



**ROWING**  
**CANADA**  
**AVIRON**

www.rowingcanada.org

**Rowing Canada Aviron  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
MINUTES**

November 6 - 8, 2015  
Ottawa, Ontario

**Attendance:**

Michael Walker, President  
Brian Lamb, Director (Treasurer)  
Jon Beare, Athlete Director  
Carol Purcer, Provincial Director  
Rick Crooker, Director  
Andrew Fitzgerald, Director

**Regrets:**

Joel Finlay, Director

**Staff:**

Donna Atkinson, CEO  
Peter Cookson, High Performance Director (Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>)  
Sid Murdoch, Secretary

**Guests:**

Ann Merklinger, CEO, Own the Podium (Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>)  
Mark Hahto, HP Director Summer Sports, Own the Podium (Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>)  
Nora Scheffe, Consultant (Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>)

**1. Call to Order Acceptance of Agenda**

The meeting was called to order by President Walker at 7:00 p.m. The meeting schedule and agenda was reviewed.

Item 14.4 Canadian Olympic Foundation MOU, was added.

**MOTION #1: Board Meeting Agenda**

Moved: Carol Purcer                      Seconded,

That the Board Meeting Agenda, November 6 - 8, 2015, be approved as amended.

**CARRIED**

---

**2. Review and Approval of Previous Minutes – October 6, 2015**

Approval of the October 6<sup>th</sup> minutes was deferred to item 12.4.

### **3. High Performance Update & 2016 Plan**

HP Director Peter Cookson presented an update on the RCA High Performance Program.

#### Logistics for the Rio Olympic Regatta in 2016:

- It was noted that the team will train in Ontario prior to the Olympics and arrive in Rio 4 days in advance of the regatta. Rio is one hour time difference (ahead) from Ontario.

#### Senior Team Highlights 2015:

- World Cup 2 results were on target with medals in the W8+, M4-, M4x and 4th place for the W1x.
- 11 medals at the Pan Am Games, 8 gold
- There were 2 bronze medals at the World Championships: Para LTA4+ and W8+ bronze medal at the World Championships.
- Qualified 6 boats for Rio Games including 1 Para boat
- Strategic shifts in the program were explained. These include coaching re-assignments, changes within the daily training environment / athlete pool and additional competition leading up to the Rio Olympics for the Senior and Para rowing teams. Changes include:
  - The Para team will be continue to be located in Victoria leading up to Rio.
  - Terry Paul moved to Assistant Coach – Men 4x
  - Tom Morris moved to full time – LW Women
  - John Wetzstein moved to Para coach
  - Phil Marshall moved to Assistant Coach – Open Women
  - Volker Nolte to assist with the W1x

#### Row to Podium Highlights 2015:

- 4 international development regattas attended including the Junior Worlds, U23 Worlds, FISU and CanAmMex.
- 3 medals at the Under 23 World Championships including first ever Gold Medal in the U23 Men's Quad. A finalists in the Junior World Championships.
- There is a clear athlete pathway within the men's development system including a Junior M4-, U23 M4- and Senior M4-

#### Competition Strategy 2016:

Continue to get more “competitive racing” starts in 2016 in preparation for Rio, 15 to 20 racing starts including:

- Piediluco International Regatta (April 2016)
- World Cup 1, Varese (April 2016)
- Final Olympic Qualification Regatta (May, 2016)
- World Cup 2, Lucerne (May, 2016)
- World Cup 3, Poznan – Para team (June, 2016)

### **4. Own the Podium (OTP) – Ann Merklinger and Mark Hahto**

#### 4.1 Governance and the Board / OTP/ HP Interface

Ann Merklinger and Mark Hahto provided an update on the Own the Podium program.

- OTP has a strong relationship with RCA's technical staff and CEO. The primary contacts for the program are the OTP High Performance Advisor and RCA's High Performance Director.

It is integral to the OTP program that HP Director has the authority to run the day-to-day operations.

- The RCA Board of Directors need to be informed about the OTP program at a high level including HP deliverables, strategic priorities and the direction of the program for 2016 and beyond.
- The first priority of OTP is medal performance at the Rio Olympics with multiple medals.
- Second priority is to develop a strong medal program for 2020 and beyond.

