

27 November 2006

Revised 11 February 2015

Revised 19 January 2021

**Peace River Sail & Power Squadron**

**Strategic Plan**

**Mission Statement:**

PRSPS Mission:

* To promote recreational boating safety in the surrounding community through education and civic activities while providing fellowship on and off the water for our members.

***Vision Statement:***

PRSPS Vision:

* We will be recognized by the community as the leading organization dedicated to the improvement of public boating safety through education.
* We will attract members who voluntarily contribute time, energy and talent toward improving their water safety skills.
* We will actively participate in civic activities, educational programs, social offerings and leadership opportunities.

***Strategic Issues:***

* Awareness – Expand public knowledge about our mission and the contribution made by the Peace River Sail & Power Squadron to recreational boating safety in the community.
* Public Education – There is a rapidly growing need for public safe boating education as more people move to SW Florida and acquire boats.
* Member Education – Increased participation in internal courses will not only increase member boating skills but enhance our ability to attract active members.
* Leadership – Filling Bridge, committee, and staff positions with active, motivated members is vitally important to the future health of the Squadron.
* Member involvement and retention - Many members do not become integrated into the organization and leave.
* Boating Activities – Participation by members in day and overnight cruises planned by the Boating Activities Committee will be improved as more members are included.
* Facilities – Our classroom at Bayfront has limited space and the yearly lease arrangement results in the need for more dependable long-term availability
* Communications – Advance our internal and external communications strategies to include more novel and updated approaches that will meet engagement across all adult age groups. Shift our website to a modern platform/format with easier updating capacity and develop an effective email and texting distribution capability.

***Strategic Issue – Awareness***

Expand awareness of PRSPS in the community through increased public relations and promotion/marketing.

**Organizational Goal:**

Increased public awareness of the contributions PRSPS has made and can make to boating knowledge and safety in the community.

**Lead Department – Executive**

**Strategies:**

* Expand PR Department to include internal and external components.
* Provide speakers at various local boating, social, and civic organizations using existing and novel presentation material which describes and highlights our public educational programs, the vessel safety check program and benefits of USPS membership. Increase visibility at boat shows, marine stores, marinas and launching ramps.
* Promote utilization of Volunteer Interest List.

**Goals:**

1. Purchase and maintain closed notice holders at all boat ramps and lifejacket stands.
2. Increase effective advertising of public boating courses and vessel safety checks that leads to annual increase in student enrollment and vessel safety checks year after year. HQ800 can capture survey information.
3. Provide posters and handouts for upcoming classes on a continuing basis.
4. Expand PRO Committee to provide increased committed personnel and funding for more geographic coverage and public penetration. Utilize the VSC Committee to assist in advertising boating courses.
5. Invite local print, radio and TV media outlets to visit squadron activities, such as boating course classes, vessel safety checks, cooperative charting activities, Safe Boating week activities, and other appropriate events to promote the squadron and to generate feature stories and/or interviews about squadron contributions to boating safety.
6. Enhance role with the Punta Gorda Boater’s Alliance.
7. Develop a speaker’s bureau and with a list of prepared topics available for presentations and have published on our website.
8. Offer Vessel Safety Checks and provide Boating Safety Course information at a minimum of one (1) public boat ramp and local yacht club annually.
9. Provide continuing Boating Course and VSC information at all boat ramps, marine stores and marinas.
10. Arrange local radio and TV interviews of officers, instructors, and/or the Public Relations Officer at least two times each year.
11. Continue reporting Squadron activities, course offerings, honors, etc. through press releases by the Public Relations Committee, in cooperation with the Bridge and the Executive Committee.
12. Conduct at least one Safety Demonstration Day each year.

***Strategic Issue - Public Education***

Increase yearly boating course attendance to improve boater skills and safety.

Organizational Goal:

Provide an aggressive and compelling schedule of boating courses and seminars to the public that results in increased annual attendance of students.

**Lead Department - Education**

**Strategies:**

1. Offer public boating courses at venues and times that promote increased attendance.
2. Be open to alternative locations for public boating courses, e.g., Military Heritage Museum or Library
3. Increase PRO support for activities to include multiple media outreach (print, electronic, TV, radio, posters, websites, posters, etc.`) for effective publicizing of our offerings.
4. Evaluate new seminars provided by National as they are released for relevance to our area.
5. Explore new educational offerings outside of National approved courses, such as “Learning to use a sextant,” How to Buy/Sell a Boat”, etc.
6. As education is the prime mission of the squadron and is also the major recruitment source for new members, explore a complete reorganization and approach to funding more effective advertising and have a budget for educational course advertising.  Our current members are not advancing through grades, so it is imperative that we reach out to the community for student recruitment.
7. Further explore expanding online courses and seminars to attract wider audience.
8. Explore new opportunities such as offering ABC to high school students for credit and obtaining certification.
9. Promote on the water teaching such as Jump Start to attract students who may not want formal classwork but would appreciate OTW training.  Reach out to boat brokers and offer free OTW training to new boat owners that would introduce potential students to more educational seminars and courses.

