

Strategic Plan for the Marquette Yacht Club

Draft July 10, 2020

Dear MYC Members,

The MYC board of directors embarked on a strategic planning effort beginning late 2018 to update our club mission and to develop a five year sustainability and growth plan driven by input from MYC user groups and members. As part of the strategic planning process to date, the board has met in a facilitated session, held several working sessions, and completed the following tasks:

- Drafted a revised vision statement (i.e., where do we want to be in 5-10 years?):
 - *To provide a unique gateway to recreational boating in our community.*
- Drafted a revised mission statement (i.e., what business are we in?):
 - *To encourage and support sailing and non-motorized boating by providing facilities for the recreational, educational, and social use of its members.*
- Identified club values and positioning (i.e., what principles will guide future direction?):
 - *We maintain the cost of access to achieve affordable facilities for members with a predictable fee structure.*
 - *We host and encourage user groups to promote diverse community participation in activities with an emphasis in educations, safety, respect, and outreach.*
- Identified our major user groups.
- Conducted a survey of the interests of our members, non-member participants, and user groups.

Responses to the survey were collated and are available to all members. Informed by the survey, the Board has drafted a preliminary strategic plan for review and further comment from members. A general meeting of the membership is scheduled for August 1st to take further comment, answer questions, and discuss potential edits to the plan

Overview of the Survey and Draft Plan

The Board was encouraged by the participation rate for the survey, and the general positive response from members concerning the club's operations. The survey had a response rate of about 30% which is not bad for a survey of this type. Members mostly voiced contentment with current fees, operations and facilities, yet some common items were noted for changes. The top five of these were:

1. Messiness – primarily with the small boat storage area, the clubhouse, and near the shed.
2. Communication – Improved web site and more information on events and volunteer needs.
3. Volunteers – many hands help get the work done

4. Docks – swim ladders and more effort to stabilize docks for storms.
5. Dues and fees – though members were content, there were varying ideas for alternative dues and associated benefits.

Most responses to the survey dealt with short term issues and current operations. There were few responses for long term planning and direction. With minor exceptions, the Board views this as an indicator that the membership is largely pleased with the status quo, with a focus to tighten up on the top 3 items noted above.

The Board divided survey responses into categories of Administration, House, Grounds, Upland Storage, Docks, and Events; and formulated plans for each category. Not every response was addressed in the plan, rather just issues that were commonly mentioned, and some singular but insightful comments. All survey responses are available for members to review in depth. Some of the proposed actions that follow in this plan have already taken place, others may require volunteer commitments, and some longer term proposals may be aspirational at best.

Plan for Administration

The survey suggests that members are largely content with administration of the club, though there were some suggestions for changes. The most common responses related to fees, communication, and volunteers. Fees were largely viewed as reasonable with support for modest increases if justified, especially for student and associate memberships. Various and competing ideas were offered for new fee and benefit structures. Many members observed that communication was lacking and not timely, particularly for new members, events, and outreach to enlist volunteers for help with club upkeep. Some communication efforts have improved recently and are well liked (newsletter, Facebook) but more should be done. Many members seem to like email notifications. One member observed that monthly membership meetings were not occurring per the bylaws. More general meetings would be useful to discuss current issues and projects that need to be done.

Proposed actions for Administration:

Fees/Dues

- Dock and storage fees were raised 10% this spring.
- The Board proposes a change to Student and Associate membership levels:
 - Associate memberships will only be offered for two years, after which the associate will need to join as a full member.
 - Associates and student members will have full access to the clubhouse, parking and other on-site privileges.
 - Full membership will continue to be required for dockage, voting, and serving on the Board.
 - A dues increase will be proposed for a vote at the annual meeting where changes to dues can only be made. We will propose \$50 for a student and \$100 for an associate membership.

Communication

- Concentrate efforts on communication with membership on multiple fronts (website, social media, email, clubhouse dry/erase board).
 - A newly refurbished web site has been launched with an improved calendar of activities (in progress). Several Board members and committee chairs will be able to post to it. Additional volunteers will be sought to help keep it updated.
 - Advertise events/activities in advance (schedule/plan out an entire season of activities) and notify/update membership well in advance through various communication efforts outlined in item #1.
 - Keep web page up to date with membership forms, policies, rules (sailing/racing rules), payment/renewal functionality.
 - Post Board/committee minutes/summary of key actions and initiatives being considered to view on website or on board in clubhouse.
 - More use of email to communicate current information.
- An updated handbook has been prepared and will be made available to members on the web site. Hard copies will also be available.
- New members will promptly be provided an orientation and assigned a membership mentor.
- A list of volunteer opportunities will be posted on the web site with contact information.
- A new white board will be installed in the clubhouse for current announcements.

Other

- The Board will offer an amendment of the by-laws for membership approval that would provide flexibility in scheduling general membership meetings. In the short-term, schedule at least two general meetings during 2020 summer.
- A list of current members with their contact info will be compiled in a notebook and left in the club house for member reference. Members may black-out their own information.

All of the above proposals except a dues increase can occur within the current year. Any new dues or fee changes would not take effect until 2021.

Plan for House

Survey responses for the clubhouse, deck and shed (collectively referred to as House) were primarily concerned with better upkeep and keeping things in order. There were additional comments for modest facility improvements.

Proposed actions for House

Short-term

- Provide membership a clear list of expectations for club upkeep.