#### 4.2 High Performance Independent Review

- The terms of reference for an HP independent external review have been drafted, template provided by OTP. The scope of the review was expanded by RCA.
- The recommended reviewers have been short-listed. The reviewers need to consider not just international programs but how this fits into Canadian sport culture. There will be 2 reviewers, a technical expert and an administrator so the review can be completed in a timely manner. The work must be done with minimal disruption to the athletes and coaches.
- Items will be prioritized in the review and may be adjusted by the reviewers.
- The review has the support of the HP Director.
- Timing – well before Rio to avoid distractions.
- This is a high level evaluation that will go into RCA's strategic plan.
- Rowing already has a culture of excellence - the review should support and improve that culture.
- Questions included in the independent review were discussed.

#### 4.3 Succession Planning

- RCA's succession planning was discussed in the context of OTP support.

### MOTION 2: External review of RCA's High Performance Program

Moved: Carol Purcer                      Seconded,

That RCA conduct a review of the High Performance Program in partnership with OTP, as presented.

CARRIED.

---

## 5. Strategic Plan 2017 - 2021 – Nora Scheffe

### 5.1 Strategic Plan Process

President Walker provided an overview of RCA's Strategic Planning process. The plan looks ahead to the next quadrennial (2017 – 2021). It was noted that High Performance would be part of the process but, this would take place as the external review comes to completion.

Nora Scheffe was welcomed to the meeting. Nora has been engaged as RCA's consultant for the Strategic Planning process.

The following 6 steps in the Strategic Plan process were reviewed by the Board:

#### **Step 1 – Select a Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG) – October or November 2015**

Identify 5 - 6 individuals who will participate on the strategic planning team. The SPWG will review and finalize the planning process and oversee the planning and reporting. This would include 1 or 2 board members and a wide range of working group members.

**Step 2 – Define the Planning Process and Timeframes – By December 15, 2015**

Working with a draft general approach, the planning team will identify key dates and the specific process for creating the 2016 strategic plan.

**Step 3 – Engage Staff and Members – January 2016 – March 2016**

Collect information from staff members on the progress from Vision 2020 and their recommendations for 2020 goals, objectives and strategies. Using the information collected in the recent member survey, identify the best way to engage the members in the process.

The importance of collaboration with the membership was noted, get them involved in the process. The recently completed membership survey will be a valuable tool for the SPWG. The current information from the 2014 member survey needs to be presented in a more practical way.

A planning meeting at the National Conference was discussed with some time devoted to group function at the beginning of the meeting. Participants, 20 to 30, will be invited to the meeting, tentatively scheduled for Saturday afternoon. This is for Members, staff will be engaged separately.

**Step 4 – Review Data and Input – January – March 2016**

Review the data collected (e.g. progress on the current plan) as well as input from members and staff to prepare for the planning session.

**Step 5 – Conduct a Strategic Planning Session – March or April 2016**

Use member input, the perspective of the board and staff to prepare the draft 2017 - 2021 strategic plan with a vision, mission, values, goals, outcomes and objectives.

**Step 6 – Refine and edit the Strategic Plan – by August 2016**

Document the outcomes of the planning meeting into the strategic plan. Collect final edits and input from the planning team to finalize the plan.

The importance of the 3 Strategic Goals was discussed and how each is integrated into the plan and considered by the SPWG:

1. Win Gold Medals at the Olympics, Paralympics and World Championships
2. Grow Participation in the Sport all levels
3. Build a Dynamic and Sustainable Organization

5.2 Board Strategic Planning Guidance

- The selection of working group members was discussed including the importance of including RCA Directors on the committee.

**MOTION 3: Strategic Planning Working Group**

Moved: Jon Beare                      Seconded,

That RCA establish a Strategic Planning Working Group with Andrew Fitzgerald as Chair.

**CARRIED.**

- Carol Purcer, Provincial Director, will also sit on the SPWG to help assure Provincial Rowing Association input.
- SPWG Meeting tentative dates are February 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016 – additional members to be determined by the Chair and CEO.

## **6. Board Discussion: Examination on progress on transition to Policy/Strategic Board**

- A Board development document was discussed.
- Since the governance changes were approved along with the shift to a Policy / Strategic Board, the CEO has taken over the responsibility of managing most of the portfolios, committees and staff. There remain concerns that CEO's workload has increased too much in the past year as a result of major strategic projects such as Fundraising and Facilities.

