

The South Florida Emerald Society, Inc.

Board of Directors' Meeting

Miami Yacht Club

Thursday, February 5, 2015 at 6:45 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order:

Members Present- Don Harrington, Jr., John Doherty, Kassie Doyle Taylor, Judi Tierney Sherry, Mark Donnelly, Sean Ferrell, Hugh Ryan, Ann Eustace, Chris Kelley, Sean Glynn, Joe McManus, Noel McManus Stillings, Dan Fitzgerald, Blair Brogan

Excused absences: Johnette Hardiman (proxy to Judi Tierney Sherry), Bill O'Brien

Unexcused Absences: None

Guests – Barbara McManus, David Donnelly

Pledge of Allegiance
Welcome any guests

Quorum Call
Recording of Proxies

Order of Business:

President's Report: (Don Harrington, Jr.)

We need to approve the budget. That is our immediate goal. Also, we should focus on membership. Every member who has not brought in one new member should do all they can to do so.

Secretary's Report: (Judi Sherry)

Review & approve Minutes of January Board meeting – Motion to approve January minutes by Chris Kelley. Second by Hugh Ryan. Motion carries unopposed.

Treasurer's Report: (John Doherty)

- Review & approve Treasurer's report –
 - o Motion to accept Treasurer's Report as submitted by Chris Kelley. Second by Hugh Ryan. Motion carries unopposed.
- Review & Approve Emerald Society 2015 Budget
 - o Note Treasurer's memo regarding the second iteration of the proposed 2015 budget. Treasurer recommends the Board come to a fiduciary decision as to what we want to do going forward. If we continue to do what we are doing, we are going to lose over \$10,000 as a deficit. This will be our second deficit in two years which will leave us bankrupt in three years. Every revenue item and every expense item in our budget is on the table.
 - o Don Harrington: Avenues to raise income are Christmas in Ireland and Membership. CII can raise around \$1000 if we are lucky. Turning to membership, we have about a net increase of 12 members. Next option is cutting net expenses. The first foreseeable expense to cut is Installation Dinner. Don is unsure what else to do. Membership recently has had two

great events. These were two new events that were excellent but broke even or lost money. Possible membership idea is that anyone who joins at the Festival can be a member for free for the first year (this will require focus on renewal at the end of the year). He is disappointed that his idea for each member to bring in one new member has not been successful. Let's talk about budgets and what we can do.

- Hugh Ryan – CII and Installation dinner should not be thrown away but we should rethink how we do them. Perhaps consider making these events less flashy and more humble. If we can re-work these ideas but still have them, we could make more money.
- Ann Eustace – Have all of the committees submitted budgets?
 - Treasurer's answer: mostly, no.
- John Doherty – As budgeted, CII is basically budgeted in the same way it was last year although Kassie has an analysis to present later at this meeting. Our other main expenses include \$5,000 to St. Patrick's Day Festival. Emeralds can cut this but it is important to recognize that there are consequences such as St. Patrick's won't be able to continue in the very near future without Emerald support.
- Ann Eustace – Should we go line by line? To give free membership for people signing up at St. Patrick's Day Committee seems dangerous and unfairly penalizes current members. What can we do right now to look at the budget committee by committee to see what we can cut?
 - Sean Glynn agrees with going through budget line at a time. Also feels that Membership can address issue of whether to waive membership dues for new members as a committee.
- Judi Tierney Sherry – Proposes cutting Installation dinner out of budget. We will not get the same deal we got in the past at Jungle Island this year. We can welcome new members at every social as they are having increased attendance.
 - Judi moves to cut Installation dinner for 2015.
 - Dan Fitzgerald agrees about cutting Installation Dinner but suggests new board should be welcome all at once at the first social. Can be done at first social in April.
 - Sean Glynn suggests making the April social a bigger event. This is tabled to a second motion.
 - Motion on the floor is to table Installation Dinner for 2015 calendar year. Second by Joe McManus. Motion carries unopposed.
- Hugh Ryan – Does not want Social Committee to be penalized if there is an April social in place of Installation Dinner as there is no budget for April social.
- David Donnelly – What are we doing to generate new revenue?
- Kassie Doyle Taylor – How many socials are there each year? Would it be a bad idea to limit the number of socials to six per year?
 - General Board consensus: Yes. Bad idea. We have socials in January, February, April, May, June, September, October, and November. Christmas in Ireland is in December (not a "social").
- Don Harrington – We should cancel our participation in Ft. Lauderdale St. Patrick's day parade (about \$550) due to direct conflict with St. Patrick's Day Festival.
 - Motion to eliminate participation in Ft. Lauderdale parade by Dan

