

# HMC-Memo-003-Server-Admin

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mariano Uvalle  
FROM: Abner Coimbre  
DATE: February 25th, 2026  
SUBJECT: New tasks with Handmade Revolt (and beyond)

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*Mariano Uvalle is the [server admin](#) for Handmade Cities. He's a former Microsoft engineer at Azure who recently stepped down to work for a smaller company (opinions here do not represent any of his employers.)*

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Dear Mariano,

Thank you for donating your time to run our servers! I loved your [recent message](#) to the community. I'm going to list our immediate priorities below, just to make sure we're on the same page. Send me a ping if something seems off or is incorrect.

## Codename: Handmade Revolt

We've agreed to hard fork Revolt since the author deprecated it in favor of the [Stoat rebrand](#). Our rationale being that Revolt, for all its missing features, is surprisingly stable. Meanwhile if we look at the open issues for Stoat, we can tell they're going to be in flux for a while... Furthermore, our chat invite systems ([here](#) and [here](#)) depend on the legacy codebase. We might as well take full ownership and develop features or fix bugs ourselves: which you've [already started](#) doing!

I think "Handmade Revolt" is a good codename until the fork is mature enough to call it something else.

P.S. Our Boston host [recently](#) demoed a new Revolt client at her meetup. Let's keep an eye on [Ermine](#) and make sure it's compatible with Handmade Revolt.

## Beyond Revolt

Handmade Cities takes self-hosting seriously, as [mentioned](#) in our About page. I'm going to slowly give you administrator rights to the services we already self-host. Some examples:

1. **Meetup Newsletters:** *Every meetup in each city has a local newsletter. The host can see who's subscribed to it. The host can send fancy emails using fancy branding. We handle unsubscribe requests on their behalf. We mirror their newsletters to [News](#).*

2. **Press Releases:** *Very similar system to a meetup newsletter, except I'm the only one who's able to issue a "press release." A press release emails everyone in all cities, everyone who's ever donated, everyone who's ever bought a conference ticket and so on. I use it sparingly.*
3. **Gitea Instance:** *Of course we need source control!*
4. **CI/CD:** *For example, someone makes a `git commit` and the website updates automatically.*
5. **RSVP System:** *This is how meetup hosts generate RSVP links.*

Sadly, this is just off the top of my head. I'll give you info dumps as needed. I'm just happy we're finally starting to solve the bus factor problem :)

## Dealing with Rogue Server Admins

Let's pray you never turn evil! But let's imagine you get hacked or something. In that case that's no good because your Linux account is in the sudoers group!

What I've done is ensure our server can be purged instantly through the VPS provider. I've turned on weekly backups - full snapshots of everything - to restore from a savepoint. Only I can talk to the VPS provider and that account has MFA enabled. Only I own the DNS records for [handmadecities.com](https://handmadecities.com) and that account has MFA enabled. I'm also logging `sudo` operations and receive [PUSH notifications](#) for anything sus. Finally the Server Admin, whether it's you or someone in the future, agrees to follow community policy to never violate the privacy of our users. (To the extend permitted by law.)

I don't take your competence for granted: indeed, you were the one who expressed relief at my basic OPSEC efforts. Sysadmin work is NO JOKE and I should not be surprised by how quickly you're running things already.

*Yours sincerely,*

*Abner Coimbre, Founder*

*Seattle, WA*