

# MEETING MINUTES, SEPT 23, 2025

## Attendance

John Ratcliffe, Bev Sawchuk, Dennis Cartwright, Jim Dunfield, Harold Walker, Dani Lee, Barry Edgington, and Sandy Sutherland.

## Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 19:05. This was an in-person meeting at the Clocktower Brew Pub, Westboro (418 Richmond Rd).

## Minutes of Previous Meeting – June 17, 2025

Adoption of meeting minutes from June 17, 2025. Motion made by Barry, seconded by Sandy. Motion carried.

## News and Recap of Recent Events

There was an official opening and ribbon cutting ceremony for the **new diver bench** at the **Prescott Scuba Park** on June 28. John, Jim, Tim, and Gerry from our chapter were there, as well as the mayor of Prescott, Dana Valentyne (our main Prescott contact), and members of the town council.

**Scuba Finatics** held their annual **Canada Day dive** and BBQ event at Lock 21 on July 1, where they gave away lots of prizes and raised more than \$400 for SOS. Thank you Finatics!

The **Seaway Valley Divers** club held their annual **Pig Roast** event at Guindon Park on July 5. Thank you to Seaway Valley for their continued support with moorings in the area.

Dani said that **KDS** recently organized a **Dive for Debris** cleanup dive in Prescott.

Kayla Martin will be running a **photogrammetry workshop** in November, organized through Dan's Dive Shop in St. Catharines. John has emailed members about this.

## Financials

Dennis provided an update on our finances. Our current bank balance is \$5,932.88.

Tim dropped off \$440.00 earlier this evening which Scuba Finatics raised at their Canada Day event. A big thank you to Scuba Finatics for their continued support.

## Donation Boxes

Chris Holloway had 1,500 copies of his updated Scuba Park map printed (1,000 English, 500 French), this was done at no charge by Jill Bobula from Lowe Martin.

Chris has dropped these off at most local dive stores, and also dropped some off for Barry, who passed them to Gerry Carter for distribution. Chris also gave some of the updated maps to Dana Valentyne in Prescott.



## T-Shirts

Various options are available. Chantelle Blanchard produced our old shirts ("Keep Calm and Volunteer On") about 10 years ago; she recently quoted a price of about \$11 per shirt if we ordered 24.

Members liked the style of the Picton Chapter t-shirts better, these have an embroidered SOS logo on the front and an image of a wreck on the back. Helen Cooper says the shirts are from Thousand Islands Sports and cost about \$16 per shirt.

John shared drawings of the Rothesay and Conestoga produced by Tom Rutledge (Shotline Diving) as possible options for the back of our shirts. Dennis says these are too busy, we should choose artwork which is simple and easy to recognize. John to see what else is on file - we have a bunch of drawings made by Nick Baets years ago. Dani thinks a picture of the Eastcliffe Hall would be a good option. Barry suggests a map of the Lost Villages or a drawing of the Power House. Dennis points out that the Power House is not a shipwreck, per se.

## Buoys

Belly Dumper – message from Bill O'Toole in early September that the line between the Belly Dumper and Barges was broken and needs repair. John notified Sylvain Marcotte, Sylvain has 500' of new line to replace the old line but needs one or two divers to help. John sent out a request for volunteers and Jonathan Tetreault and a friend volunteered to help, plan is to do this on September 30. Sylvain and a friend have already removed the old line between the Barges and Seaway Dyke.

Eastcliffe Hall – John spoke with Ron MacDonald yesterday; buoy is still in the water, Ron says he plans to remove it weekend of October 8-9.

Power House and Fred Mercur – Seaway Valley says there's a problem with Parry Walker's trailer so they won't be able to remove the buoys at the Power House and Fred Mercur this fall. Jon Mondoux will remove the buoy from the Fred Mercur and Sylvain Marcotte will remove the buoys from the Power House.

Rothesay - we didn't put out a buoy at the Rothesay this year as it gets minimal boat traffic. Tim reached out to Hubert Chrétien to see if he still plans on bringing his boat there, Hubert says he hasn't used it in years.

Luc Martin donated 500' of polypro line; Dani picked this up in Brockville and delivered it to Tim's shop for storage.

## Prescott Scuba Park

There was an official opening for the new diver bench at the Prescott Scuba Park on Saturday, June 28th at 11:00 am. John, Jim, Tim, and Gerry from our chapter were there, as well as Mayor Shankar, members of the Town Council, and Economic Development Officer Dana Valentyne. John and Mayor Shankar did a ceremonial ribbon cutting with a giant pair of scissors, the mayor said a few words, and photos were taken.

New privacy screens were installed in the change rooms in August, based on suggestions provided by our chapter members.

Chris Holloway and Harold Walker flipped the stairs in the Scuba Park so they are now right side up. Jim suggests we fix the line between the platform and the stairs. Line between the entrance and the platform is also too high.

Jim has been looking at ideas and options for adding more objects to the Scuba Park. One idea was to sink an old school bus. Jim met with Stéphan Senécal from the 1000 Islands Chapter recently, as their chapter had tried to sink an icebreaker in Brockville a few years ago. Stéphan suggested that sinking old boats would likely be the easiest option, as they can be acquired easily and are fairly easy to position and sink. Dani suggests concrete sculptures like those found in Brockville would be another option; Jim says there is also a plane on a podium near Brockville. More to follow.

Barry would like to recognize all of Jim's work to improve the Scuba Park and suggests a certificate would be in order.



New privacy screens installed in the change rooms at the Prescott Scuba Park in August.

## Lock 21

No updates on demolition of old pavilion and construction of new structure. Dani was at Lock 21 on Sunday and can confirm that the old pavilion was still standing. He's noticed that many divers at Lock 21 are not paying the day use fee.

Dani says the old SOS slates for Lock 21 are great, they're very helpful for dive planning and you can also write into them. Should look at producing and selling more of these.

## BEYOND THE EDGE with Barry Edgington

Barry brought in a Jack Browne free flow mask made by DESCO. This was developed during World War II and features a triangular acrylic face plate. This style of mask was worn by Lloyd Bridges at the beginning of "Sea Hunt."

Barry offers to host a future chapter meeting at his house, so members can see more of his enormous collection of vintage dive gear.

## **New Business and Next Meeting Date**

John received a message from Jennifer Gould from Dive Brockville that the change rooms at the Rothesay were in rough shape. He contacted staff from Augusta Township, who took care of it.

Dani suggests that SOS could be more active in connecting with new divers, could be doing presentations at open water classes.

John says he'd like to step back from Chapter Chair position next year, as he's been in this role for 10 years. Please get in touch if you're interested in taking on the Chapter Chair position or know someone who is. John says he would be happy to help guide and mentor a new person and would still attend meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.