### RCA Committees:

- The Human Resources, Emergency and Awards committees report to the board.
- Standing committees include Nominating, Committee on Dues and Fees and Audit.
- The Umpires, Safety & Events, Coaching Education and Medical and Sport Science committees report to the CEO.
- Finance Committee: It is good corporate practice to appoint a Finance Committee to prepare a report for the Board. The Treasurer and President will prepare a terms of reference and report back to the Board in January with a view to establishing a Finance Committee.
- Audit Committee will remain as a separate committee.
- RCA's administrative structure with respect to the CEO's workload will be reviewed post Rio.
- There are improvements/shifts that may need to be made relative to the Nomination process based on feedback this year. This will be discussed at the next in person Board meeting.

## **8. Board Priority - World Class Training Facilities**

### 8.1 "Centre of Excellence" Update

- Overview of vision and strategy was provided with greater detail
- Centre of Excellence concept plans shared with the Board.
- Important to ensure that the vision for the Facilities strategic objective is planned in conjunction with the Fundraising objectives.
- Timelines for the Facilities project are not yet finalized.
- A communication strategy has been drafted - under review to bring forward prior to the National Conference.

### 8.2 Other Plans and Projects

- A feasibility study has been completed by the London Rowing Society and the plans allow for re-development of the centre to take place in phases. The first would be a new boathouse.
- Local organizers are in preliminary discussions for a 2000 metre rowing facility on the Toronto waterfront. There are two proposals that are being discussed and all of the groups involved will be meeting next month. RCA will have a representative in attendance.
- St. Catharines is starting a capital campaign for a new training centre facility.

## 9. Board Priority – Fundraising

- The Fundraising project is underway, the case for support is being developed (preliminary) and potential campaign cabinet members are being met with. The Board will review the final list of cabinet members.
- A tentative fundraising event in Toronto was discussed, including potential sponsor support. Further research will be required.

## 10 Board Priority - National and International Event Strategy

### 10.1 Award of 2016-2019 NRC

- The leading bid as recommended by the Safety and Events Committee for the 2016 -2019 National Rowing Championships was reviewed / discussed.
- There was discussion around the concept of a hosting fee, the event dates and format, and the importance of an experienced Organizing Committee.

### MOTION 4: Award of 2016-2019 National Rowing Championships

Moved: Rick Crooker                      Seconded:

That RCA conditionally award the 2016 – 2019 National Rowing Championships (NRC), held at Burnaby Lake, to Rowing British Columbia, subject to; signing a hosting agreement approved by the CEO; acceptance of the hosting fee provisions and the revised dates for 2017 and 2018 and; further information provided to the RCA Board on the members of the NRC Organizing Committee.

CARRIED

---

### 10.2 International Events

FISA Coaches Conference 2017:

- RCA has been approached by FISA about hosting the 2016 FISA Coaches Conference to be held in January 2017.

FISA World Championships:

- The Board discussed locations and strategy for hosting future world championships events.

Role of the Safety & Events Committee in Events Strategy:

- Expanding the committee's role in international events was discussed by the Board along with the future direction of the committee.

## 11. Board Priority – System of Influence

### 11.1 Canadian Olympic Committee Election

- The COC President's election will be held in 2 weeks – candidates are Peter Lawless and Tricia Smith. RCA will be supporting Tricia Smith.

### 11.2 National Federations Conference Follow Up

- The Board reviewed documentation from the National Federations Conference including the Rowing Event Programme, FISA Statutes, Rules and Regulations.

- Peter Cookson and Mike Walker will prepare a position regarding FISA Technical and Governance issues prior to December 2015 in preparation for the next National Federations meeting on the subject in March 2016. Voting on proposed changes takes place at the Quadrennial Congress in 2017.
  - Comments from the Board can be sent to Mike and Donna by the end of November.
- 

The meeting reconvened on Sunday November 3<sup>rd</sup> at 8:30 am.

## **12. President**

12.1 Succession Planning (in camera – CEO in attendance for first portion)

### **MOTION #5: In Camera**

Moved: Carol Purcer                      Seconded,

That the meeting be move In Camera.

**CARRIED**

---

### **MOTION #6: Out of In Camera**

Moved: Carol Purcer                      Seconded,

That the meeting be move Out of In Camera.

