



PANAMA CANAL SOCIETY
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Saturday, August 5, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.
Seven Springs Golf & Country Club, New Port Richey, FL

The Board Meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Bill McLaughlin, P.P. (President).

Attendees:

Bill McLaughlin, P.P. (President), Carl Orvis (1st Vice President), Laura Kosik (2nd Vice President), Penny Canamas (Director), Mike Young (Director), Margaret McLaughlin (Director-at-Large), Elaine Lewis, P.P. (Past President), Ted Kaufer (Sergeant-at-Arms), Bill Lane (Chaplain), Jacque Vowell (Editor), Betty LeDoux, P.P. (Reunion Hotel Chairperson), Cheryl Williams (Reunion Hotel Co-Chairperson), Dave Bishop (Reunion Golf Chair), Anna Hertrich (Office Assistant), and Kathy Malin (Office Manager)

Attendees by Zoom: Bosco Hoyte (Director) and Ray Husum (ByLaws)

New Business:

Bill McLaughlin welcomed all and asked if everyone had read the June Board minutes. Elaine Lewis made a motion to approve the minutes, Penny Canamas seconded, and the motion carried.

Bill asked if anyone had questions about the Check Detail report that was sent to them. None did, Elaine made a motion to pay the bills, Penny seconded, and the motion carried.

Reunion Report:

Bill discussed the After-Action Reports (AAR) submitted by most Chairpersons. He asked about Zonie and Kathy Malin had asked Trent Romero (Amy Robertson and Jaimie Rheberg's grandson), if he would be Zonie this year. Amy said her other grandson, Manny Romero would love to be Zonie next year. Kathy recommends giving Amy a key card so they can change into outfit more often.

A few suggestions for next year:

- a) Registration had problems with the printer which Anna Hertrich will investigate. Purchase two cheap non-Wi-Fi printers. The cost of renting the hotels could have paid for two cheap printers.
- b) The registered attendee list mention in the AAR problem needs to be ironed out with a better system.
- c) Anna reported that she had great volunteers, and the names are in her report.
- d) People wanted lanyards or string badge holders verses the regular pin-back name badges. The Board decided on pouch lanyards next year instead of bags.
 - a. We need a sponsor to pay for the lanyards or go with the low end string type.
 - b. Kathy will acquire samples for the October meeting.
- e. Hiring additional people to work was discussed and ruled out except for moving, loading and unloading the office and reunion supplies.
- f. Bill reminded all that in the past, the Chairpersons worked in all positions and even picked up their supplies and carried them to the Reunions in their own cars.
- g. Bill asked why the Sunday loading was early. The Board members did not know about late check-outs. Laura asked Betty if she would send out letters to the Board explaining all their benefits.

