Luders sailors,

Like you, I've been at home doing my best to envision a bright future that doesn't include dangerous viruses, and for me that means working on MaryJane and dreaming about summer days on the race-course. Given the uncertainty of when and how that summer might materialize, it is taxing my imagination. Of course the reality is that none of us really knows how that might play out.

Having just sat in on a Northeast Harbor Fleet planning call with Franny, Mike Cook, and others, it's clear that the uncertainty that is plaguing all facets of our life is front and center at NEHF as well. I was impressed by the hard work that is being done to be ready for whatever the Fleet can do this summer, and to look for safe ways to do it.

I am writing with a message that whatever services the Fleet is able to provide this summer, they need the membership by their side with both our financial support, and our feedback. The range of options the Flag Officers are facing include everything from no operations this season, to finding ways to provide most of their normal operations in a safe manner.

The only certainties they have today are 1) It's too soon to know what they can provide, and 2) whatever they do, this will be a painful year financially.

Most expenses at the Fleet are fixed, so whatever comes, there will be money going out the door. Most of the income at the Fleet comes in through membership and mooring rentals. If we want the Fleet to be there when we are ready to use it, we need to sustain it through hard times.

For that reason, I urge all of you to think about paying dues this year, whether you think you'll be on MDI or not, and even though the services you receive this summer will likely be reduced, or possibly even non-existent. Not everyone will find themselves in the comfortable position of being able to do that. But the Fleet is a club, and it is our club. We are the only ones who can make sure it is there when the air clears.

In addition, the Flags can use your feedback as they grapple with planning in such uncertain times. They'd like to know what you think they should do, and they'd like to know what your own plans might be for the summer. Do you expect to be on MDI? Do you see a path to racing your boat safely?

With all of the other parts of our lives in upheaval, I can imagine that many haven't even gotten around to contemplating racing. But if you have, please share your thoughts. And whatever your plans, please give some real thought to supporting the Fleet with your dues.

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