**CARRIED**

---

12.2 President's Award

- The President advised Board members of his preferred recipients for the President's Award at the National Conference. Two recipients were identified to be recognized (with one added secretorially following the meeting).

Other Awards:

- Lifetime achievement awards are approved by the Board. Nominations for this award will be included on the agenda of the December meeting.

12.3 Semi-Annual Meeting

- Agenda items for the Semi-Annual Meeting, held January 31, 2016, will include:
  1. Approval of the Membership Category Review proposal.
  2. Ratify the By-Law amendment on the timings for notice of meeting and registration deadlines as approved by the Board earlier in the year.
- The member proposal deadline has passed without further proposals.
- A plenary will be held late on Saturday afternoon of the National Conference for the Membership Category Review proposal.
- The President and CEO reports will be included in the Annual Report.

## 12.4 Board Meeting Minutes

### MOTION #7: Board Meeting Minutes, October 6, 2015

Moved: Jon Beare                      Seconded,

That the Board Meeting Minutes, October 6, 2015, be approved.

CARRIED

---

## 13 Membership Category Approval

- The Board received a report from the Membership Category Working Group. The Working Group report recommends the development of a new membership system that is based on:
  1. One base membership fee for each rowing participant.
  2. A competition fee per entry into an RCA on-water sanctioned event
  3. A Supporter membership for those friends/family/fans/alumni, etc., who wish to be part of Rowing Canada Aviron with benefits associated with that membership.
- The regatta fee system will be mandated following approval by the membership and the sanction approval process will be tied into the new fee structure.
- The Membership Category proposal will be communicated within provinces, meetings are being held at large clubs.

### MOTION #8: Membership Category Working Group Recommendations

Moved: Carol Purcer                      Seconded,

That the Membership Category Working Group recommendations be approved.

CARRIED

---

- The Board noted that it will be important to have an estimate of fees available for the plenary session to be held at the National Conference.

### MOTION #9: In Camera

Moved: Brian Lamb                      Seconded,

That the meeting be held In Camera to discuss Items 13.1 Expression of Interest and 14.4 Memorandum of Understanding (legal)

CARRIED

---

### MOTION #10: Out of In Camera

Moved: Carol Purcer                      Seconded,

That the meeting be move Out of Camera.

---

## 14. CEO

### 14.1 RCA National Conference

The CEO briefed on the RCA National Conference.

- RCA has taken a holistic approach to the athlete pathway, covering all facets with expert speakers.
- Canadian Rowing Technique will be covered, a breakdown of key pieces.
- All RCA staff are involved in the project.
- Add a welcome by the RCA President to the schedule.
- Thursday and Friday morning are devoted to coaches, administrative/club streams start later in the day on Friday.
- First day focuses on the athlete pathway.
- Second day, Speaker Pierre Trudel - coaches taking responsibility for their ongoing development.
- Jen Parfitt's Coach development pathway follows Trudel's talk.
- Hudson will be delivering a Boat repair workshop.
- Women in coaching session will be held with Katie Edwards, Amanda Schweinzbenz and assisted by C. Purcer.
- Longer Breaks and networking than last year throughout.
- Club Fundraising speakers are Michelle Kerr and Daniel Aucoin.
- There will be a focus on clubs diversifying into new areas such as Coastal Rowing and Touring, sharing successful experiences.

Board and PAC Meetings:

- Board Meeting - Friday Jan. 29th from 7 to 9 pm
- Joint Board – PAC Meeting on Saturday, time to be determined
- Strategic Planning Meeting – Saturday January 30th from 1 to 3 pm.
- PAC Meeting – Sunday after the Semi-Annual Meeting from 11 am to 1 pm approx.

National Conference travel messages will be sent to the Board and PAC.

### 14.2 Staffing

- Communication Coordinator – 2 candidates have been short-listed.
- Donor Development Coordinator – reviewing resumes including graduate students, 2 to 3 strong candidates. The goal is to fill the position by January.

### 14.3 Red Tie Debrief

- Events organized by RCA during the Pan Am week included
  - A Penn Centre welcome event with an athlete meet and greet,
  - A VIP reception was initiated by RCA, costs shared with the City of St. Catharines at the Aqua restaurant, and
  - The Red Tie event:
    - Following the event there was a debrief conducted with Celebration Club. The event received excellent feedback from participants but did not generate the level of fundraising expected. Planning began late, summer mid-week dates are a challenge in getting people, particularly the Toronto corporate community, to attend something this far from the city.

