

Ontario Adventure Rowing

Annual General Meeting Minutes

April 22, 2022



1. Call to Order – 10:16 am

Attendees:

In Person: Cynthia Warn, Peter Jepson (ind.), Arnold Vandermeer (ind.), Doris Chai (ind.), Homam Michael (Durham RC), Ernst Peters (Don RC), Matt Gleben (Barrie RC), Heather Palmer, Elaine Bursztyn, Peter Bursztyn,
Zoom: Richard Vincent (ONEC), Diana Watson (Cambridge RC), Shawna King, Susan Bruce (Sudbury RC), Nancy Kielar (Guelph RC), Kevin Donnelly (Cornwall RC).
Proxys: Lucy Renard (ind.), Dominique LaMarre (ind.), Jane MacDonald (ind.), Janet Bolton (Hanlan BC), Carol Grenier (Quinte RC).

2. Filing of Notice of Annual Meeting

Notice was given on the OAR website more than 10 days and less than 50 days prior to this meeting. The financial statements were distributed more than 21 days before the meeting. Both these timelines conform to OAR bylaw 1.

3. Quorum

Required quorum is 50% of voting members. There are 15 member clubs and 13 independent members, both with one vote each. Sixteen votes are 'present', therefore quorum was reached.

4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The previous minutes were approved with the addition of the club of the attending member added to the call to order.

Motion to approve financial statements (Second): Arnold Vandermeer, (Ernst Peters).

5. Business Arising Out of Previous Minutes

No business was arising from the previous minutes.

6a. President's Report

It is fitting that we gather in Barrie for this AGM.

This year Barrie Rowing Club and the Ontario Adventure Rowing Association (OAR) concluded a mutually advantageous agreement to host a **mobile touring unit for coastal boats** at Barrie RC. The use of the boats will be prioritized as follows:

1. OAR tours
2. Barrie Rowing Club tours
3. Rentals to other OAR Clubs.

Barrie Rowing Club is the host to a gem of a river tour: the **Nottawasaga Tour**. Last year we went upstream. Only Matt Gleben would be audacious enough to lead us upwards through the swifts.

In 2019 at the AGM in Barrie I talked about '**la relève**' (renewal of volunteers) and we did recruit some new directors. They were absorbed – with some bumps on the road – and we have achieved **successes**: revival of tours after COVID, a successful WRT, more touring boats, and the creation of a mobile touring unit for coastal boats. We are going further to renew our directors this year. Two years ago, Donna Spiegel and I made a pact to continue on the Board until now. Unfortunately, Donna did not make it. This year I am finishing 15 years as President.

In our **strategic plan** we put finding sites for mobile touring units as a top priority. The Barrie agreement is the first, but we need two more sites for touring boats. We also listed trailer drivers and greater publicity as part of the strategic plan. The strategic plan helped us a lot to take action on our priorities. It was supposed to be a three-year plan, but we have done a lot in less than a year. It is good to have an action oriented strategic plan around which there was a consensus.

Now some words of wisdom for the future which people may ignore, but I will say anyway.

- **Be fiscally conservative** – Of our total income, the percentage distribution for the last two fiscal years (with the addition of the WRT 'surplus') is as follows:
 - Tours: seat fees/'surpluses', rentals: **21.9 %**
 - Covid grants including WRT tourism recovery grant: **60.5 %**
 - Surplus from World Rowing Tour: **17.6 %**

The Covid epidemic is gone, so there will be no more Covid grants. No World Rowing Tour in Ontario is on the horizon. So in future years, our revenues will be down considerably. Tour income amounted to an average of only \$8,561 a year in the last two years from which we will have to pay Association fees, insurance, and repair costs. So let's be careful with spending money in the future. (It is good that we took advantage of these inflationary times to increase our fees. For example, our daily seat fee is now \$30 instead of \$25 in 2022.)
- **Be ambitious but be realistic** – to maintain relevancy, you must try different things. But you cannot deplete the reserves of the volunteers, nor the finances available.

b. Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement

Diana reviewed the Income Statement and Balance Sheet. It was noted that without the extraordinary income received through Covid grants, the membership and seat fees contributed only \$931. We need to put more bums in seats and explore non Covid granting opportunities.

Motion to approve financial statements (Second): Cynthia, (Richard).

-Approved by a show of hands.

c. Other – WRT Report - Vice-President

Peter Jepson reviewed the objectives and achievements of the World Rowing Tour.

