

Florida Council of Yacht Clubs January Directors Meeting

Highlights

The Florida Council of Yacht Clubs convened its January Directors Meeting at the Coral Reef Yacht Club. Directors and members gathered to address key issues impacting the Council and its affiliated clubs.

Bahamian Cruising Fees

A significant topic of discussion centered on the Bahamian Cruising Fees. The Council addressed continuing concerns regarding the costs associated with cruising in Bahamian waters. In response, a member of the Halifax River Yacht Club, who also serves with the National Marine Association, will present a proposal designed to mitigate these expenses. This individual intends to submit a pilot policy to the Prime Minister of Bahamian Tourism. The proposal seeks to reduce current fees for members of selected yacht clubs, anticipating that more favorable rates will encourage increased visits to the Bahamas by cruisers. The primary objective is to alleviate the financial burden on FCYC members and the broader boating community.

Reciprocity Dining Policies

The directors discussed ongoing issues with certain clubs placing restrictions on reciprocity dining privileges for visiting club members. Except for special events, the Council strongly recommends all member clubs extend reciprocity dining. By consistently honoring these privileges, clubs can foster camaraderie and strengthen relationships among members. The Council emphasized its commitment to open access and collaboration, ensuring all members benefit from visiting and dining at affiliated clubs. Additionally, the Council stated that no upcharges should be imposed on visiting club members.

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Coast Guard Western Region Report

The Coast Guard West Report was presented to the Council during the meeting. For a detailed overview of the topics discussed and updates provided, please refer to the attached report.

Club Updates

Naples Yacht and Sailing Club (NYSC)

The NYSC announced its reopening following the completion of construction. The club also shared that its seafood buffet event will be exclusive to NYSC members and Florida Council of Yacht Clubs members who arrive by boat.

Naples Yacht Club (NYC)

NYC will start dock modifications on April 1st, enabling the marina to accommodate larger boats once completed. The project is anticipated to be completed by November 1st.

St. Charles Yacht Club (SCYC)

SCYC revealed plans to commence a \$2.5 million complete rebuild of its main clubhouse starting April 1st. During construction, the club's satellite building will offer a light dining menu, and the marina will remain open for transit dockage.

Harbour Ridge Yacht & Country Club (HRYCC)

HRYCC will soon initiate a total rebuilding of its marina, a process expected to take approximately one year. Transit dockage will not be available during this period; however, club condos will remain accessible for use by FCYC members.

Government Affairs

Directors discussed the varying policies among yacht clubs regarding the open carry and possession of firearms on yacht club properties and vessels docked at club marinas. Some clubs have established policies on this matter, while others are still formulating their approach.

Cruising Awards

The Council issued a reminder about the annual Yacht Club Cruisers Awards presented by the FCYC. The awards include the Yachtsman of the Year Award, Founder's Cruising Award, Past Commodore's Distinguished Yachtsman Award, and General Meeting Awards. See attached file for additional information.

Youth Sailing Programs

There was a discussion about the prevalence and structure of youth sailing programs across member clubs. Topics included funding sources, program levels, whether instructors are paid or volunteer, the duration of programs (year-round or summer), and the number of youths participating. Some clubs utilize 501(c)(3) foundations to support their programs. The Florida Commodore's Association was noted for offering youth sailing scholarships.

Communication and Collaboration Initiatives

Directors highlighted the importance of maintaining clear communication channels among member clubs to ensure seamless operations and timely updates on policy changes. To further this goal, the directors proposed establishing a regular inter-club forum. This forum would serve as a platform for representatives to discuss emerging challenges and share innovative solutions, fostering unity and the exchange of ideas for continuous improvement across all member clubs.

Updates on upcoming club-hosted events were reviewed, along with best practices for enhancing member engagement. The Council discussed plans to develop a collaborative calendar to streamline communication and promote active participation throughout all clubs. To support these collaborative efforts, the Council proposed the creation of an online platform where clubs can post event details, share key announcements, and provide real-time updates. This centralized resource is intended to facilitate seamless scheduling, reduce conflicts, and keep members informed about opportunities across the network.

Additionally, the Council launched a quarterly newsletter featuring important updates, notable achievements, and upcoming events from each member club. By leveraging this digital platform, member clubs will be able to coordinate events more efficiently, minimize scheduling overlaps, and boost participation. The Council believes that enhancing connectivity and transparency will result in higher engagement and a stronger sense of community among all affiliated clubs. The communication tool is designed to keep clubs informed and engaged, ensuring all benefit from shared knowledge and collaborative opportunities. This initiative is intended to increase awareness of scheduled activities and encourage broader involvement from both new and longstanding members. The Council encouraged all clubs to share best practices and lessons learned to further strengthen the network and enhance the overall membership experience.

Yacht Club Dining Attendance

During the meeting, directors examined current trends in dining attendance across member yacht clubs, with a particular focus on weekday participation. It was observed that some clubs are experiencing decreased attendance during dinner services held on Tuesday evenings. In response to this challenge, a suggestion was put forth to consider hosting members' birthday dinners on Tuesdays. This initiative aims to boost attendance on traditionally slower evenings by creating a celebratory atmosphere and encouraging greater member participation.

Next Directors Meeting

The next Florida Council of Yacht Clubs (FCYC) Directors Meeting is scheduled to take place from March 13 to March 15 at the Venice Yacht Club.

