



## Membership Handbook

Welcome to Sebago Canoe Club! Sebago is a 501C3, all-volunteer nonprofit dedicated to promoting human-powered boating. Through our programs, we strive to increase water access for the local community as well as for other New Yorkers who are interested in discovering the city's waterways. It is our hope that your experience with Sebago is both fun *and* rewarding. We are proud of our long legacy of giving back to the community. We celebrate the volunteer contributions of all our members, from those who make the commitment to develop high-level skills in paddling and sailing, which enable them to teach and lead others, to those who put significant hours into maintaining our club operations.

As we are an all-volunteer club with no staff, new members are encouraged to get involved and reach out to officers, directors, and committee chairs to discover the best way their skills and interests can be put into service.

All new members are expected to review this handbook, our Constitution & Bylaws, and our Operating & Safety Rules. The rules are meant to make sure everyone stays safe on the water. These materials can be found on the members-only section of the website (PW: checkinonow).

### Leadership (June 2023)

#### OFFICERS

Commodore: Beth Eller, [commodore@sebagocanoecub.org](mailto:commodore@sebagocanoecub.org)

Vice Commodore: Rob Buchanan, [vicecom@sebagocanoecub.org](mailto:vicecom@sebagocanoecub.org)

Treasurer: Alison Karasz, [treasurer@sebagocanoecub.org](mailto:treasurer@sebagocanoecub.org)

Secretary: Linda Petersen, [secretary@sebagocanoecub.org](mailto:secretary@sebagocanoecub.org)

#### DIRECTORS

Patrick Daniels

John Decker

Roger Hodge

Walter Lewandowski

Gianni Lopez

David Shaw

John Thomas

April Volponi

#### ACTIVITY CHAIRS

Kayaking: Gianni Lopez, [kayaking@sebagocanoecub.org](mailto:kayaking@sebagocanoecub.org)

Sailing: John Decker, [sailing@sebagocanoecub.org](mailto:sailing@sebagocanoecub.org)

Canoeing: John Thomas, [canoeing@sebagocanoeclub.org](mailto:canoeing@sebagocanoeclub.org)

Rowing: Rob Buchanan, [rowing@sebagocanoeclub.org](mailto:rowing@sebagocanoeclub.org)

## **APPOINTED OFFICERS**

Membership Chair: April Volponi, [membership@sebagocanoeclub.org](mailto:membership@sebagocanoeclub.org)

Gardening Chair: Mary Ann Hoag, [gardening@sebagocanoeclub.org](mailto:gardening@sebagocanoeclub.org)

Cabin Steward: Dottie Lewandowski, [cabinsteward@sebagocanoeclub.org](mailto:cabinsteward@sebagocanoeclub.org)

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

All members are automatically added to our Google Group email list. The email list is our primary vehicle for Club communications. Monitor the list for activity announcements, calls for volunteers, and other Club news. It is also the place to post if you are looking for paddling or rowing companions. Please be mindful about cluttering the list with excessive messages. Post items related to Sebago and human powered boating only. If you wish to respond to a post DO NOT REPLY ALL. Reply only to the person who posted. And, of course, civility is always expected.

We do have several smaller special interest email lists. Reach out directly if you would like to be added to any of these:

Sailing: contact [sailing@sebagocanoeclub.org](mailto:sailing@sebagocanoeclub.org)

Canoeing: contact [canoeing@sebagocanoeclub.org](mailto:canoeing@sebagocanoeclub.org)

Rowing: contact [rowing@sebagocanoeclub.org](mailto:rowing@sebagocanoeclub.org)

Gardening: [gardening@sebagocanoeclub.org](mailto:gardening@sebagocanoeclub.org)

Mowing: [vicecom@sebagocanoeclub.org](mailto:vicecom@sebagocanoeclub.org)

Boat Shed/Tool Shed: [vicecom@sebagocanoeclub.org](mailto:vicecom@sebagocanoeclub.org)

Don't hesitate to reach out to our committee chairs or board members with any questions. Our board meetings are the first Tuesday of every month. They are virtual meetings; all are invited. Meeting links posted to the email list.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Sebago Canoe Club is to expand public access for human- and sail-powered boaters; strengthen the connection between members of the surrounding community and the local waters and wetlands; promote the ecological stewardship of Jamaica Bay and the greater New York–New Jersey harbor and estuary; offer training in boating technique and navigational and water safety; and collaborate with and extend hospitality to other like-minded groups.

