

CONNECTICUT RIVER MUSEUM

Annual Members Meeting

15 September 2022

Minutes

**Call to Order:** Chair Peter Coombs called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the 23 September 2021 Annual Members Meeting were approved as distributed.

**Report of the Treasurer:**

Treasurer Robert Annon reported that operating income for the fiscal year ending 30 June 2022, CRM generated \$1,121K of operating income, \$388K higher than budget. With expenses \$129K higher than budget, the Total Net Income for the fiscal year was \$220K or \$259K better than budget.

“The outstanding performance for the fiscal year,” Annon reported, “is due in part to significant grant income, excellent results in the operation of our two vessels, the return of school groups, and a payroll tax credit.”

Expenses were higher than budget due to new hires, raises, and the additional staff required to operate our two vessels.

As of 31 August 2022, the Museum had \$394K in its checking account and zero drawn against its \$200K line of credit. The Museum’s investment accounts totaled \$2,353K.

**Special Presentation:**

Gary Johnson and Henry Wyngaarden of the Essex Auto club presented the Museum a check for \$4,000 in thanks for using the Museum’s grounds for its annual July 4<sup>th</sup> auto show. It was hoped \$3,500 could be used for general operating support and that \$500 be made available so that low- to middle-income children could come to the Museum free of charge.

**Special Award for Service:**

Trustee Joanne Masin presented the inaugural annual “CRM Founders Award” for exceptional volunteer service to long-time volunteer Merrill Perkins.

**Report on Collections:**

Collections Committee chair Brenda Milkofsky reported on collecting activity over the course of the year, highlighting, among others, the gift of a 1930 frostbite dinghy by member and yacht designer Mark Ellis which will find its place into a refreshed

yachting section of the second-floor gallery. Ms. Milkofsky also indicated the Committee will recommend to the Board that the Museum commission artist Len Tantillo to paint a researched imagining of the 1633-1653 Dutch trading post at present-day Hartford known then as the House of Hope to help tell the story of early European settlement of the river valley.

### **Buildings, Grounds, Docks, and Vessels:**

Vice Chair John Bennet reported on the general condition of the Museum's real and fixed assets. Several deferred maintenance items were being attended to on the buildings, made possible by spending a portion of a generous bequest. The Museum docks will be re-arranged and replaced with newly acquired, second-hand docks at the end of the sailing season. Both vessels are in good condition, with work to be done on the Onrust over the winter at Great Neck, Long Island.

### **Elections:**

Nominating Committee chair, Tom Wilcox presented, on behalf of the Committee the following slate of Trustees:

- For the Trustee Class of 2025 (three-year terms): returning Trustees John Bennet of Chester and Paul Rector of Essex; and new Trustees Paul Eddy of Westbrook and Johan Varekamp of East Haddam.
- For the Trustee Class of 2024 (two-year terms): returning Trustee Thomas R. Wilcox, Jr. of Essex and new Trustee Philip Coles of Deep River.
- To Life Trustee: retiring Trustee Joanne E Masin of Essex

A motion to adopt the slate as presented and empowering the Secretary to cast one vote in favor of it was made, seconded and: VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE the motion.

A slate of officers was presented as follows:

- For Chair (two-year term): John Bennet of Chester
- For Vice Chair (two-year term): Verena Harfst of Essex
- For Treasurer (one-year term): TBD
- For Secretary (one-year term): Thomas R. Wilcox, Jr. of Essex

A motion to approve the slate as presented by Trustees present was made and seconded and: VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE the slate.

### **Bylaw Amendments:**

Newly-elected Chair John Bennet introduced two amendments: one to the bylaws, the other to the Museum's certificate of incorporation, both amendments permitting the

Board of Trustees to elect new and additional members to its body without the requirement of Member approval at the Annual Meeting. Rather, the Board of Trustees could elect new members to its body at any of its regular or special meetings.

A brief discussion ensued followed by a motion to approve both amendments which was duly seconded and after a vote it was: VOTED TO APPROVE BOTH AMENDMENTS.

**Other Business:**

Chair Bennet led the assembled company in thanking Olivia White for her diligent service as Interim Director which will come to an end when new Executive Director Elizabeth Kaeser takes the helm as of 1 December 2022.

Mr. Bennet also announced the formation of a committee to plan the events surrounding the Museum's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024, chaired by Verena Harfst and Theresa Dryfoos.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:50 pm.

Submitted by:

Thomas R. Wilcox, Jr.  
Secretary