

Members Owned Assets Identification White Paper v2.0 **DRAFT**

Table of Contents	
I - Background	1
Why the Town Halls and Why this White Paper?	1
First, The Data	2
II - Solutions	4
a) Responsibilities	4
b) Process & Systems	4
III - FAQ / Other Questions re Asset Identification Program	5
Appendix - Benchmarking with Other Clubs	8
Town Hall Dates:	
- Aug 10, 2025, 1pm CST at AYC	
- Aug 25th 2025, 7pm CST on Zoom	
Important note:	
This paper deals with asset identification issues. For all other harbor questions, please contact: harbor_commander@austinyachtclub.net	

I - Background

Why the Town Halls and Why this White Paper?

AYC is one of the most affordable, most fun and most convenient places to store boats and trailers. Furthermore, the club has historically been quite liberal - probably not completely intentionally ⁽¹⁾ - in allowing members and guests to leave their boats, trailers, dollies and other items in various areas of the property.

Our handbook specifies that only Senior and Young Adult paying members are permitted to store items on the property. We also have a commitment to the LCRA to ensure that, when the lake rises, there is space available for all boats. However, anyone who has volunteered with the Harbor Committee knows that we regularly face challenges in identifying items. The biggest ongoing issue involves small boats, along with their trailers and dollies.

¹ We believe such liberality may have come as a result of the shortfalls outlined in this White Paper, as opposed to being completely intentional.

The club has not historically imposed strict identification requirements for these items, making their proliferation on the property more difficult than necessary to control. The majority of large boats, on the other hand, ought to be easily identifiable through the name on the trailer or their TX numbers for boats in wet slips. However, you will read from this paper that there is room for improvement in this area too.

This paper has therefore two objectives:

1. To provide quantified and qualitative support to the issues at hand in preparation for the upcoming Town Halls - see under section called *"First, the Data"*
2. To present simple, more acceptable solutions - see under sections called *"Responsibilities"*, and *"Process & Systems"*

We recognize that the issue of "Small Boats" identification must be tackled differently than "Large Boats".

Last but not least, while our "Why" - specifically, why do we need to be able to identify the owner of every asset on our property - may seem like a no-brainer to most people ⁽²⁾, we are aware that a new solution does represent a change in habits. We anticipate therefore that there may be many questions (regarding "How" "What", "Who", "When" and "Where"). Hence the proposed Town Halls with the goal of fostering a rich dialogue with our membership before phasing in the proposed solution.

First, The Data

Here is a summary of recent problems. As you will see, none of these issues taken individually, are insurmountable. The problem, however, is that the issues tend to repeat, they persist and they add up. It is not fair for Harbor volunteers & staff who are asked to check that the harbor rules are being respected, to not give them the means to do their verification efficiently (hence some amount of burn out from Volunteers and staff). We all really would prefer to spend more time sailing, than transforming ourselves into detectives ("who do these items belong to?"). **We need an easier way to verify that our club's honor system is in fact uniformly respected by members and guests: this is only fair to paying members.**

- On the topic of ensuring adequate space for all boats previously stored on the point—and confirming that every boat occupies a paying member's space—the recent rise in lake levels has given us valuable data:
 - There were 93 small boats and 20 empty trailers that had to be quickly moved off the point as it was flooding on July 4.

² Leaving boats on the property is a privilege, not a right. The premise of this White Paper is that this privilege must be reserved for those who pay for storage and have permission to use it. If we do not agree on these basic principles, then we are having a very different conversation. Keep in mind that the majority of AYC's revenue comes from storage fees. In other words, if we choose to rely solely on the honor system, forgo the ability to sample and audit all items on the property, and accept that not all items must be identified, then we are embracing an entirely different approach, different conversation.

