

Ontario Adventure Rowing

Annual General Meeting Minutes

March 30, 2022



1. Call to Order – 10:06 am

Attendees: Cynthia Warn, Shelagh Baker, Richard Vincent, Peter Jepson, Kathy Lessard, Homam Michael, Diana Watson, Norma Strachan, Alistair Hensler, Matt Gleben, Arnold Vandermeer, Doris Chai, Kevin Donnelly, Brian Howe, Mary Clark, Dominique LaMarre, John Murphy
Proxys: Jean-Christophe Marly, Brian Love (exercised by OAR Secretary)

2. Filing of Notice of Annual Meeting

Notice was given on the OAR website more than 30 days and less than 60 days prior to this meeting.

3. Quorum

Required quorum is twelve. There were seventeen attendees via zoom and two proxies.

4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The previous minutes were approved with no corrections.

5. Business Arising Out of Previous Minutes

No business was arising from the previous minutes.

6a. President's Report

The last two years have been tough in that COVID restrictions have shut down many of our tours. We did manage to squeeze in two exploratory tours of routes involved in the 2022 World Rowing Tour in the Bay of Quinte and among the Thousand Islands. Both tours were extremely useful in providing lessons. We had a half season of tours from mid-July to October, 2022. One of the tours was a re-creation of the first tour in 1995 on Big Rideau Lake.

Despite these challenges, the number of Club members is up to 16 which is higher than our normal dozen or so (though we had 15 Club members in 2019). This is due to the Kawartha tour which brought in the Peterborough Rowing Club, the World Tour pilot which encouraged a couple of participants to ask their Clubs (Argos and Kingston) to join; as well the Cornwall Rowing Club joined. The rest of the Clubs are loyal members over many years.

Despite the paucity of tours, we have been busy with many meetings over ZOOM and have become expert at making Covid grant applications. We updated the by-laws to conform to the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA); we will ask you to vote on the revised by-law at the Annual General Meeting on March 31.

Also a number of policies were updated and the Row Canada Safe Sport policies were enacted. The Safe Sport policies represent massive overkill for a small organisation with no elite athletes, no coaches, no employees, and no minors. Fortunately we have had no complaints over 14 years of operation, so we expect none. ZOOM has changed our culture. It has allowed for more meetings and more productivity. However, as many organisations have found, there is no replacement for person-to-person meetings to encourage empathy and understanding of complex issues.

We have recently adopted a strategic plan which focuses on four goals:

1. To maintain and improve touring capacity
2. To increase and renew membership
3. To increase our respect within the rowing community
4. To increase our ability to reach rowers through the on-line media.

In the first goal we identified having more trailer drivers as the top objective. So if you know anyone who would volunteer to drive a trailer, please contact one of us. We have already moved on the second objective to create a second mobile touring centre by agreeing to purchase three used T-11 touring quads. With this acquisition, once we have refurbished the used T-11s, we will have eight touring quads on two trailers ready for use.

In the fulfillment of our goals, we have created an additional committee, the Outreach Committee, to reach out directly to individual Clubs and independent rowers. The mandate of the Newsletter Committee will be expanded to deal with publicity to the Row Ontario community. We are soliciting people with social media skills to make our social media platforms buzzing with activity.

In terms of relations with the rowing governing bodies, we may be on the cusp of better recognition. The World Rowing Tour is embraced by Rowing Canada (RCA), the revised Touring Manual will be converted into a RCA document, and sanctioned tours will now be publicised in the Row Ontario Community News.

All our directors and tour organizers are volunteers who give freely of their spare time to encourage and deliver touring in Central Canada. I want to thank all of them for their contribution. We also appreciate very much the contribution of our equipment manager and main trailer driver, Arnold Vandermeer. And finally we mourn the loss of our long time treasurer, Blackfly tours organiser, and FISA World Tour organiser, Donna Speigel.

b. Other – WRT Report - Vice-President

There are 50 participants from 12 countries accepted for the tour and a short-wait list if any of the 50 can't make it. The deadline for payment is April 15 and we have received more than \$50,000 at this time. Soon we will have \$150,000 in the bank. Grants seem slow to arrive, but we are told that it is the same for everybody this year. We are confident that the total expected from grants and sponsorships will be reached. Several thousand dollars of savings on expenses have been identified. Cynthia is doing the bookkeeping, and we are keeping each other honest!

The participants have been sent a welcome package which includes information on tours and events before and after the WRT.

The E team and especially Shelagh have been very active in getting the word out and marketing the event. The social media component is beginning to move. Lots of publicity for the World Tour means lots of publicity for row-touring in general.

Everything is coming together, in terms of equipment and volunteers, but we still need more volunteers! We are planning to trial an offshore boat loading system and experiment with adding keel strips to the EuroDiffusion boats with the old steering system, to make steering easier, at Hanlan in May.

A group of Belleville watersports clubs is collaborating in the planning of a Quinte Watersports Fair to promote on-water activities in the bay on Saturday 10 September. The WRT was the catalyst for creating this event!

C. Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement

Diana reviewed the Income Statement and Balance Sheet. There was a correction to prior years expenses and the WRT loan entry. Diana also did her best to capture many years of capital acquisitions and disbursements to create a reasonable balance sheet for this fiscal. It was noted that without the extraordinary income received in 2021, the membership and seat fees would not cover the operating expenses.

Motion to approve financial statements (Second): Shelagh Baker, (Richard Vincent).
-Approved by a show of hands.

d. Nominating Committee Report – Secretary

As noted in the previous year's minutes, the number of directors is fixed at nine. This is in anticipation of the updated by-law being approved. The bylaw lays out the mechanism to have three positions become vacant each year (the term length will be three years. At the next board meeting, the officer positions and lengths of terms for each director will be decided.

I would also like to thank Kathy Lessard for her participation on the board, and Elaine Bursztyn for her many years as registrar, and spelling and grammar authority!

7. Election of Directors

There are eight nominees for the board: Shelagh Baker, Diana Watson, Richard Vincent, Homam Michael, Cynthia Warn, Doric Chai, Peter Jepson, and Arnold van der Meer.

Motion to approve election of the above-named candidates (Second): Richard Vincent, Arnold van der Meer.

– Approved by a show of hands.

8. Vote to Approve New Bylaw

The new bylaw was undertaken to conform to the new Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA), to update the language of the old bylaw, and to amend areas that were not clearly or practically defined. The board approved the bylaw on July 20, 2021 and the members of OAR are now asked to vote on accepting the new bylaw.

Motion to approve the by-law presented to the members (Second): Homam Michael, (Matt Gleben)

– Approved by a show of hands.

9. Next Meeting

The next member meeting will commence on termination of this meeting. The next board meeting will be scheduled through a Doodle Poll.

9. Termination - 7:23 pm