

2008 Midnight Riders Annual General Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2008 12pm
Good Time Emporium, Somerville, MA

About 80 members attended the meeting. Midnight Riders membership applications and ballots for the general election were available before the meeting.

1. 2007 Review - Executive Board Directors

President's Report – Monty Rodrigues provided a general review of the past year. He pointed out that it was the best season ever as far as memberships, our many road trips with great attendance, and our non-profit incorporation. We had over 400 members in 2007.

Monty thanked Bill Manganiello for his assistance in getting our non-profit status. Bill recapped the process: during 2007 the Midnight Riders Board of Directors formed 2 MA corporations, both IRS tax exempt. The first is the Midnight Riders, Incorporated, which can take a tax writeoff on state and federal tax returns. This is a major tax benefit, as now, larger corporations won't hesitate to give larger amount of money to our the charities that we support. Some corporations wanted to give sizable donations for the golf tournament this past year, but since our non-profit status was pending, they scaled back their donations. The second corporation is the Midnight Riders Independent Supporters Association, Incorporated, which is an IRS 501(c)(7) organization. The funds raised and used internally through our membership drive are non-taxed. (In the past, membership dues could have been taxed as income.) Now we can have extra money in our bank account and it will be tax exempt.

Monty noted that Bill did all of work for us pro-bono. The membership applauded Bill's contribution.

Treasurer's Report

Dan Clark gave the treasurer's report. Last year we started with \$4,075, and begin 2008 with \$4,019, so we basically had no profit. We were able to allow discounts on bus trips and had a good year financially. All the car flags, selling now, are already paid for, and proceeds will add to our account. We are in a good position financially. Our goal is to keep our bank account around \$5,000.

Membership Secretary's Report

Jon Strauss gave the membership report that we have had a lot of growth in the last 5-6 years. In 2007, we had 107 single memberships, 102 family, which accounted for 426 paid members, which was a record. We expected some fall off in 2007 but the opposite occurred. Our membership grew 12% over 2006.

Philanthropy Coordinator's Report

Mike Amrock gave the Philanthropy report. Last year's golf tournament was very successful and we raised over \$10 thousand dollars for local charities (applause) At the end of the season we also participated in the Jimmy Fund walk, which raised close to \$2,000.

This year we hope to continue the unused tickets plan – if anyone has extra tickets, we will offer them at the tailgate and give proceeds to charity. If anyone has any ideas for other charities, let Monty know. Monty thanked Mike and the golf committee for their work on the golf tournament.

2. Nomination & Election of 2008 Executive Board

Monty announced that Jon Strauss was stepping down as membership secretary. Amy presented Jon with an engraved pewter stein as a remembrance of his six years of service on the Riders Board and thanked him for his contributions.

Ballots were distributed at the door to all paying members. There were two contested positions and twelve at-large nominations. Amy tallied the ballots and Monty reported the winners for the 2008 season.

President: Monty Rodrigues
Treasurer: Dan Clark
Secretary: Amy Ross
Membership: Ed Mulrenan
Asst. Membership (contested): Peter Kearns
Merchandise coordinator (contested): Krista Taylor
Philanthropy chair: Mike Amrock

At-Large Board:
Jim Andruchow
Joe Butler
Fran Harrington
Julie Kumor
Michael Lawlor
Garrett Quinn
Mike Smith
Sarah Smith
Karen Tompert
Kim Wilkinson
Kenny Hall (write in)

Monty expressed the opinion of the Board that he hoped anyone who did not win would stay on as an at-large member.

3. Discussion of possible Road Trips

Last year we had the Dick Wiz tour, the Chicago season opener, the Toronto trip, Dallas for the Open Cup, DC for the MLS Cup final.

This year we will only have one game at New York, on April 19th. We are also looking for people to travel to Denver and San Jose. Monty noted that Columbus is hosting Toronto for season opener and more than 1,000 Toronto fans going. He encouraged the members to pack three buses for the New York trip. One note: now that we are a non-profit, we will have to suspend our practice of giving the Rev Army the Rider's discount on bus trips. Sarah Smith will let them know.

4. Discussion of upcoming events

Meet The Coach/Meet the Revs – this will probably be April 5, two hours before Meet the Revs, which is supposed to be that night.

Opening day tailgate -- early in the season the parking staff don't check passes for people to get into the Riders lot. Monty suggested to the members that we put some of the Riders' funds toward food and let people know we're providing food to everyone who wants to come. It would be a kind of open house to the Midnight Riders tailgate. Comments—someone suggested that it would be good if we can open up the lots earlier. Monty agreed but it is not likely. Our location for parking is not yet set. Another member suggested we wait to do the open house until later in the year when it's warmer. Monty thought that may cause a problem if we did it later in the year (more stringent parking rules as the season gets underway). Monty said he would have to talk to Craig Tornberg. Members were receptive to the idea.