- After two weeks from July 4, there were still 15 boats and four empty trailers needing to be addressed by the Harbor Committee and staff. Some of these boats were illegally parked on the point by various parties not renting dry sail space thus costing AYC lost revenues.
- Bone Yard had 57 empty trailers with 6 of these trailers unlabeled for a 89% Harbor Rule compliance.
- Dry Sail Area has 99 keelboats, 139 small boats, 8 power boats, 2 utility trailers, 9 empty trailers with a 62% Harbor Rule compliance.
- The harbor team's goal is 100% compliance - to accomplish this goal, we need every asset on AYC grounds to be identifiable at all times.
- Before the point flooded, there were 93 small boats stored there, many of them in locations that blocked wet slip renters from accessing parking areas for their cars when going to their wet slips. There were two abandoned boats and many empty single trailers.
- Harbor Rules do not directly allow boats to be stored on the point. Most past Harbor Commanders have not allowed it at all.
- In 2025, the Harbor Commander permitted small boats to be parked on the point due to very low water levels, determining this to be the best arrangement for small boat sailing at AYC. In return for this privilege—not a right—members are expected to ensure their property is clearly identifiable to the Harbor Committee volunteers and management.
- Wet Slips – Large Boats: We have 142 keelboats in wet slips, 39 of which either have expired TX numbers or are not displaying them, resulting in a 73% compliance rate with state boater law. There are also 40 Hydro Hoists in the wet slips.
- Recently, a mast was left unidentified in the Work Space Area for nearly a year. After numerous attempts to locate its owner, the mast was impounded, which led to some drama when the owner eventually came forward to claim it.
- The GM assigns a space to a Senior or Young Adult member, only to discover a boat is already parked there. If every boat were properly identified, this issue would be less frequent. However, when the occupant is an unidentified squatter, it results in wasted time and effort.
- When we run a TX number on a large boat, sometimes there is no member associated with it in our database. We then send a photo of the boat to all members—which can be a nuisance to recipients—but still fail to identify the boat. This situation occurs several times a year.
- With rising lake levels, too many boats ended up crammed into a single space, making it difficult for neighboring members to move their boats. This led to several complaints.
- An Associate member does not have boat storage rights. During the clearing of the point, it was discovered that non-member boats were present, and that Associate members had parked boats there without paying for storage. It is important to note that Associate members do not have boat storage rights.

- After 42 days from the point flooding, we've impounded three boats, one empty single trailer, and a beach dolly.

Circulating pictures of unidentified items to all members in hopes of locating owners, or impounding items lacking identification, are neither pleasant nor cost-effective solutions—especially given the size of the point and the historical prevalence of unidentified small boats and items stored there.

The boat storage facilities are currently at full capacity, with dry storage and board boat slips completely occupied, making it even more critical to improve our situation now—before lake levels recede again (hopefully not anytime soon).

It is our opinion that failing to address the identification problem is both more difficult and costly than implementing the straightforward solutions we propose below.

II - Solutions

a) Responsibilities

- Member Stored Assets Management
 - Harbor Commander is responsible for overseeing enforcement of the harbor rules as set by the handbook
 - The GM is responsible for making sure they are fairly & impartially enforced, as directed by the Harbor Commander
- Oversight
 - The GM is responsible in order to assure continuity regardless of changes in board
- Data Base Management / Maintenance:
 - Database team
- Checking that assets on the property are in compliance.
 - Harbor team
- Communication
 - Primary responsibility with the boat owner to communicate the ins/outs of items they own on the property
 - The Membership Committee and the GM are responsible for educating the new members about their obligation to identify their boats, trailers and any other items at all times.
- Escalating items that are not in compliance
 - Harbor team
- Analytics
 - The Harbor team is responsible for analytics regarding identifying unidentified boats and trailers, determined under used boats, and working with the Fleet Captains to make the Harbor Rules work better for everyone.

b) Process & Systems

- **What are the acceptable forms of Identification?**
 - Currently AYC requires trailers to be labeled with the owner's name.
 - Most keelboats have TX numbers making identification easier and faster.
 - Stickers on all boats and trailers used by most yacht clubs is the most reliable identification especially for small boats.
 - Dolly luggage type tags or lanyards are the most practical for beach dollies.
- **How do people apply?**
 - Online Application Form
 - simple and quick
 - Item description (boat, trailer or dolly), Owner Name
- **How do new members apply?**
 - Use the same online Application form as used by all members.
- **Where is the ID placed?**

Principle: it must be consistently placed, otherwise not fair on volunteers to keep looking.

