

President's Message to Falmouth Running Club Members March 2021

Because January's meeting was the Annual Meeting and February's meeting was the Special Meeting to discuss the potential running club name change, the FRC March Monthly Meeting was the first Regular FRC Monthly Meeting of the year. Our agenda was packed, so we extended the meeting 30 minutes to try to cover everything and we were able to cover most of the topics. The official minutes, once reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors will be posted on the FRC website.

It seems like a lot longer than six weeks ago that I became President of what is now the Falmouth Running Club. I'm buoyed by what I'm seeing, hearing and reading about the excitement that is creeping back into our club. A number of you have expressed interest in getting involved with some of our new initiatives and are starting to propose ideas of your own on how we can add more activities and events, add different types of merchandise and ways to enhance communications out to all club members. Please keep proposing ideas and continue to offer your willingness to participate in developing these ideas into realities.

So, what actually is going on?

The FRC Races

The permit applications for the annual **Cape Cod Marathon Weekend Event** and the proposed **Women Run Cape Cod 5K** are still waiting approval from the Falmouth Select Committee. We were initially scheduled receive this information on Monday, March 8, but because of the large number of special events and the continually changing COVID restrictions, we are now expecting to receive an update on these races on Monday, March 22. Registration for the races included in the CCM Weekend normally would be in progress by now, but we will wait until we hear from the town before opening registration. Some initial planning has been done for the Women's 5K, but we mainly are waiting on that also.

As you know, the **Seagull Six** and the **Cape Cod Trail Races** have been cancelled for this year, however the Seagull Six will be held as a low-key virtual event in April. Ken Gartner will be working out the logistics. You will be hearing more about this soon. The Trail Races simply will not occur this year, however we have a number of runners who registered for the 2020 race before it was cancelled due to COVID. Upon cancellation, they chose to defer their registration fee to the 2021 race, which we are not conducting this year. We are in the process of identifying those individuals so that we can refund their registration fee.

CCM and FRC Budgets and Financial Status of the FRC

As the Race Director for the CCM, I found that this was the most difficult year to create a budget for this event. As members of the club, I believe you should be made aware of where we stand with the budget for the race.

Because of the continuing COVID situation, there are many different scenarios that could play out for the event in October. That being the situation, the budget that is now in place assumes that we will conduct a live event that will attract just enough runners in each of our events, so that we break even. In this situation, the FRC doesn't make any money or lose any money, but we conduct the live races and still are able to make the donations to all of the volunteer groups that help us put on the event. Stayed tuned as this situation continues to evolve.

The FRC budget depends heavily on the income from the CCM to be in the black, so we are expecting that we will be dipping into the club reserves to meet our financial obligations for the year.

Fortunately, over the years, the leaders of the club, mainly driven by Courtney Bird, were wise enough to anticipate that there may be years when the club may lose money, so a substantial "Rainy Day" fund has accumulated over the years to sustain the club for quite a while if we run into hard times. The bottom line is that the financial state of the Falmouth Running Club is very strong and will be able to withstand a tough year this year if it turns out that way.

5 x 5K Virtual Challenge

This is an idea that **Kathy MacDonald, Board of Directors member and club Secretary**, suggested. It will consist of club members running or walking five virtual 5Ks in a month. Currently we are looking at May to conduct this challenge. Kathy and I will be working out the details and will notify all club members soon.

Women's Fitness Program

Mary Tolland, also a Board of Directors member, has officially started the Women's Fitness initiative within the running club. Included in this initiative will be meetings with guest speakers talking about topics important to women's running and overall fitness, a special "Walk and Talk" activity, the potential for a Women Run Cape Cod 5K race, just to name a few. Mary will be scheduling a kick off "Meet & Greet" meeting at the Gus Cauty Recreation center in the very near future. Unfortunately, because of COVID restrictions, there will be a limited number of people who will be able to attend this first meeting. Within a few days, Mary will be sending details regarding this meeting and other activities included in this important initiative.

Monthly Races and Socializing with FRC Members

This activity will start once COVID restrictions ease up enough so that road races are allowed. We will designate one local race a month for FRC members to not only run the race, but also to participate in pre-race and post-race socializing with other FRC members. We will also be trying to get a club discount on entry fees for each of these races. One potential race is the Liam Maguire's Almost Five Miler, which hopefully will be held in early October right here in Falmouth.

