annual fee model that would be \$3,500/year with a 3-year minimum contract, beginning on October 1. Ernie recommends that the CCA move ahead with the Live Icom proposal.

There was a motion made and seconded to approve the Live Icom proposal as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

There are currently 1359 members of the CCA. The Commodore noted that we typically have run right around 1400 members, so we may want to keep an eye on this. Ernie noted that we have been a little soft on membership proposals through COVID but those numbers seem to be bouncing back up again.

Kathleen noted that last year we thoroughly cleaned the membership list when we dropped about 21 members for non-payment, many of whom had not paid dues in multiple years.

10. James Phyfe gave a report on the Communications Committee. James noted that the committee had put together a new mission statement for the committee, which is now included on the “about us” section of the website.

Chuck Hawley continues to be very energetic in getting School of Hard Rocks and Safety Moments out. Chuck and John Burnham have done a great job of getting SAIL Magazine to pick up the CCA Safety Moments to publish them in their monthly newsletter. And we do Scuttlebutt advertising.

The Charts and Guides committee continues to do a lot of work with ongoing updates to the online cruising guide to Maine, a new edition of the Cruising Guide to Newfoundland and the latest- the Essential Guide to the Viking Route, which is at the printer as we speak.

James noted that the editors of the various publications meet monthly to discuss things. He also thanked Pat Montgomery who, after sailing for the summer, will be working to standardize our branding and

develop a style guide for all of us to follow. Ernie took the baton to help us think about a communications strategy- which we will pick up again in the fall, when people return from sailing.

11. The Commodore then called on Michael, our Webmaster Extraordinaire. Michael began by noting that he has made some technical updates to the website including updating the expiration date of the membership cards, which are now being used by 350 members. He reminded us that the value, in addition to the fact that some people just like to have membership cards, is that there is a calendar of events attached and a link to the website that does not require members to use their password. He went on to tell us about additions: self-serve event registration creation, which is available to all stations, and the ability to send email to groups in your station or committee. Those with edit access to their stations or committees will have a link at the top that allows them to send messages to the group. Michael reported that it has been working pretty well with minor glitches that he is working to resolve with MailChimp. Michael then noted that he and Chuck Hawley have been working hard to clean up the articles in the database including trying to bring the articles to a consistent look by using a script that strips out all the formatting without losing important content. The hope is that it will look more professional and will look more like Voyages. A Photo Gallery site has been added to the website but it is not being used yet and needs a little more work. There have been 35,000 page views in the last quarter. And finally, Michael will be updating the server, which should not impact anyone, later in the summer.

12. The Commodore asked Molly to read an update submitted by Alli Bell, Chair of the Next Watch Committee. Next Watch is planning a number of zooms in the fall that include presentations by Peter Gibbons-Neff, Molly Barnes, Brian Hill, and Roddy Hearne. Next Watch Chair Alli Bell will be passing off the reins and is excited to see what happens with the next iteration of Next Watch leadership. Several people acknowledged that the Next Watch Zoom presentations have been excellent.

13. The Commodore called upon Ami Green, one of the editors of Voyages. Molly read her submission: Voyages 2024 is gearing up to be a terrific issue that will include an interview with Kirsten Neuschäfer, the first woman to win the Golden Globe Race and CCA's recent recipient of the Rod Stephens Seamanship Award for her remarkable rescue of a fellow competitor. While it is still early for submissions (the deadline is October 16, 2023) Ami is confident we will have a wonderful array of stories. She is also excited about a recent conversation with James Phyfe about distributing the articles from Voyages. And finally, Bob and Ami have made the difficult decision to hand over the reins after they complete the 2024 Issue 66. They have spoken with Commodore Otorowski and hope the new editor selection will be made by September so that they can walk the new editor/editors through the process if needed. The Commodore then encouraged us to let him know if we have any ideas for a successor as it is a priority in the next couple of months.

14. The Commodore noting that he had just received his most recent copy of the GAM, which looks great, called on Phil Dickey. Phil noted that the GAM remains the most granular source of information about activities at the stations, on the committees, and about our membership. It is also the most rapid transmission of new things that happen regarding our membership. It is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the GAM. Phil concluded by noting that it is an amazing amount of work that our historians do and full steam ahead!