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- h. Bill showed all the 5 pages he wrote of logistics and sign placements. Carl stated that Chairpersons should be putting out their signs before each event and returning them to the storeroom. Bill....doesn't agree with chairpersons moving signs. This was tried in the past and didn't work.
- i. The Vendors had a few issues during the Wednesday set up. It is evident that they do not read the vendor instruction packet. In the future, it is imperative that the rear doors of the vendor room are locked all morning until 1:00 and do not let the vendors in before 1:00 pm. Once the tables are in place in the room and have been inspected by the fire marshal tables are not to be moved.
- j. Mike Young would like to be the vendor and pool Chairpersons. Kathy Malin volunteered to work the Ball in place of Mike.
- k. The hotel cannot lock the air-wall doors between the Vendor and Dance rooms. Some for fire code and others can't be fixed as parts are unavailable.
- l. Margaret McLaughlin works long hours to put together the beautiful table decorations. As long as she is working at the flower shop, the discounts and tax free purchases for flowers and floral support items (vases, Oasis, floral tape, etc.) will be available for discount pricing for the Society.
- m. Bill had Laura Kosik read an email she wrote on ways to assist the Board members at the Reunion.
- n. Set up a schedule to make sure they don't work day and night shifts the same day.
 - a. There is no reason for 2 Board members to be present if we can get volunteers to work.
 - b. Board members with less job responsibilities should be floaters and assist other Chairpersons.
- o. Bill Lane and Bosco Hoyte wanted to attend other events and feel there is no need for 3 Board members to work 1 shift in Registration. Ongoing problem; Duty or pleasure.
- p. Carl Orvis asked if Anna was necessary in Registration. He thought she could assist Kathy. Bill wants Anna in charge of registration. Jacque can assist with Information. Betty and Cheryl volunteered to help at information along with Penny.
 - a. Ray Husum asked why registration is opened after the Luncheon.
 - b. The board discussed; Hours of operation on Saturday for Registration, information, ticket sales will only be open from 10am – 11:30am. Registration, information, ticket sales will be closed on Saturday afternoon. This will give volunteers and staff a chance to attend functions or class reunions. Any registration packets not picked up will go to the luncheon or ball chairpersons. Any packets not picked up by members will be returned to the office.
- q. Ray stated one of his bestselling times is after the luncheon so he will open at the same time as Bingo from 3 – 5pm on Saturday. His table will be outside the vendor room.
- r. A discussion arose about Official Name Badges. They do not receive free Ball tickets; the Board working the Ball did not know this. Samples will be given to board members for review.
- s. Mike and Kathy asked if we could allow children to attend the Ball from 8-9pm. Bill stated that a few years ago this was tried; the parent turned their kids loose in the ballroom. The children tore up decorations and parents were not controlling their children. He reminded us that Thursday and Friday dances have no restrictions.

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- t. Anna suggested having a children's event on Saturday from 6:30 – 7:30pm. No one was interested in organizing.
- u. Kathy will make sure more vendors ribbons will be on hand.
- v. Kathy will investigate if volunteers are covered under PCS Certificate of Insurance.
- w. The Class reunions all went well except for BHS 1978 who had to pay a corkage fee. The class coordinators were encouraged not to let housekeeping in their rooms. Betty is not aware of any other issues except someone taking supplies to their sleeping room that were excessive. Cabanas sold out right away. Ray thought it was funny that as older adults, that we are sneaking in food and drinks. He suggested adding a corkage fee of \$300 to all class reunions. It was brought up that 3 or 4 classes did pay for \$500 worth of food – pizza, etc.
- x. Carl reported that the golf luncheon was \$24.50 each to go in and make their own sandwich and scoop your own potato salad. He suggested we do away with the luncheon and just have a room for awards and add a bar. This will drop the cost and still make money. Dave Bishop had a spreadsheet with different suggestions for 2024. He says if we charge \$75 - \$80, we can give golf balls with logos and still have enough money for all the award prizes. Currently, \$90 does not cover lunch, golf, and prizes. We could increase it to \$100 to include luncheon. Betty read the history of golf prices.
 - a. Carl asked Dave & Kathy to send out an email questionnaire to golfers asking if they would like to have golf with a luncheon for \$100 or no luncheon with a cash bar and presentation for \$80.
 - b. It was suggested to get a room (possibly H-1) for awards with a cash bar if the golfers voted no luncheon.
 - c. Carl asked if there is not another golf tournament if the pro shop will let us add more golfers. Betty will ask if we could have more than 72 golfers and less than 128.
 - d. Bill and Dave discussed Golf sponsors.
 - e. Golf pricing will be \$80 or \$100 depending on the golfer's response.
 - f. Bar must make at least \$400 or pay the bartender fee.
- y. Bill reported that the hotel's food menu is \$62 per plate for the Annual luncheon. Our contract price is 20% off but Joan got it down to 35% off. The increase will be about \$9.40 a plate from 2023. The figures given to Bill are \$40.00 plus 26% Service Charge and 6.5% tax comes to \$53.68 inclusive. PCS will have to charge \$55 a plate to attendees. Bill sent an email back to Joan telling her we would not have a luncheon unless the prices drop. Bill told Joan, "I have a feeling the board will not approve having a luncheon this year or in the future if the pricing of these things keep going up."
- z. Bill said the musical show drew in a big crowd in 2023, but we don't have that kind of draw for 2024.
 - aa. Bill asked if anyone would pay \$55 to listen to a speaker. The Board then discussed and asked whether we needed a luncheon or not. The board agreed to soft cancel the luncheon, inform the hotel that we are cancelling the luncheon. We can revisit if the hotel drops the price to a more affordable price for our members.
 - bb. Bill has Stuart Redwood, a geologist from Scotland and working in Panama interested in speaking. He has written many books and has been interested in speaking at our event.