To continue the tradition of an OAR-organized World Tour in Canada in years ending in '2'. This was achieved! Looking forward to 2032, though, perhaps thought should be given to hosting the World Tour in another part of Canada.

To give the participants an enjoyable experience. Achieved, by all accounts! Many complements and comments on the excellent organization were received.

To raise the international profile of the Bay of Quinte and the 1000 Islands as great places for rowing. Achieved! Leading rowers from twelve countries now have first-hand experience, and articles about the tour have been published in many international rowing and leisure journals, including The Porthole, The Wave, 1000 Islands Life and Rowing Chat. Reports and photos of the tour are currently being used to reinforce the impression. Several attempts were made to gain a presence on social media: it is not clear whether much was achieved.

To allow OAR and local clubs to obtain new equipment. Achieved! The hosting of the tour allowed OAR to obtain two coastal coxed quads, and some new oars, though no local club used the opportunity.

To emphasize to local authorities the potential of rowing as a major sport in the region. Achieved! Most of the municipal governments in the Quinte region through which the tour passed, Brighton, Quinte West, Belleville and Napanee, took an active interest in the sport-tourism potential which the tour demonstrated. However, I don't expect them to support rowing actively, next year or beyond, unless the rowing community makes proposals. At least, if a rowing club does propose some program or event, the councils are now 'primed' and are more likely to respond. The cities in the 1000 Islands were less interested.

To publicize the sport of rowing in the region. Achieved, to the extent we could reasonably have hoped, with several Press Releases before the tour in the Belleville Intelligencer and other local news outlets, and good coverage on the Row Ontario web-site. This objective also is being reinforced with reporting of the Tour, now it's

finished. After that, it's up to the rowing clubs to take the baton and run with it. The Quinte Watersports Fair helped with achievement of this objective. Perhaps the Facebook page did too.

To provide a focal point for local rowing clubs to develop, particularly in coastal-boat rowing. Achieved, but only partially, because Trenton Rowing and Paddling Club was the only club which took advantage of the opportunity, exhibiting at the Quinte Watersports Fair, and welcoming the tourers as they arrived in Trenton.

To give the organizers and volunteers an enjoyable experience. Achieved! This objective was expected to be more difficult than (2), and we did not begin well, with considerable ill-will shown in late 2021. From the beginning of 2022 until the day the tour began, though, everybody involved in the organization worked enthusiastically and co-operatively, and during the tour the volunteers co-operated well and, their work being highly appreciated by the participants, seemed to enjoy themselves. Most of the volunteers who are rowers got a half-day rowing, when one of the international participants wanted a break.

7. Vote to Approve Bylaw Amendments

Two changes to the bylaw were proposed and approved by the board. We bring them to the membership for your approval.

The first is to address the absence of the role of Vice President in the bylaw: Add 5.04 Vice President – *“The Vice-President shall in the absence or disability of the President perform all duties and obligations of the President”* Section 5.04, 5.05, and 5.06 become 5.05, 5.06, and 5.07, respectively

Motion to approve the above amendment (Second): Arnold, (Doris) Vincent).
-Approved.

The second is to revise signing authority in section 2.06 Execution of Contracts. Currently it reads: *“Deeds, transfers, assignments, contracts, obligations and other instruments in writing requiring execution by the Corporation may be signed by any **two** of the Directors.”*

The proposed change is: *“Deeds, transfers, assignments, contracts, obligations and other instruments in writing requiring execution by the Corporation may be signed by **one Director and one Officer**”.*

Motion to approve the above amendment (Second): Arnold, (Doris) Vincent).
-Approved.

8. Nominating Committee Report

There are nominating committee put forward four nominees for four positions on the board: Arnold van der Meer (ind), Nancy Kielar (Guelph RC), Shawna Periera (Hanlan BC), and Heather Palmer (Barrie RC). No one is running from the floor. Each nominee introduced themselves and discussed their rowing experience.

9. Election of Directors

Each of the nominees was elected individually. No votes were cast against any nominees and no abstentions were given. Arnold, Nancy, Heather, and Shawna were welcomed onto the board.

10. Elections of Officers

Cancelled by meeting chair after a request by Shawna, as all Directors were not present in person and not enough information had been disclosed to new Directors.

11. Touring Schedule

Each tour organizer present was asked to provide a brief synopsis of their tour for promotional purposes.

12. Termination of Meeting – 12:13 pm