- Provide tags/stickers for members to label property that may be left for a day or two.
- Create a weekly cleaning list; membership will volunteer for a week or two over the course of the season to be responsible for club upkeep.
- Designate an area where items can be left for the evening if need be, along with protocols for such.
- Add a new bar top to list of volunteer opportunities.
- Stiffen springs on chairs.

Mid-term

- Find location for outdoor covered bike storage and possible temporary sail storage.
- Create “Bar-Top Stool” seating that overlooks the Harbor. Cleans up sightlines
 - We will need to re-enforce the deck railing.
- Replace grills with one combo grill (Gas/Propane)

Long-term

- Ensure the cleaning schedule is being followed and adjust as needed.

Plan for Grounds

Survey results indicated two main themes regarding the MYC grounds: *First* was to improve the eye appeal of the property through such things as more landscaping; and a focus on improving the south boundary with better fencing, organization, and debris removal. *Second* was to enhance the functionality of the club with various ideas presented, particularly leveling of the NW hillside by adding a retaining wall thereby gaining some boat storage space. Organization of boat storage was a commonly referenced issue, but is addressed in a latter section. Finally, improvements in recruiting volunteers to maintain the grounds was recognized as important and is addressed above in the Administration section.

Proposed actions for Grounds

Short time period

- Construct fencing around garbage bin with ability to lock entry gate to bin if necessary.
- Construct an attractive inexpensive fence along south property line. (Eventually, when funding allows, install a metal fence similar to fence on north side of property.)
- Construct an improved storage rack for sailboat masts, perhaps along property line next to shed.
- Landscape the hill between clubhouse deck and lake, and at base of flagpole with weed barrier cloth, shrubs, flowers, and other plants.
- Install a gin pole (previously approved by the MYC board) near dumpster.

- Establish a permanent location for a fire ring using bricks at the base and placed adequately away from boats and decking.
- Conduct routine fertilization and mowing of lawn.
- Organize a voluntary team for maintenance of the grounds, encouraging members to sign up for a week of duty.

Mid to longer term

- Expand the proposed fenced area around the dumpster so it is large enough to store other outdoor items such as grass clippings, temporary driveway barriers, and other unsightly items.
- Install a metal fence on the south property line like fence on north side of property.
- Grade northwest corner of property and construct a retaining wall to expand parking area for boat storage to and improve aesthetics.
- Plant two or three hardwood trees that will eventually replace the large cottonwood trees. These will be placed further back from the docks such that falling branches and bird droppings will not damage boats.

Plan for Upland storage

Generally members were pleased with the upland storage program for small boats, but expressed a desire for it to be less cluttered and better organized (this may have been the most dominant response in the survey). Suggestions included enforcing policies to limit empty trailers, unused boats, and perhaps more racks. Also, some commenters seemed to accept that some chaos was inevitable with comments such as *haphazard but great* and *cluttered but functional*.

There was near unanimous support for current winter storage practices, though one commenter suggested working toward off-site storage options. Some responders suggested maximizing storage off the grass to the north graveled area. Given these results, the Board is comfortable with the current winter storage plan, though we would like to see patrons of this service attempt to limit turf damage and perform some repair after boat removal in spring.

Proposals for Storage

Summer Storage (small boats) - Short-term.

- Enforce required registration and labeling of boats and trailers at the club, as well other club rules for upland storage.
- Deploy numbered markers on ground for assigned placement of small boats on trailers.
- Eliminate odd and unused items from NW property (phone poles, barrels, trailers) and return racks to designated location to allow small boats and transient boats access to designated spots.

- Track down and notify owners of unused and unlabeled boats and trailers.
- Work with MJYC to limit boats and trailers on grounds to only those necessary.
- Identify an area for masts and rigging
- Post signs identifying designated areas for temporary trailer parking, registered small boat parking; and directing no parking on gravel driveway clear to the ramp.

Storage – long-term

- A longer term effort to excavate the NW hillside to make more storage space is being considered.

Plan for Docks

Dockers were largely content with the dock program but there were some varying comments for improvements, principally support for some additional swim ladders on docks and more stabilization. Some responders were skeptical of proposals to extend docks further.

Proposals for Docks

Short-term

- Experiment with dock stabilization upgrade during 2020 on south dock
- Install two additional ladders on docks

Long-term

- Evaluate dock stabilization structure on south dock and replicate on additional docks if successful and funds are available.

Plan for Events

There were few concerns raised with the club's events policy (available on the MYC web site). Members did not feel their access to club facilities or their boats was encumbered by private events. They also seemed supportive of modest use of the club for community related events. More club sponsored events such as group cruises and potlucks were suggested.

Proposed actions for Events

Short-term

- Keep members informed of upcoming private and club events consistent with communication initiatives noted above in Administration section (i.e.; website calendar, Facebook, email, whiteboard).
- Events Committee members will collectively review proposed private events.

- The Events Committee will work with club associated groups (e.g., Ensign and Laser fleets) to schedule and plan events.

Long-term

- Increase/improve sailing instruction programs at MYC (not just youth). New sailors make new boat owners, which may ultimately increase membership at MYC.

Next Steps

After these draft proposals are reviewed with members at a special general meeting, the Board will make indicated adjustments to the plan. Next, we will need to identify who, how and when these proposals can be accomplished. Most can be done in short order if volunteers are identified. Some of the proposals will take longer and some may prove only aspirational due to difficulty, cost, or lack of interest. The Board will work with members to prioritize this lengthy list of projects to achieve some early successes. Stay tuned and get involved.