## **Commitment to Diversity**

The club's Constitution states that membership shall be open to all, regardless of age, race, religion,

national origin, marital status, disability, or sexual orientation. We respect different experiences and cultures and will work to create an environment in which diverse people feel supported, recognized, and rewarded in making their best contributions to the mission of our organization. This is a statement we expect all members to take seriously. No hate, no harm, no harassment will be tolerated.

## **Code of Conduct**

In support of an enjoyable and safe experience, all members, volunteers, and participants from the communities we serve with the club's programs are expected to abide by the club's Code of Conduct.

### **SAFETY**

- Members are expected to follow the club's operating and safety procedures.
- Members have a duty to address unsafe conditions, whether by acting to remedy the situation or by notifying the club's leaders.

### **RESPECT FOR PARTICIPANTS**

- Courtesy, respect, and cooperation must be shown to all, in private correspondence and in email and social media postings; at club meetings, events, and activities; and at any other event or activity while representing yourself as a member of the club.
- Differences of opinion and lively debate are encouraged, but rude behavior, intolerance, and personal attacks of any kind will not be tolerated.
- Discriminatory or harassing language and behavior, especially regarding a person's cultural heritage, race, religion, gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability, or any other personal attributes, will not be tolerated.
- Sexual harassment or unwanted advances of any kind will not be tolerated.

### **RESPECT FOR PROPERTY**

- Follow club guidelines for the use of all shared equipment.
- Ensure all shared and private property is always secured.
- Do not commit or allow theft or vandalism to individual or club property.
- Damage to any club property or others' personal property, however inadvertent, must be reported immediately to the appropriate activity committee chair or vice commodore.

### **REPORTING GRIEVANCES**

Any member who believes that the Code of Conduct has been violated should report the alleged violation as follows:

- Report the incident in writing to an officer or director. The complainant shall set forth the facts as well as the names of any witnesses.
- Upon receiving a complaint, the Board of Directors will convene a special meeting. Both the complainant and the member(s) at whom the complaint is directed will be given at least five days' notice of the meeting.
- The Board of Directors will determine if there is cause for disciplinary action and will determine, what action, if any, should be taken. The decision must be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the board.
- The Board will inform all interested parties of the decision in writing within five days of the decision.

- The decision by the Board of Directors may be appealed to the membership by contacting the secretary in writing. A meeting of the membership will be held to consider the appeal, and an affirmative vote of the majority present will be necessary to uphold the decision.

## **Membership Status**

### **CONDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

- Applicants who are at least 18 years of age may be accepted for conditional membership after completing an application, signing a liability waiver, and paying a full year of dues.
- Conditional members do not have voting privileges. They may not serve in any office but may be appointed to a committee.
- Conditional members do not get keys to the club unless they have a boat in storage.

### **SENIOR MEMBERSHIP**

- Conditional members may stand for senior membership after a probationary period of one year. Candidates must have completed their work requirement or paid the work fee, have a current waiver on file, and owe no outstanding dues or other fees.
- Those wishing to stand for senior membership must respond to the call for consideration issued by the club secretary and have their names posted for consideration on the email list.
- Votes for candidates are held at a General or Annual Meeting. Two-thirds majority of those in attendance shall be required.
- Senior members have voting privileges, are able to serve in any office, and may be appointed to any committee.
- Senior members are given keys to the club, and senior membership is continued if the member remains in good standing.

## **General Information**

- Invoices are sent during the first two weeks of October. To remain in good standing, members must pay all dues and fees by December 1. Members will be dropped and boats will be considered abandoned if payment is not received within 90 days of the invoice.
- All members may use club equipment according to the policies laid out in the Operating & Safety Rules and on the individual activity sections of the website (Kayaking, Sailing, and Canoeing). Please refer questions to committee chairs.
- All members may bring guests. Guests may be invited three times a year before they are expected to join. All guests must sign waivers, either via the website or kiosks in the clubhouse. All members and guests must sign in into the logbook in the clubhouse upon arrival.
- All members must wear PFDs whenever they go out on the water, and members are responsible for making sure any guests do as well.
- All members are welcome to attend the board meetings the first Tuesday of every month. Meetings may be held at the clubhouse or remotely.
- All members should try to attend the Annual Meeting and any other General Meetings. Our Annual Meeting is held the third weekend in September. Notice of all meetings will be posted on the email list.
- No private property, including but not limited to cars, boats, and trailers, may be kept on the club

- grounds or facilities without the permission of the commodore or vice commodore
- The last member on the grounds should make sure the gate is locked upon exiting.

