PANAMA CANAL SOCIETY
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Saturday, August 16, 2025– 9:30 am
Seven Springs Golf & Country Club, New Port Richey, FL

The Board Meeting was called to order at 9:36 am by Carl Orvis. (President).

Attendees:

Carl Orvis (President), Mike Young (1st Vice President), Penny Canamas (2nd Vice President), Cheryl Williams (Director), Dixie Barons (Director), Kelly Fenton (Director-at-Large), Ted Kaufer (Sergeant-at-Arms), Bill Lane (Chaplain), Jacque Vowell (Editor), Betty LeDoux, P.P. (Reunion Hotel Chairperson), Debbie Lane (Reunion Hotel Co-Chair), and Kathy Malin (Office Manager)

Attendees by Zoom: Ray Husum (ByLaws) and David Dahlstrom (Legislature Rep)

Absent: Bosco Hoyte (Director), Jim Parthenais (Treasurer) and Bill McLaughlin, P.P. (Past President)

Carl Orvis asked if everyone read the June Executive Board minutes. Cheryl Williams made a motion to approve the minutes, Dixie Barons seconded, and the motion carried.

Penny Canamas made a motion to approve the new member, Dixie seconded, and the motion carried.

Financials:

Carl asked if anyone had questions about the Check Detail report. Cheryl motioned to pay the bills, Penny seconded, and the motion carried.

Kathy Malin discussed the Profit and Loss (P&L) statement. She also recommended to update the Truist account by removing two and adding two other Board members.

President Remarks:

Carl stated due to health reasons, Jim Parthenais has stepped down from the Treasurer's position.

Old Business:

Kathy updated the Board on the October General Membership meeting and luncheon. Carl stated either he or Kathy will contact the Hilton Cocoa Beach to see if they can block rooms for the weekend of the February Space Coast General Membership meeting and potluck. Kathy recommended an Ad be placed in the October and December *Canal Records.*

Carl reminded the Board that the members at the July Annual meeting recommended the Board decide on moving from a not-for-profit to a non-profit. Ray Husum explained this will allow donators to receive a tax deduction. Ray stated this can be covered under educational, charitable or historic purposes and will investigate if there are taxes on goods. He also stated this will be a process with IRS filing fees as well as changes to the Articles of Incorporation.

Kathy said our CPA firm can handle all the filings for approximately $3,000. Penny motioned for the Accountant to handle the 501(c)3 filings for $3,000. Cheryl seconded and the motion carried.

2025 Reunion Report:
Carl stated that Bill McLaughlin is being replaced as Reunion Coordinator (RC) and he has assigned Kathy to be the 2026 Reunion Coordinator with Penny Canamas being the on-site Reunion Coordinator. Carl had Kathy simplify the 2026 After Action Reports (AAR).

Carl went through the Board's AAR reviews. There were some issues:

- Annual Ball
  - Add age restrictions on the sign.
  - Allow children into Ball until 10 pm or so.
  - Security allowed personal drink containers. [Carl will contact the hotel.]
  - At midnight, let people in.
  - Members loved the new band and DJ.
  - No real issues except one which was taken care of by Carl and Kathy.
- Bingo
  - Worried about children winning since they are gambling.
  - Carl will investigate Florida law.
- Lottery
  - Children need to be with the adult in case they win – add to signs.
  - Most volunteers did not want to handle cash.
- Catholic Mass – discussion arose.
- Thursday Night Dance
  - Band was terrible – they had new members.
  - Electrical issues with black cables thus needed extra plugs. Kathy handled this.
  - Class requested a smaller room, but Carl decided to change it.
- Future Class Dances
  - Need electricity information in advance.
  - RC will pass on to the class coordinators.
  - Need Certificate of Insurance (COIs).
- Golf was fun but next year, Betty LeDoux needs to check the percentage of players. Betty stated we can go down from the contract number but not more golfers.
- Hotel – some attendees did not like the large 'hold' on credit cards. Betty will investigate it but recommends credit cards and not using debit cards.
- Logistics went well but next year to set a time; possibly load after Despedida.
- Annual Meeting was poorly attended. Discussions arose to move the meeting to Saturday.
  - Lori Snow will not be sponsoring grand prize trips to Panama.