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- cc. Cheryl told the Board about a Table Planner online service. This will develop table seating at all PCS events and even organize vendor and other rooms set up. Penny made a motion to purchase Perfect Table Planners for \$74.95 (a one-time purchase) that would include 2 users and updates. Elaine seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- dd. Joan said the clubhouse pricing is in our contract. Clubhouse pricing is not in contract, only the bar pricing.
- ee. Bill explained about the issue of the price of kegs of beer for the pool party. The hotel wanted to charge \$225 a keg. The contract states \$200 and that fixed that problem.
- ff. Carl announced that Arnold Ferguson, BHS 94 wanted a DJ for Friday, but he was confused on how things worked at the Reunion and was not a member at that time. Mary Alice Albritton suggested a Beatles tribute band from the Space Coast area. Carl will speak to BHS 94 chairperson and the Board did not want a band that played only one type of music.
 - a. Betty announced that BHS 79 & CHS 79 and possibly 1974 groups wanted to sponsor Friday night music with a group called "Be Easy".
 - b. Bill will ask Frankie Pretto if he would like to play on Saturday night. If not, Kelly Fenton found a 10-piece Latin orchestra band in Orlando.
- gg. Margaret explained that she keeps the decorations at a good price since she works at a florist shop and pays wholesale prices and said for 2024 decorations will cost \$2300. Elaine made a motion to pay Margaret \$2300 to create center pieces for the ball and the luncheon if it happens, Penny seconded, and the motion carried.
- hh. Betty mentioned that we should raise the vendor fee. The Board discussed the vendors' cost and will leave at \$100. Betty reported that has been \$100 since 1985. To raise the fee would probably discourage vendors from attending.

New Business:

Betty discussed options for future Reunions hotels and dates. Right now, we have a contract for 2024 and 2025. Betty had a spreadsheet with numerous hotels in Orlando, Tampa, Jacksonville, and Dallas areas. The problem with most hotels that have convention space is the minimum for food and beverage is so high that the Society cannot afford those hotels. Right now, Rosen Shingle Creek does not have a food and beverage minimum for 2026 and 2027 and they have a great room price.

Betty asked the Board if they would consider moving the Reunion to August in 2028. She will investigate finding a new and smaller location. Shingle Creek Resort is offering a \$2500 signing bonus if the contract is signed by September 15th. Bill asked if he could designate a person to sign the contract since he is retiring. Ray stated he could, and Bill asked Carl to sign. Carl agreed to sign the Reunion contract with the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort for 2026 and 2027. A motion was made by Carl and Penny seconded, and the motion carried.

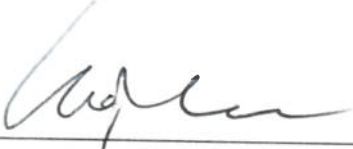
Upcoming Events:

Kathy discussed the upcoming events that Bill has proposed. She asked if the Board agreed to have a 15-minute Flamenco dance performance during the Christmas luncheon that Kelly Fenton will sponsor. All agreed. Kathy also asked about moving the May Gulf Coast picnic from May to March when it is cooler. All agreed. The Space Coast picnic will be the last week of February if available and the UF luncheon will be in April again. No meetings in May.

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Sarasota Luncheon is on September 9th.
Next Board meeting is October 7th.
Christmas Luncheon is December 2nd.

Penny made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Elaine seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting ended at 12:47 pm.



Bill McLaughlin, President



Kathy Malin, Office Manager