**Goals:**

1. Maintain an adequate number of public boating course instructors and proctors to ensure that each scheduled course is properly staffed without burdening volunteer instructors and proctors.
2. Offer new seminar offerings from National that are deemed relevant to our area.
3. Obtain approval from ExCom to open up all our course offerings to the public, albeit with higher fees for non-members assuming the instructors of each course, as needed, have criteria for prerequisite knowledge and/or skills by prospective students so as not to adversely affect teaching of members who might be taking the course.
4. Provide a formal means of recognition beyond Merit Marks for our instructors and proctors so that their service is deemed to be valued.

***Strategic Issue - Member Education***

Increase participation in advanced grade, elective course and seminar programs.

**Organizational Goal:**

Maximize the proportion of our membership who actually boat to earn advanced grades and take additional elective courses and seminars.

**Lead Department - Education**

**Strategies:**

1. Encourage new members (2017-2020: lost 57, 59 remaining 52 have no grade, 47 have not even taken an elective) to enroll in a course or seminar when they join.
2. Encourage members to progress through advanced grades at least to *Advanced Piloting* as a group, leading to the Educational Proficiency Award (AP plus any three elective courses)
3. Implement on the water instruction in courses as appropriate...
4. Encourage members to become involved in progressing through the Boat Operator Certification program.

**Goals:**

1. Enroll students in the *Boat Handling* or seminar course equal to at least 60 percent of the number of new eligible (I.e., those who actually boat or are planning to boat) members each year.
2. Offer at least two *Boat Handling* and *Piloting* courses each year.  Offer all other advanced and elective courses at least once each year
3. Enroll at least 60 percent of the *Boat Handling* graduates into the *Piloting* course
4. Enroll at least 50 percent of the *Piloting* graduates into *Advanced Piloting*
5. Completion of Educational Proficiency Award requirements by 80 percent of the number of *Advanced Piloting* graduates each year.

***Strategic Issue – Leadership***

Filling bridge, committee chairs, and staff positions is essential to the future of the Squadron.

**Organizational Goal:**

Encourage members to join committees, become committee chairs, and eventually become bridge officers**.**Especially encourage new members to become involved in specific activities early on.

**Lead Departments – Commander, Executive, Administrative and Education**

Promote joint interaction between Bridge Officers and Committee Chairmen to resolve interdepartmental issues.

Every Bridge Officer, Assistant Bridge Officer and Committee Chairman will have access to resources and/or a member experienced in computer technology that can support him/her as needed with productivity tools to be successful.

**Strategies:**

1. Host new member orientation socials at least twice a year.  Bridge officers are to encourage committee involvement by all members, especially new members.
2. Encourage members to attend the Operations Training Seminar and Leadership Development training.
3. Compile data contained in membership applications on member’s preference for committee work and distribute to bridge officers and committee chairs. This information needs to be embedded in our current database, either DB2000 or its successor so always available and can be updated.
4. Bridge officers will review existing job descriptions for their positions and, if appropriate for their assistant chairs. They will write or review existing job descriptions for committee chairs in their departments, confer with, and provide the descriptions to the chairs at the beginning of their terms of office.
5. Bridge officers will keep accurate records of their department’s events, activities, personnel. They will evaluate the functions of the department in a written annual report at the close of the Watch Year to be published in *The Pilot*.  Outgoing bridge officers shall mentor and facilitate the smooth transition of new officers.  Bridge Officers will provide the Planning Committee with a written assessment of their success in implementing provisions set forth in the Strategic Plan and recommend changes to the Strategic Plan by the December meeting of the Executive Committee.

**Goals:**

1. Fill each elected and appointed position including assistants for each department and/or committee each year with qualified and motivated candidates.
2. Each officer should identify potential leaders & forward recommendations in writing to Nominating Committee.

***Strategic Issue - Member Involvement and Retention***

Involvement will increase and turnover improved if new members are quickly integrated into the organization.

**Organizational Goal:**

Increase member retention and advancement of the squadron’s mission through active, measurable participation.

**Lead Department – Administrative**

**Strategies:**

1. Determine new member’s interest in educational, civic and social activities and provide guidance in joining a committee and taking a class.  All members who are physically able are expected to provide substantive, annual contributions to the mission of the squadron.
2. Ensure that members are aware they have an obligation to serve the Squadron in exchange for the educational and social benefits.
3. Use a new member “mentor” system during the early months of membership. The “mentor” would keep in touch with the new member and through personal contact encourage them to attend social functions, sign up for classes and join a committee/activity area. At squadron functions the mentor sits with the new member and introduces him/her to the group. The mentor is responsible for teaching the new member about squadron traditions and activities and promotes the new member’s integration, engagement and connections with the squadron.
4. Continue the new member host program at the business meetings.
5. Have *Boat Handling* and *Marine Navigation* instructors present course materials and signup prospective students during the membership interviews following public boating course examinations.