- Future Luncheons were discussed with possible speakers as Reprosa, retired Baseball players from Panama, a Navy SEAL author, etc. Possibly have a tea lunch at a cheaper price.
- Pool party went well. Moved inside due to rain and opened the last keg at 5pm. Next year, hotel is not supplying a free keg.
- Reporters Luncheon was attended by 10 reporters. Next year, have the bill go to the Master Account.
- Vendors – it was recommended to have gift bags ready for the vendors. Penny Canamas thought this would be a better solution. Kelly Fenton volunteered to recruit more vendors.
- Ticket Sales – most volunteers did not want to handle cash.
- Information/Office – recommend a cash counter.
- Registration
  - Need to give the Board Chairs a shift off.
  - Possibly change the shift hours, no need for a 30-minute break.
  - Healthier snacks for the volunteers.
  - Members wanted reprints on badges so emphasize on next year's registration form to write down the name you want.
  - Discussion on lanyards vs bags but cannot have both.
- Volunteers
  - Encourage volunteers to sign up for more shifts.
  - Recommend better volunteer gifts or free Ball tickets.
  - Board members cannot enjoy the Reunion.
- Children's Program was recommended, possibly a magic show or a movie.
  - Need a children's coordinator.
  - Hotel does have a contact for babysitting service.
- Bars needed better signage for different brands, i.e.: call, deluxe, premium, and a better wine selection.
- Venues and Layouts – need smaller rooms.

Carl stated we need a unified Board making decisions on future Reunions. He feels the Canal Zone Reunion (CZR) in January doesn't really affect our attendance. The CZR has offered to let the Society have a table to recruit members.

New Business:
Carl asked Ray to investigate the Bylaws verbiage. The Bylaws are out of date. Change the nomination section of the Bylaw so that if there are no incumbents, a current Board member can run again if so desired. Ray stated the President can request Bylaw changes. Need to update the Director-at-Large position. That position is mentioned twice and contradicts each other per Cheryl.

Carl asked the Board members if they are running next year during elections. Carl appointed Dixie Barons as the Nomination Chairperson since she is not running for Director next year. He also appointed Ted Kaufer and David Dahlstrom to be on the committee. Dixie will find two members to join the committee; one will be Rush Barons.

The Board reviewed and discussed two resumes for Office Assistant. They selected one name.

Kathy will be working on the new database starting next week.

Jacque Vowell's laptop crashed, and she purchased a new one. After reviewing a past purchase, Cheryl recommended reimbursing Jacque for up to $500 for a replacement laptop including any programs she might need. Penny seconded and the motion carried.

Kathy shared that at the end of October, the current office computer does not meet the minimum system requirements to run Windows 11. This will be a big security risk. Since the computer is old, Cheryl motion to spend up to $1200 to purchase a new desktop and any programs required for the office. Dixie seconded and the motion carried.

A past member requested to add a link to our website. The Board said we could once she renews her membership.

There was a short break for lunch.

2026 Reunion:
Carl discussed and assigned the chairpersons for next year's Reunion as well as the deadlines. He announced we are on the Panzacola side of the Convention Center for the next few years.

BHS '95 sent a request to sponsor the Friday Night Dance. BHS '76 asked to host the Thursday Night Yacht Club dance. Both were accepted by the Board.

Discussions arose concerning 2026 events:

- Annual meeting to move to Saturday at 10:30 am will the Lottery drawing to be held at the end of the meeting.
    - Request a smaller riser for the Board.
    - Ray will have lottery tickets for sale, an hour before the meeting.
- Moved the luncheon to Friday but just have a speaker, Paul Shemella, a retired Navy SEAL author who was in Operation Just Cause. [Kathy decided to call it a Meet & Greet and found a sponsor.]
- Saturday Dinner/Dance – Kelly and Cheryl shared their thoughts on a sit-down dinner followed by the Ball. A Tivoli theme was discussed.
    - Social Hour from 6-7pm
    - Dinner from 7-8 pm
    - Dance Performance from 8-8:30 pm
    - Then outside to join the Murga at 8:30pm
    - Ball from 9 pm- 1am.

    - There will be separate Ball tickets for $20 for those not attending the dinner.
- Leave the Despedida on Sunday morning.
- Carl discussed the floor plans and room assignments. Kathy will follow up with the hotel.
- Kelly recommends adding Karaoke.
- Friday DJ late night dance did not have a great turnout so will not have one in 2026.
- If there is a Security incident, do not call the Orange County police, call the Hotel Security.

Upcoming Events:
Kathy discussed the upcoming events for 2025 – 2026.

Penny made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mike Young seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting ended at 1:45 pm.

Carl Orvis, President

Kathy Malin, Office Manager