Golf tournament -- we will have another one this year. Looking to do one every year – biggest thing we can do. To pull this off, it will take a lot of planning and help from our new volunteer board and others. The plan is for the tournament to be in the fall. We were able to organize it in just over 3 months last time. One problem with the fall is a congested schedule. We may not get many, if any, players to participate. The players who played last year aren't with the team any more. The Board has to decide the direction for the tournament and will be looking to members for help.

5. Committees needed

Monty said that since we have grown to our current size, we need help with our events. Some of the things we know we'll need help with:

- Philanthropy support - golf tournament . If anyone has other ideas, all fundraising ideas are welcome. If you're interested in helping out with the golf tournament, let Mike know.
- Website - Fran, Steve, and anyone else that wants to help out and can work on the Riders' site let us know

- Other needs - game day help from the at-large board

6. General discussion with entire membership body (time permitting).

Away game viewings – one of the members endorsed Tyng's pub in Tyngsboro. We will need a USMNT away game viewing location. In Hartford we can use Vaughan's Pub. Finding a place in Boston is tough, especially because we need a place that will allow children.

Prairie Clayton suggested that the Riders be more pro-active in promoting important activities both on our website and on our mailing list. She noted that not everyone reads BigSoccer.

We have several communication vehicles, the website, the email list, Big Soccer, and the MySpace Revs page. They should all have up to date info.

Craig Pion had a website suggestion that we post what's happening in Riders' community or in the Fort. We need more pictures up there so people can see who we are and what we do.

Garrett Quinn recommended the creation of a Tifo committee. He introduced himself to everyone as "the flag guy". He suggested that we put out the effort to bring more flags, banners, and streamers to games, both at home and for organized displays on the road. We will need people to go into the stadium early to put them up. Monty nominated Garrett to chair that committee.

Monty wanted to bring up a problem towards end of year, and addressed it to those who are in the Fort. We have been given permission by security to throw streamers. Monty said he saw a golf ball thrown one time...it was probably not us, but asked the members to either let security or Monty know if you see someone throwing something other than streamers or confetti. Throwing objects could cause us to lose our right to throw streamers, and worse, it could hurt someone down in front, or even a player.

Monty mentioned we need a new Fort banner since our banner was stolen in Toronto. He said the Riders will accept a monetary contribution if anyone's able to help out, and said we need ideas for a new banner design. The dimensions are 25 feet wide x 3.5 to 5 feet long. The new banner needs to be done by March 29. If you have any ideas about the design, let the Riders Board know. The banner should have our logo and the Rev Army logo on it, and both logos are on the Riders MySpace page.

Garrett said funding is one of the issues for this. Will we allow the use of the Riders' general fund for banner or for tifo? The general consensus among the board and membership is that we not use funds for tifo displays. Garrett suggested fundraising online, creating an online "chip-in" where you can raise money for a goal. Getting a new banner made won't be cheap.

One member said that In Poland used to use cans and collect money...but Monty let everyone know we can't officially collect money in the parking lot.

Someone suggested we make up a song sheet and see if we can hand them out. Monty said we need to be careful with this. Craig has issue with that because it makes a mess.

Monty let everyone know there was new merchandise available. We are selling beautiful new car flags at the meeting and offering a one-time discount. The flags were \$10 at the meeting and Steve was also taking pre-orders for the 2008 scarf.

Monty thanked Steve Erickson for his merchandising work this year. He sold all the Toronto scarves (beautiful scarf for the game), and all the 2007 merchandise, including 150 2007 scarves and old t-shirts.

Before the meeting was adjourned, Jon Strauss made his annual motion that the Red Bull franchise, and all of its predecessors, do suck and will do so in perpetuity.

The meeting was adjourned.

Post meeting note:

Following the general meeting, Mike Amrock resigned his position as Philanthropy Chair. That position was voted upon among the Executive Board and Peter Kearns was named the 2008 Philanthropy Chair. This opened up the Assistant Membership position. The Executive Board selected Julie Kumor from the at-large membership to fill this position.

Email addresses of new board members:

Mike Smith – smith624@hotmail.com
Sarah – lighthouseluva5@aol.com
Kenny – lk62@yahoo.com
Pete – pkearns@bwayres.com
Karen – ksue62@aol.com
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Joe – citizentoxie@gmail.com
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