 - Boat: Aft on hull
 - Trailer: on tongue
 - Other items (e.g.mast and beach dollies) attached as best can be achieved for the specific.
 - The Harbor team will work with Fleet Captains to determine the best methods for properly identifying items attached to each fleet's equipment.
 - Ask the GM on other non-normal situations
- **What Data Base will we be using?**
 - Airtable. AYC member Brigitte Benquet has volunteered to maintain the data in Airtable and run analytics, matching assets to paying members (using owners names for matching criteria)
- **Describe Communications of ins/outs**
 - The asset owner is responsible for communicating ins and outs of assets to the GM, so that the database can be updated
 - Proof of ownership will initially rely on a member's verbal confirmation (the honor system). However, the Harbor Rule wording requiring documented proof of ownership in cases of dispute will remain in effect as stated in the handbook. The following forms of documentation will be accepted as proof of ownership:
 - Title, Insurance
 - If above is not available, then written statement (mainly for small items)
- **Escalation process - Delinquent and unidentifiable items**
 - First line of escalation: harbor team notifies the GM and Harbor Commander
 - When the owner is identified, the GM sends an email notice requesting compliance.
 - Next level of escalation: Harbor Commander or the GM speaks to the fleet captain

- Next with the Harbor Commander's approval, monthly improper storage fees will be charged until the asset is brought into compliance.
- **Handling of Exceptions**
 - The Harbor Commander may approve exceptions, provided they are reasonable and applied fairly across the membership.

III - FAQ / Other Questions re: Asset Identification Program

Purpose:

The primary purpose of the Asset Identification Program is to identify all AYC member boats, trailers, and dollies on AYC grounds at all times.

FAQs

Why do we need to identify a boat when the trailer has an identification?

Trailers and boats are two separate assets. A trailer identification does not necessarily identify a boat. Many times, a trailer is not properly marked. Sometimes a small boat is on a beach dolly with neither the dolly nor the boat having any identification.

What is the purpose of the Asset Identification Program?

The purpose is to identify unidentified or unidentifiable boats on AYC grounds and ensure they are owned by Senior or Young Adult members who are paying the appropriate storage fees.

Why not just use member numbers?

Each asset needs a unique number; a Member Number will not work as many members have more than one boat or trailer. We would not be able to identify proliferation of items (vs per harbor rule, members must purchase adequate space for their boats).

As a side note, AYC has already purchased identification stickers, which are designed to look quite professional.

We should not do anything to discourage people from sailing.

We are not discouraging anyone from sailing. However, AYC Harbor Rules allow only Senior Members and Young Adults to store boats on AYC grounds. It is essential to identify all member assets to ensure safety during emergencies, such as the recent flooding of the Point. Additionally, an Asset Identification Program guarantees that everyone is paying their fair share.

Why don't we leave it to the members to tag their boats in any way they see fit?

Many members simply do not label their trailers, boats, and dollies. Additionally, labels often become unreadable over time. It is simply not practical to rely on member compliance without specifying rigorous, exact standards.

Board Boats need to be right on the water's edge.

This is an issue outside of the need to identify all AYC-stored member assets.

What problem are we trying to solve?

Currently, especially among boats under 14 feet, AYC has many unidentified or unidentifiable boats. We need an effective system to identify member assets on AYC grounds.

How does any new rule improve the Name on Trailer/Dolly rule we already have?

Assigning a unique number to each asset will provide AYC with a more reliable system to identify boats belonging to Senior Members and Young Adults stored on AYC grounds. The current system does not offer this level of reliability. Additionally, an Asset Identification Program will save time for the Harbor Committee and staff in overseeing storage compliance.

How will we enforce any new rule if the previous ones aren't enforced?

The current Harbor Rules are enforced on a regular basis. The Asset Identification Program will make enforcement easier, faster, and more consistent.

How do we show proof of ownership, to acquire our stickers?

Initially, we plan to take a member's word for ownership. However, wording will remain in the Harbor Rules that allow the Harbor Commander to require proof of ownership such as title.

Currently, we are not requesting titles as proof of ownership. For the large number of small boats without any existing identification, we plan to rely on members' verbal confirmation of ownership (the honor system).