## **Volunteer Hours**

- All members are expected to contribute 15 hours of work each year. Calls for tasks and workdays will be posted on the email list throughout the season.
- Members are encouraged to be proactive about finding work assignments. Ask the committee chairs and vice commodore about opportunities and let them know about your particular skills or areas of expertise.
- Members are responsible for logging their work hours in the online Work Book at <https://sebagocanoclub.org/club-work-book/>. The workbook is audited for billing purposes.

## **Boat Storage Facilities**

- Boat storage is not included in your membership dues and is subject to availability and the suitability of the boat for use at our facility.
- For the first boat stored inside (including sailboats with hulls outside and sails and foils inside), the fee is \$125. The second inside boat is \$150, and the third boat is \$175. Outside kayaks and canoes are \$75 for the first boat, \$175 for the second, and \$300 for the third.
- No boats may be stored on the grounds without arrangements with the boat storage coordinator and appropriate activity chair. All storage arrangements must be prepaid.
- Contact [admin@sebagocanoclub.org](mailto:admin@sebagocanoclub.org) with any questions.

## **Grounds Stewardship**

Because our organization has no staff, some simple but crucial maintenance checks are important whenever you are on the grounds. Please do your part.

### **TURN OFF THE WATER**

Our water comes from our neighbors at Diamond Point and is metered at the point where it crosses the fence. Our piping system is a bunch of hoses that fan out from that central spot to the right of the wash racks as you face Diamond Point.

There are numerous connections and y-valves at different points in this network and therefore lots of leaks and drips, so when the last person leaves the club at the end of the day it is **very important** to shut the water off at the main valve (yellow handle). If in doubt, turn it off. Don't assume someone else will do it.

The water bill is a major expense for the club, so please do your best to help us keep it under control.

### **KEEP THE CLUBHOUSE CLEAN**

All members are welcome to use the refrigerator, grills, coffee maker, dishes, and utensils. Cabinets are clearly labeled.

No food should be left in the refrigerator. The counters and table should be wiped down, and the coffee maker should be emptied and washed, with grounds placed in the compost bins. If the garbage can is full, take trash to large bins outside. If the bins outside are full, please take the liner bags to the dumpster and replace them with fresh bags.

If you've used utensils or dishes, take them in wash bins from the labeled cabinet to the washing station by the hose area and wash them.

### **LOCK THE GATE**

The cumbersome chain link lock at the gate, which was the source of complaints, has been replaced with a simpler locking system. The club is open to all members on weekends from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Memorial Day to Labor Day weekend, and if you are on the premises then it is normally not necessary to lock the gate when you come and go—unless of course you are the last person to leave. At any other time, it is the responsibility of all members to make sure the gate is secured when leaving.

If you are leaving, don't have a key, and find the front gate locked, there is a front gate key in the clubhouse on a hook to the right of the door as you enter. Please use this key to unlock the padlock, return the key to the clubhouse, and then lock the gate when leaving. **DO NOT LEAVE WITH THE GATE UNLOCKED.**

If you are a conditional member without a key – or a senior member who doesn't have one – there is also a key box at the gate with a contact phone number. There is another lockbox with a key at the clubhouse door, with the same contact phone number. Please call if you are unable to access the gate key in the clubhouse.

### **Cabin at Lake Sebago**

- Sebago Canoe Club maintains a cabin at the American Canoe Association (ACA) camp in Harriman, New York.
- All Sebago members are encouraged to join the ACA ([www.americancanoe.org](http://www.americancanoe.org)), and any Sebago member who wishes to use the cabin or equipment at the camp's Lake Sebago location **MUST** join the ACA. The ACA is the largest organization in the United States lobbying for human-powered boating.
- There is an ACA daily use fee of \$10.00 at lake. There is no Sebago day fee, but members who wish to stay overnight at the cabin are invoiced \$10.00. Sebago overnight fees are in addition to the ACA fee.
- Please see the cabin section of the website for full details.

### **NOTICE ANYTHING ELSE AMISS OR IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT?**

Email the vice commodore at [vicecom@sebagocanoeclub.org](mailto:vicecom@sebagocanoeclub.org).

**Please refer to the club website for additional information.**

*Revised June 2023*