FRC Name Change Update

We've come a long way in a short time with this one. Board of Directors member Steve Morris has been leading this effort along with Lindsay Benson, Julie Waite and Leslie DiAngelis. You probably already know that Lindsay created our new logo, which is now proudly displayed on our new sign over the door of our new office at 661 Main Street. She has also updated our Facebook and Instagram pages and is posting great news about our club.

Julie has made significant changes and upgrades to the FRC website along with changes to the Cape Cod Marathon website and all of our CCM related logos. Julie has been updating and upgrading these two websites for a number of years and is about ready to hand the reins over to someone else. See below for details.

Leslie DiAngelis, who is not only the Falmouth Running Club Administrator, is also the Race Administrator for the Cape Cod Marathon. She has been on top of all the name changes to the CCM website and is getting it ready for race registration to open in a couple of weeks.

USA Racing, our merchandise vendor, is working on designs for new FRC apparel, including singlets, shorts, pants, jackets, hats, car stickers and maybe more. Our current plan is to have one or two samples of each item in our office for you to touch and feel. They will be available for purchase in our online store and will be delivered to the location of choice. Not sure yet when this all will be available, but we will keep you updated on that. They are also working on the designs for our Marathon tee shirts.

FRC Website

As mentioned above, Julie Waite will be stepping down as our webmaster for the FRC website. Hence, we are in need of someone to volunteer fill her big shoes. If you have the technical skills and the desire to help out the club in a **HUGE** way, please contact me. Everyone in the club would appreciate your efforts. Thank You!!!

FTC History Preservation

A number of things are happening in this space. Russ Pelletier has volunteered to create a "Did You Know..." article about past and present club members as well as past and present events that will inform and sometimes humor you. He will post these articles on our Facebook page and they will also be posted on the FRC website. Initially, we're planning on these to be bi-monthly articles

Courtney Bird has been assigned the task of travelling back in time in his "Way-Back Machine" to sift through all of his FTC memorabilia, talk with prior and current long-time members of the club and perform any and all relevant research into creating a Readers' Digest version of the History of the Falmouth Track Club. I have assigned myself to be responsible for making sure it is actually a Readers' Digest version. I'm not sure who's task will be more difficult. The intent is to have a history of the club on our website that is long enough to be informative and short enough to absorb in a few minutes. The unabridged edition may end up in the Falmouth Public Library someday.

We are also planning to have a display in our new office dedicated to the club's history, including some old photos and a list of all past winners of the Cape Cod Marathon and Half Marathon with pictures of the course record holders. We expect to add other items and change out some things to keep it all interesting.

Membership Update

As of January 16, 2021, we had 150 active, dues-paying members of the Falmouth Track Club. As of March 10, 2021, that number has risen to 246 members of the Falmouth Running Club. Yes, I do understand that this represents some people who joined only to vote NO on the name change and also some people who joined to vote YES. This also represents many members who have joined recently because of what they are hearing about the changes that are being made and they want to be part of it.

This increase in membership also represents the great job that Julianna Coughlin, our new Membership Director and Board of Directors member has been doing over these past few weeks. In addition to attracting new, young members with fresh ideas, she is also working benefits for all of our members, including sending "Welcome" emails to all new members and "Thank You" emails to all who make donations to the club. Soon she will have a list on our website of local merchants who offer an FRC discount.

Relocation of the FRC Office

Progress is continuing on the renovation of our new office space. By the end of next week, we expect that the walls and ceiling will all be closed in. We are still expecting that we will be moving sometime around the end of April. Yes, we will be sending out a request for members to help with the move once we know the date.

Other Items

The FRC Friday 5 Miler is continuing and hopefully will be attracting new participants, especially after the “spring ahead” into Daylight Saving Time this weekend. I even dusted off my “used-to-be-somewhat-fast-but-are-no-longer-fast-at-all” running shoes and traversed the course last Friday. I expect to make it a streak of two in a row this coming Friday.

Yes, the Fun Runs from the FRC Office/Aquatic Brewing are still on our activities list. We’re looking forward to starting them as soon as COVID restrictions loosen. Details to follow as the situation changes.

Our Falmouth Running Club is, and always will be, as good (or great) as our members. It’s our participation in club activities and our suggestions on how to make improvements that will keep us moving forward.

As always, if anyone reading this update has any comments, questions, complaints, compliments, please email them to me at president@falmouthrunningclub.org. I will respond to you as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

Jack Afarian
President
Falmouth Running Club