- Fitzgerald. Second by Hugh Ryan. Motion carries.
- Hugh Ryan pledges to raise \$1000 this year from 50/50 raffles at socials.
 - Budget is so amended.
 - Don suggests deleting Membership Directory. Group declines this idea after brief discussion.
 - Potential to place ads on back of membership directory. David Donnelly as part of Membership Committee volunteers to be responsible for addressing this possibility.
 - Hugh Ryan – Titanic, Hurricane, Duffy’s will agree to provide 10% off food and beverage for Emerald members. Irish Times giving us 20% off food and beverage. Hugh is waiting to hear back from a few other establishments. This was pitched as a cross-promotion: Emeralds will advertise these discounts and establishments give us these discounts.
 - Don to send letter of understanding/thank you notes to establishments
 - John suggests periodic emails to membership reminding us of discounts at various establishments. Could also go in newsletter.
 - Kassie Doyle Taylor suggests adding a banner on website to advertise the local establishments that are supporting the Emeralds. Sean Glynn suggests maybe banner on website after directory ad purchased.
 - John Doherty – after deletions and increase for socials we have reduced budget by about \$900 in expenses
 - Judi – if we repeat every month what discounts we have and we add to it, this could be a big boost for membership.
 - Ann Eustace and membership committee agree to discuss this.
 - Don – Membership committee has projected 42 new members. Last year we only had 19. This may be too auspicious.
- Kassie Doyle Taylor – I will chair Christmas in Ireland 2015 but I need help. I am willing to do a total overhaul of Christmas in Ireland but, again, the committee is small and we need help. My fear is that if we cut the budget then we will not be able to have a Christmas this year if we are unable to come up with a plan. Kassie pledges that CII Committee will endeavor to cut as many costs as possible.
- John to revise 2015 budget with Kassie’s new proposed numbers.
 - Motion to approve Kassie’s revised budget for 2015. Hugh moves to approve Kassie’s revised Christmas in Ireland budget for 2015 with understanding that CII Committee has pledged to meet soon and endeavor to reduce expenses. Second by Joe McManus. Motion carries unanimously.
- Judi Tierney Sherry – Let’s talk about Fourth of July Parade. Next year they may not be able to head the committee again. But perhaps we can cut this out of the budget. Most of budget is for drinks for participants.
- John Doherty warns that the Committee Chairs may not like this.
 - Judi dismisses conversation.
- King Mango Strut – Can we do it for \$1000? There is \$2000 budgeted. David Donnelly says yes.
- Sean Glynn – what is important is whether the expenses can get in by December 31 (end of year). The Mango Strut line item for 2015 is already around \$970 in debt from 2014 Mango Strut (i.e. the 2014 Mango Strut was not paid by the 2014 budget). So budget is already \$1000 negative and 2015 strut has not occurred.

- St. Patrick's Day Festival– around \$5000 budgeted
 - Judi Tierney Sherry – Budget includes photo of Emerald Board in book, photos of CII, Pub Crawl, and other pages of color photos.
 - Noel – What if we reduce size of Emerald board photo to a half page and president's letter to half page. Also reduce Irish Whiskey Cake recipe page down to half page. We can do photos of CII, Mango Strut, etc. on two pages total (already have one for CII). Page of past presidents should stay as full page. One page membership application is in the Book.
 - Dan Fitzgerald reminds Board that we need to sell ads and Board members should all be buying ads in the book.
 - Ann Eustace – We have never received a membership application from the Book. Maybe we should remove the application from the book. Question to John – what should Emeralds do that will benefit both groups?
 - Chris Kelley – cut page in half – half for membership and other half color photo collage
 - Judi Tierney Sherry – My plea is this: our President is focusing on Membership. If everyone on the Board took out an \$85 business sized ad, we would have enough money to fund the Emerald Society's contribution to the St. Patrick's day festival.
 - Chris Kelly moves to reduce Emerald Festival ads to three pages (cost of \$3000) down from \$5000). Second by Hugh Ryan. Motion carries.
 - John Doherty – if we want to promulgate the Emerald society within the St. Patrick's day committee then we need to show our support for St. Pats. St. Pats makes most of its money through ad revenue.
- In total so far we have cut \$3925 from the budget
- Judi moves to pass budget with adjusted changes that we have agreed to tonight with an approximate \$6359 deficit. Second by Joe McManus.
 - Chris Kelly – moves to eliminate \$60 for nominating committee budget
 - John – Let's cover the line items
 - Installation dinner cancelled. Revenue reduced by \$1575
 - Social 50/50 increased on revenue side from \$600 to \$2000
 - Expenses
 - Eliminated Ft. Lauderdale St. Patrick's Parade - \$550
 - Eliminated Installation Dinner - \$2,050
 - Reduced contribution to St. Patrick's day festival for Festival book ad from \$5000 to \$3000
 - Eliminated \$60 nominating committee
 - Judi revises her motion to approve budget per John Doherty's summary of modifications to budget. Second by Joe McManus. Motion carries.