- Because of the tie in to the PanAms many viewed the event as more geared towards volunteers versus a corporate function and fundraisers. The expectation of complimentary invitations was high.
- Good learning in terms of future – a need to review fundraising plans/strategies based on this.

## **15. Treasurers' Report 1030 – 1100**

### 15.1 Committee on Dues and Fees Report to Membership

- The Committee's report was reviewed and no fee changes are being recommended. The report needs some minor typographical corrections before transmission to the Members.

#### MOTION #11: Committee on Dues and Fees Report to Membership

Moved: Brian Lamb                      Seconded,

That the Committee on Dues and Fees Report be received as amended.

**CARRIED**

---

- 15.2 Financial Statement – YTD to September 30, 2015 There is a projection for a small surplus at year end.
- The Umpire Fund will undergo further expenditures by year end.
- Sport Canada core funding remains unchanged but it is increasingly difficult to access any special project funds that used to support things like strategic planning, new program initiatives, etc.
- Coaching Association funding is now based on numbers and we used to received about \$40,000 per year in funding – our base funding is now \$3,000 less user fees we pay (\$1,500)
- We are now being assessed for Anti-Doping Control costs – chargebacks may become more common.

#### MOTION #12: Financial Statement – YTD to September 30, 2015

Moved: Brian Lamb                      Seconded,

That the Financial Projections, Year to Date to September 30, 2015, be approved.

**CARRIED**

---

### 15.3 Operational Plan Update

- The Coach Education program is now moving forward well and Performance Coach has received Conditional Approval. With this approval, a considerable backlog has been alleviated. The Coaching database is completely up to date and planning for a new Learn To Row Curriculum is underway.
- The Membership Category review has moved forward well but there is considerable work to be done if the membership supports the recommendations of the Committee. This will have a significant impact on next years' workplan.

## **16. Secretary**

## 16.1 RCA Contacts

- Contact Sid with any changes to Board of Director contact information.

## 17. PAC update - Carol Purcer

- 2 day meeting went well with respect to the engagement of the Provincial Presidents.
- 3 Main issues were reviewed: Coaching Education – Canada Games, Risk Management, Strong and Healthy Board.
- There was information on Sport Funding including the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework, Membership Category Review, RowOntario's Regatta Streaming and COAST Program, Board Development, Roles and Responsibilities.
- The focus on day two was sharing of information including issues for each provinces and methods of resolving issues – a group discussion.
- Information was collected from the group discussion to assist PAC development going forward.

### National Rowing Championships:

- It was noted by PAC that attitudes of some of the National Team athletes at the NRC's was not appropriate. Uniforms were also not consistent amongst the National Team compared with Provincial teams in attendance. Important that National Team members follow the rules for team uniforms at future events.
- Donna will ask the High Performance Director to deal with both of these issues.

### 2016 National Rowing Championships / Canada Cup:

- Two provinces will not participate in the NRC because of a lack of competitive athletes but they could fund young rowers to participate at the Canada Cup.

## MOTION #13: 2016 Canada Cup

Moved: Carol Purcer                      Seconded,

That participation at National Rowing Championships is not required for participation at the Canada Cup.

CARRIED

---

## 18. Round Table Updates

### 18.1 Athlete Director – Jon Beare

- Jon gave an overview of National Team Athlete progress including the Heavy Weight Men and Light Weight Women.

### 18.2 Director – Rick Crooker

- Report provided during the Fundraising and Facilities items.

### 18.3 Director – Andrew Fitzgerald

- Looking forward to working with Nora Sheffe and the Strategic Planning Committee.

## 19. Next Meetings

### 19.1 Conference Call

- December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at 430 pm PST.
- Face-to-face board meeting to be scheduled for April in Victoria, date to be determined.

19.2 National Conference in Ottawa

- Travel and registration for the conference is underway.

**20. Adjourn 12 Noon**

MOTION #14: Adjournment

Moved: Andrew Fitzgerald                      Seconded,

That the meeting be adjourned at 12 Noon.

CARRIED

---