

The annual meeting of the White's Creek Marina Condominium Association was held at the Millville Volunteer Fire Department's Meeting Room in Millville, DE, on March 29, 2025. For the record, a pre-meeting packet was mailed to each slip owner's home that included the WCM Ballot/Proxy Voting Form, 2025 Annual Dues Invoice, Draft of the 2024 Annual Meeting Summary, the 2024 Budget Report with the 2025 Estimated Budget, and the 2025 Renter Form. Email reminders about the annual meeting were also sent. It was noted that the meeting was being recorded.

The meeting was called to order by President Paul Lubold, at 10:06 a.m. In addition to Paul, the following Board Members were in attendance and introduced at the meeting: Kathy Sutphin, Secretary and Acting Treasurer, Joe DeAngelis, Vice President, and Toby Rice, Vice President. Paul introduced and welcomed Mark Toolan, a new slip owner and CPA who volunteered to serve as the Whites Creek Marina Board Treasurer in January. After reviewing the meeting sign-in sheets and returned proxy statements, it was announced that of 98 proxy signed forms and 7 unsigned forms were returned. Therefore, with the robust attendance and signed returned proxy forms, the minimum 88 slip owners had been exceeded for a quorum enabling official marina business to be conducted. There were no additional nominations for officers, so the following slate of Whites Creek Marina Board Members was approved for 2025:

President Paul Lubold
Treasurer Mark Toolan
Vice President Toby Rice
Vice President Joe DeAngelis
Secretary Kathy Sutphin

Paul noted that Marty Lampner, the Whites Creek Manor POA president, had planned to attend this meeting to discuss the ongoing speeding problem in the community and to ask persons using the marina to please obey the posted traffic signs and speed limit of 20 mph. Paul called attention to the prepared slides and noted the importance of volunteers to the marina. He gave kudos to the following people for their help during the past year: Joe Hyde for the many hours he spends on maintaining the marina; Herb and Jeanne Speck for the beautiful gardens they planted and maintain; Karen and Larry Pennypacker for their ongoing support, Stan and Kathy Sutphin for the general facility and marina support, and Deb Martin for doing the amazing marina's safety ring rejuvenation. In addition, Paul recognized Brian Staley, Brian Mansure, Ed Wagman, Emerson Wells, Toby Rice, Tony Martin, Joe DeAngelis, and Robbie DeAngelis. Paul added that the Fall 2024 workday had been cancelled because he and Joe had caught up the work and noted that a Spring 2025 workday was planned to clean out the shed, build shelves, and install new anodes in the ice eaters.

Returning to the issue of speeding in the community, Paul asked that everyone be mindful and shared that WCMPOA will be installing additional radar speed signs with cameras to increase speeder awareness and address the speeding problem that threatens child and pet safety.

Kathy Sutphin reported that 85% of slip owners had paid their annual dues for 2025 to date. Mark Toolan reported the hybrid accounting system had been shifted to Quick Books, the industry standard, and explained that normal operations of the marina are on a break-even basis with the revenue of \$49K nearly equal to the operating expenses. Taxes are filed on a corporate level and the tax preparation for 2024 will be done in-house, representing savings from prior years. Marina typically pays taxes on any interest earned. Mark added that insurance, by far, is the largest expense as it represents about 70% of the operating budget. Paul noted that Board members met

with our insurance agent last summer and found that after the renovation, the marina was under-insured and pier/dock and promenade values needed to be increased to ensure the marina was covered appropriately. Raising the values resulted in the higher premiums. Responding to a question, Paul explained that the deductible per dock is \$50K.

Mark said it was one of his goals to avoid any financial surprises and mentioned investigating the benefit of engineering and/or capital reserve studies that look at what needs to be done, when, and at what cost. Responding to another question, Mark explained that the marina had a cash balance for the end of the year of about \$91K, with \$10K in operating funds and the rest in savings, including the CD, which rolled over in January at good rate. Mark asked the slip owners to call or email him – after April 15th – if they see things that need to be done. He also thanked Kathy for her work as secretary/treasurer and supporting his smooth transition onto the WCM Board in January and February. Motions to accept the 2024 budget report, the 2025 estimated budget, and summary of the 2024 annual meeting were made, seconded, and passed by attendees.

Kathy explained that all marina records were organized by Slip Numbers, not last names, and asked everyone to please include their Slip Numbers in all correspondence. She noted that the Whites Creek Marina website is a great resource and explained that copies of all forms and newsletters are uploaded to the marina website so they can be downloaded at will. She explained that the free version of MailChimp was a very efficient and cost-effective way to distribute marina information and cautioned owners to never unsubscribe from MailChimp correspondence as it is impossible to be reinstated. Kathy announced that she had enjoyed her time on the Board but after three years, it was time to retire. Kathy is ending her service effective December 31, 2025.

OLD BUSINESS

Marina Reconstruction: Paul reiterated that the Marina Reconstruction Project was finished well before the permit expired. He noted that all final inspections had been completed including the Pier C electric issue and the wiring problem on Dock D had been remedied. He added the rub rails and eye hooks had been installed by volunteers and encouraged anyone missing those items to contact the Board.

Rock Gardens: Jeanne and Herb Speck kindly agreed to continue maintaining the gardens.