Committee Reports:

Christmas in Ireland

- See above analysis and budget discussion.

Membership (Sean Glynn)

- Five new members from Irish Stew Cook-off
- New Member Applications with checks
 - Jim Weber – Friend of the Emeralds. Sponsored by Ann Eustace

- Brian Scarry – Emerald. Sponsored by Mark Donnelly
- Timothy O’Connor – Emerald. Retired US Customs Department and Homeland Security. Sponsored by Connor Hayes
- Connor Hayes – Emerald. Renewal (missed a few years). Sponsored by Jeff Bailey
- John Eustace – Emerald. Sponsored by Ann Eustace
- Isaac Taylor – Friend of the Emerald. Sponsored by Kassie Doyle Taylor
- Dan Fitzgerald moves to approve six new members. Second by Joe McManus. Motion carries unopposed.
- Irish Story Telling Event
 - February 28 from 11:00 – 11:30 a.m. at Coral Gables Library
 - We need help getting children there
 - Is Coral Gables Library going to help promote this? Membership committee will find out.

Socials (Hugh Ryan)

- Recap of Irish Stew Cook-off (Jan. 24th) – Great, casual, and fun event!! There were about 70 people there. Great opportunity to meet a lot of new members.
- Next social at Titanic.
 - Either February 18 or Thursday Feb 26. Let’s do Thursday.
 - Leaning towards John Martins or Miami Yacht Club for April Social

Celtic Cultural Series (Joe McManus)

- Nothing planned for February at this time.

Website and Big Mouth (John Doherty)

- *Shamrock News (Joe & Barbara McManus)* - Eight pages for February. Ready to go once revisions based on tonight’s meeting are made. Hopefully out this weekend.
 - Currently includes 1 page for ballot, one page for St. Patrick’s Festival ad
 - Hugh Ryan – proposes adding a membership application to the back page of every Shamrock News

Health & Welfare (Judi Tierney Sherry)

- Bill O’Brien had knee replacement surgery on Tuesday. He is going to rehab place soon. After that, he will have the second knee replaced.

Public Relations (Noel McManus Stillings)

- Emerald Facebook page updated. Irish Stew photos posted. Photos are edited.
- Going to try to promote Irish story-telling

By-Laws (Sean Ferrell)

- Noel will send by-laws in Word version. Sean to re-edit and finalize them. The changes have been approved.

St. Patrick’s Day Festival (Judi Tierney Sherry & John Doherty)

- Festival needs ads! Only 26 ads from Emerald members.
- Ads are due week from Friday on February 13
- Judi advises that if the Emeralds want to see the Festival next year then each Emerald needs to place an \$85 ad in the Festival book

Emerald Society Board photo – taken

SPDF Craft Vendor Application – No discussion

Nominations (Dan Fitzgerald/Chris Kelley)

The Nominating committee proposes the following slate for this year's elections:

- President: Don Harrington, Jr.
- 1st VP – Sean Ferrell
- 2nd VP = Johnette Hardiman
- Treasurer = John Doherty
- Secretary = Kassie Doyle Taylor
- Historian = Chris Kelly
- Past President = Hugh Ryan
- Directors (Three Year Terms)
 - o Richard Al-Imam
 - o Sean Hayes
 - o Michael Lally
 - o Paul Reilly
 - o Megan Walsh
 - o David Donnelly
- Directors (Two Year Terms) – TBA
- Election up until February 28 (cut-off)

Old Business -

- Vacant Board positions - one position has been filled. There are still vacant two-year board positions.

New Business -

- Discuss setting up electronic payment, such as PayPal or Square – John Doherty suggests we leave decision of PayPal versus Square versus another form of electronic payment
- Don will bring a sign-up sheet for Emerald Society booth at St. Patrick's Day festival to next meeting.

Adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Next meeting: Thursday, March 5, 2015 - 6:45 PM Miami Yacht Club