**Goals:**

1. Each new member will join a committee or be a participant in an activity under a Bridge Officer.
2. Expand the Member Involvement Committee by at least 25 percent each year until the National Guideline of 1 committee member for each 15 squadron members is met.
3. Fifty (50%) percent of new members will earn a Merit Mark in their first year.
4. Seventy (70%) percent of new members will renew their second year.

**Lead Department – All**

**Strategies:**

1. The appropriate Committee Chair will contact new members to discuss committee work based on their volunteer interests and see if a match within 30 days of new member status.  A standardized report form can be used to provide feedback to ExCom
2. Committee Chair to notify Membership Chair if a problem contacting New Member or if not a fit so we can talk with the New Member about other possible areas of interests.

**Goal:**

1. Have every new member engaged with a committee or activity within 2 months of becoming a member.

***Strategic Issue - Boating Activities***

Interest in and achievement of the Squadron’s mission will be enhanced by increased member participation in boating and cruising activities.

**Lead Department – Administrative**

**Strategies**:

1. Conduct a survey (may need to be done by telephone or personal contact) of active squadron boaters to determine what type of boating activities they would like to have scheduled and what each would like to participate in.
2. Offer day boating and longer multiple night cruising opportunities to new locations.
3. Appoint 2021 Boating Activity Committee asap so planning can begin.  Utilize the new and improved “Fleet Roster” to personally contact boat owners and encourage their input and participation in Squadron boating activities.
4. Boating Activity and Social Committees to function together in planning.  Luncheon “Cruises” need to be readily available to day-boaters on multiple occasions during the year; we have 5 destinations with 5 plus restaurants within easy day boating reach of the Punta Gorda/Port Charlotte/South Gulf Cove area.  They need our support, and we need to let them know who we are!
5. In the past scheduling of boating activities has been difficult due to conflicts with shore-based events and the Squadron’s desire not to overlap scheduled activities.  This issue needs to be addressed.
6. Demonstrate the connection to students between what they learn in the classroom and getting out on the water and developing real on water skills, knowledge and proficiency.
7. Institute a workable mentoring program for new boaters, new boat owners and those who want to become boaters/owners with members who boat on a regular basis.  A way to share knowledge, skills and fellowship.

**Goals:**

1. Increase member participation in boating and land-based activities by 25 percent each year until at least 80% of able-bodied members are participating.
2. Increase Squadron membership participation in day, long-distance cruising and the fellowship and knowledge gleaned from boating with fellow members. Carry forward and promote the USPS brand, “America’s Boating Club”, “For Boaters by Boaters”.

***Strategic Issue – Facilities***

The classroom at Bayfront Center has limited space and the yearly lease arrangement results in uncertain long-term availability.  Additionally, the use of the Punta Gorda Boat Club allows for larger class sizes but is also subject to long-term availability and sustainability in the event of a major disaster.

**Organizational Goal:**

Develop a plan that investigates other venue sites that would be appropriate for educational offerings and potentially for other squadron activities such as committee, social meetings and storage of equipment/teaching materials.

**Lead Department - Commander**

**Strategy:**

1. Commander will convene and charge the Facilities Committee or other appropriate group to develop a written contingency plan for alternative venues.  This plan will be approved by ExCom before the end of 2021 and reviewed annually.

***Strategic Issue – Communications***

Effective communication is a key element of success. Communication avenues include in-person squadron meetings, committee meetings, website, The Pilot, Facebook and other social media, emails, and phone calls.

**Organizational Goals:**

Focus our communications to the public and the membership through a modern website platform with associated global email capability.  The website must be regularly updated to be current.  It should serve as a platform for easily registering for educational courses and social/civic events allowing for online payment.  As much as is practical, our website should mutually interface with National and D22.  Consider a members-only area for login to assess confidential information.

**Lead Department - Secretary**

**Strategies:**

1. Form an Ad Hoc Communications Committee of members with knowledge and experience in the available state-of-the-art website platforms and email systems to investigate and report back on suitable replacements for our current system considering impact and appropriate coordination with D22 and National.
2. Ensure that there is satisfactory recognition of leadership in our major communication avenues such as Website, Pilot and Email notifications and that they are adequately supported and provided with transition and contingency plans with backup personnel knowledgeable and capable of taking charge in the event of a leader becoming unable to perform duties.

**Goals**:

1. Have an updated website functional no later than the end of 2021.
2. Identify assistant leaders for each of our major communication products (Pilot, Social Media, Website, Email administrator, etc.) no later than by the end of 2021.

Respectfully submitted by Planning Committee:

Lt/C Marge Babkiewicz, AP

Lt Larry Mack, SN

Richard Patrick, AP

Lt Richard Sluzewski, Jr. AP

Lt/C Greg Wise, SN/chair

Gloriajean Veitch

*Note: The Peace River Sail and Power Squadron Strategic Plan was adopted by the Executive Committee December 14, 2006, Revised 01/10/08, Revised 11/13/08, Revised 01/14/10, Revised 01/13/11, 01/10/13, and 01/09/14. Revised 1/19/21*