Flagpole: Donated by the previous board president, the marina flagpole has a telescopic mechanism with no ropes, which makes it very difficult to adjust the flag height. This challenge and a lack of volunteers made it difficult to raise and lower the United States Flag appropriately. A motion to have a quality outdoor Whites Creek Marina flag made was approved.

Ramp Fee: The ramp fee will remain at \$100 for 2025

PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND NEW BUSINESS

Paul noted that because of the very cold winter, the marina had to put out 16 of the 20 ice eaters to protect the marina from freezing ice, which required significant cleaning and maintenance of this essential equipment. He noted that volunteers would be needed to install new anodes in all of the ice eaters as part of the Spring Work Party.

Paul noted that the marina's various electric outlets had been installed and placed along the piers to run the ice eaters. He noted that owners wanting an electrical outlet installed at their slips would need to pay for this and have the work done by the marina electrician – Lambent Electric – to ensure safety and uniformity. Paul emphasized that the electric boxes installed on either side of the slips were put there for future lifts and not for electric outlets.

Paul reported that the Alarm & Communications Systems Group visited the marina for the Annual Fire Extinguisher Inspection on March 27th. He explained that they got the marina up to "Fire Marshall" code by adding additional extinguishers on Docks A and E, as well as replacing the worn white cabinets with easy-to-identify red cabinets. The marina has a total of 11 fire extinguishers, nine of which are new and two are recharged. He added that each light pole has an extinguisher.

Paul reminded everyone to be mindful that the ice, snow, and temperatures of winter weather make the marina very dangerous to visit – especially the south side that gets little sun. He added that slipping into the frigid water - especially when traveling alone – could be deadly.

Paul also cautioned everyone to make sure that their boats are tied to the docks securely. He noted that a boat in the marina that was not tied up correctly became almost completely submerged before he and Toby discovered it and used four pumps to bring it back up. Boaters must seek help if they do not know how to secure their vessels, especially for high and low water. Situations like this reinforce the importance of having updated contact information for all slip owner and renters.

Submission of proof of Insurance (POI) including renewals for all marina vessels is required and ensuring that this is done represents a major bookkeeping challenge for the marina. Joe DeAngelis recommended adding Slip Numbers to vessel insurance information and listing Whites Creek Marina as "additionally insured" on vessel insurance. This would in managing the insurance paperwork, especially since some companies automatically send WCM copies of POI renewals.

Paul noted that in addition to the required vessel insurance, the marina insurance agent recommended that slip owners carry liability insurance on their boat slip areas, which can often be obtained through homeowners' or personal liability insurance. Other reminders included:

- There must be NO FUELING in the marina. Paul stated that this is his primary concern due to the chance of fire.
- The gate code has been changed to 2112 for the 2025 boating season. Paul added that the water had been turned on and the marina was technically open, effective immediately.
- U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is offering free boat inspections at the marina on June 28th.
- The annual dues for 2025 will be \$400 to cover the budgeted operating expenses.
- No fishing is allowed in the marina
- Slip sales require a \$200 Transfer fee to be paid to the marina at the time of settlement.
- WCMB Stickers go on the port side of vessels and on trailers parked at the marina.
- There is a \$5 fee per sticker for lost stickers.

In response to a question about official open and close dates, Paul explained that the marina had stopped posting hard dates because late fall can be a great time to fish, depending on the weather. He added that typically most boats are out of the marina before the ice eaters are installed – usually by mid-December.

Paul emphasized that volunteers are essential in keeping marina costs down. Paul noted that the Board plans to contact management companies to explore outsourcing multiple tasks, such as monitoring vessel proof of insurance certificates, especially if no one volunteers for the Board Secretary position.

Paul said although he would like to see the old marina lighting updated, a ramp to complete the comprehensive marina reconstruction is the next thing that he believes needs to be investigated. He asked the marina reconstruction contractor to informally estimate the current cost of putting in new ramp and was told the labor intensive project would be between \$50,000 to \$70,000. An open and lively discussion about exploring options for ramp improvements as well as establishing a capital improvement fund followed and included a variety of comments and questions. Some discussion points included:

RAMP

- The severity (steepness) of the ramp is the problem.
- Would an apron at the top be helpful?
- Could that problematic piece of steel be removed and rocks added at the ramp base?
- Are there other, less expensive ways to address the ramp problem?

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND

- The goal is to avoid special assessments in the future.
- Can we have more insight on how a capital improvement fund might be used?
- What should be the length of time for long term planning – 10, 15, or longer years?
- Is it possible to accurately predict the cost of improvements over a long period of time?
- Should a Capital Improvement Fund have a broad focus?
- Should funding an Engineering Study be investigated and what would it cost?
- Could we follow the Delaware model for HOA reserve planning and periodic follow up?
- Should we just decide to dedicate a portion of the annual dues to grow a Capital Improvement Fund each year?

Several motions were suggested, started, and then changed. The only motion that was approved was to investigate the cost of an engineering study. Paul also suggested looking into whether a permit was required to pour an apron for the ramp. A motion to adjourn the meeting was approved about 11:15 a.m.

*This draft meeting summary is respectfully submitted by K. Sutphin,
who encourages any needed corrections and clarifications.*