15. The Commodore called on the stations and posts for reports.

- a) Bermuda- Governor Buddy Rego noted that since he took on the role, there have been no meetings at the Bermuda station and he has nothing to report.
- b) Bra's D'Or- Having previously covered the upcoming events in Lunenburg, RC Ernest Hamilton said he had nothing to add.
- c) Buzzards Bay Post- Molly Barnes read the highlights from Ray Collum's written report: During the final winter luncheon, past Commodore Shiela McCurdy did a reprise of her excellent Centennial presentation on the "Characters of the CCA" to approximately 35 members of the post. Past Rear Commodore Bill Cook presented the 50-year pin to Kin Howland. It was 5 years late but Kin was very gracious in his acceptance. The annual Follow the Wave rendezvous in June was canceled due to extreme weather. There will be a cruise in company in July as a jumping off point for the Maine cruise. And the final Follow the Wave rendezvous will be on September 30<sup>th</sup> at the Great Hill estate in Marion. All are welcome to join.
- d) Chesapeake- RC Bev Crump noted that they had a successful, but lightly attended, spring cruise. The attendance was probably impacted by Memorial Day and a number of other cruises happening at the same time. They had a wonderful cocktail party attended by 60 people to start the cruise, even though the number of boats was down. The station has had very successful and well-attended luncheons every second Tuesday of the month at the Annapolis Yacht Club. In June, they will be having the luncheon at the Gibson Island Yacht Club- you can attend by boat or car.
- e) Southern California- RC Steve Calhoun reported that the station has hosted 2 of its 4 annual lunches and the 3<sup>rd</sup> will be happening next week. The highlight will be the opportunity to see a member's 58-foot yawl, which has been owned by the same CCA family since she was launched in 1938, and has been recently refit. Generally, the lunches are attended by 35-40 people. Many station members are getting ready for the TransPac. Steve highlighted that the station has a great membership chair and that they have brought in some good people. He then shifted to the Sea of Cortez cruise. Steve was in Baja in late April with Gary Davidson, one of the cruise co-chairs, on another member's boat. They sailed the planned itinerary and noted that everything checked out fine including getting into La Paz, the charter company (which has quality modern boats, both catamarans and monohulls), and the safety of the area where we are cruising. The cruise information is up to date on the website. Steve also asked how to get the word out to the membership about the cruise soon because the charter boats are reserved for CCA until August 1<sup>st</sup>; after that there are no guarantees that any will still be available. The Commodore encouraged Steve to be in touch with Michael ASAP about sending a cruise update to the membership.
- f) Essex- Tom Wadlow reported that since the March Governing Board meeting, Essex has had 6 events, 3 well- attended lunches, a potluck GAM, spring dinner at the Essex Yacht Club and just last weekend a spring cruise to the new CCA dock at the Mystic Seaport.
- g) Florida – Atle Moe reported that the Florida summer has started and many members are gone north. He noted that several members will be in Lunenburg this fall, including Atle who will be staying on his boat. He reported that for the first time in a while, there are some new members coming in to the Florida Station, which is great. When asked, Atle noted that Starlink is working well for him on the boat, especially when they are in remote areas where there are fewer users.

- h) Great Lakes- Peter Balasubramanian noted that they welcomed new members in March. They have a barbeque event planned at the Royal Canadian Yacht Club in Toronto on June 29<sup>th</sup> and they are trying to organize a Safety at Sea Practice on Your Own Boat session.
- i) Pacific Northwest- Dave Utley reported that they continued with their bi-monthly lunches at the Seattle Yacht Club, which generally draw 35 people + 15 on Zoom. They finished the spring cruise a few weeks ago, which included a party hosted by the Commodore at their house one night. The PNW Fall cruise will be in Princess Louisa and anyone is welcome to join us, noting that the scenery is spectacular. Dave also noted that the Commodore recently suggested that the station align its fall cruise with the 2025 Fall Meeting so that people can come out to do both.
- j) New York- Hiro Nakajima, standing in for RC Peter Becker, began by telling us that Peter just completed the first stage of the Bermuda 1-2 hours ago. The station is healthy and active. In March, Gary Jobson gave a talk and re-played the CCA Centennial movie and some other vintage films. NY currently has 127 active members in 51 surviving spouses and membership remains stable with an annual enrollment of 6-9 new members, including 3 this past March and several in the pipeline for the fall. Last week we had our annual clambake with 40 members at the home of former RC David Tunick's house.
- k) San Francisco- Richard Schaper noted that the monthly meeting is scheduled for tomorrow with 45 people registered even though it is 85 miles outside of town in Santa Cruz where we will learn more about boat building there. In the fall, we will have our fall meeting at Cal Maritime and will be going aboard their training vessel, the Cal Bear.

16. The Commodore asked for old business, hearing none, he moved to new business. The Commodore said that upon discussion with Vice Commodore Gowell, they would like to form a standing committee on cruises. We have learned that there is a lot to organizing cruises and volunteers would benefit from having more support and documentation of what has been done before. In addition, planning for some of the international cruises needs to start 3 years in advance. The goal is to stabilize the cruise program. There was a motion made and seconded to form a standing Committee on Cruises. After some brief discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

17. Governor Gretchen Biemesderfer raised the question of discounted insurance for CCA members. She and Bob Green have been discussing doing what the OCC does, which is using the depth of experience and skill to negotiate for more favorable yachting insurance rates. The Commodore noted that we may want to talk with our Quartermaster, Steve Prime, about that since he was in the boat insurance business. We noted that discounted insurance might enhance the attraction of CCA membership. After some discussion, the Commodore asked Kathleen to reach out to both Steve and also Sandy Vctor about what the feasibility of brokering a discount for CCA members seeking their own insurance.

18. The Commodore reminded us of the upcoming meetings of the Governing Board.
- a. September 5, 1600 ET, Tuesday via Zoom
  - b. September 29, at the Lunenburg Fall Meeting
  - c. December 5, 1600 ET, Tuesday via Zoom

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1735 hours Eastern

Respectfully Submitted,

Molly P. Barnes  
Secretary, The Cruising Club of America