How will stickers on boats be enforced?

The new system will be enforced by moving boats without stickers and trailers without proper labeling or unreadable labeling to an Impound Area for the Harbor Committee and AYC staff to continue trying to identify ownership.

If there is no visible hull area when a boat is stored, how can a sticker rule be enforced?

If a member has properly obtained a sticker, they are considered to be in compliance. There will be occasions when the Harbor Committee or staff need to look under a boat's cover to verify that the boat displays a valid sticker. This inspection is well within AYC's rights as the property owner, as members must allow such inspections to store assets on club property.

Should we charge separately for on-point storage?

This is not an Asset Identification Program issue. It is a broader question for the AYC Harbor Committee to consider and falls outside the scope of the Asset Identification Program.

Should on-point storage be an independent storage option, rather than an add-on?

This is not an Asset Identification Program issue. It is a broader question for the AYC Harbor Committee to consider and falls outside the scope of the Asset Identification Program.

Should on-point storage be in a designated area, or just parking anywhere available?

While this falls outside the scope of the Asset Identification Program, it seems like a worthwhile idea and is a broader question for the AYC Harbor Committee to consider.

Should non-member Lasers and Sunfish be allowed to park on the point if active on Wednesdays?

No. AYC Harbor Rules permit only Senior and Young Adult Members to store boats on AYC grounds. Associate Members and non-members are always welcome to bring boats for activities; however, those boats must be removed from AYC grounds after hours. Overnight storage may

be allowed as an exception for regattas, provided the Harbor Commander is informed and approves the arrangement.

Should some categories of designated storage, or even all storage at AYC be free?

No. AYC storage fees are based on a member's individual use of storage, not shared collectively among all members. Each user pays their fair share. Only AYC Senior and Young Adult Members are permitted to store property on AYC grounds by paying the club's current pricing structure.

Can we mark storage areas on the point in compliance with LCRA regulations?

This is not an Asset Identification Program issue. It is a broader question for the AYC Harbor Committee to consider and falls outside the scope of the Asset Identification Program.

Should there be a separate storage area on the point for youth/junior program private boats?

This is not an Asset Identification Program issue. It is a broader question for the AYC Harbor Committee to consider and falls outside the scope of the Asset Identification Program.

How do we identify other items, for example a mast?

The member's Last Name should be written on the mast (sharpie, tag, or other).

Boat Covers: My boat has a cover. The ID is under the cover. Is it a problem?

It is the right of the AYC to lift the covers on boats left on property to check the asset.

Proof of ownership: Do I need to prove ownership?

The handbook requires that only property owned by a Senior or Young Adult member be left on the property.

Liability

If an item cannot be identified, the club reserves the right to remove or auction the unidentifiable property.

Campaign to retire non actively racing boats.

Yes, there is a push for this, to make room for actively racing members - especially since we are at capacity.

Appendix - Benchmarking with Other Clubs

We checked with the following clubs: Rush Creek with 300 members, Lakewood with 500 members, Lake Canyon with 400 members, and Southern Yacht Club of New Orleans with 1,700 members.

- All of these clubs use stickers to identify their member boats and trailers.
- Two of these clubs have full time staff members with the title "Harbor Commander"
- All require current TX Numbers for boats in their wet slips.
- All send out email flashes when a boat or trailer is found on club property with no labeling stating "Whose boat / trailer is this?"
- All do not charge for identification stickers.
- Two clubs also charge for storing empty trailers of wet slip renters.

- All clubs monthly check all boats in their wet slips for expired TX Numbers.
 - None allow non-member boats to be stored overnight unless as part of a regatta.
 - All regularly check for non-used boats and have them removed to allow for more active users.
 - All allow Sunfish / Laser type boats to be stored at \$25 per month on club grass.
 - Two clubs require written compliance agreements each year confirming current insurance and non-expired TX Numbers.
 - All regularly impound unidentifiable boats and either auction them off or have them removed from club grounds.
 - One club charges separate fees for storing a powerboat and its utility trailer.
-

White Paper Core Team

- Mike Beuerlein
- Jackie Wheeless
- Anne Morley
- Harry Polly
- Brigitte Benquet
- Tyler Carstensen