



## **ROWING CANADA AVIRON ANNUAL MEETING REPORT**

### **SEPTEMBER 24, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. PDT.**

President Carol Purcer opened the 2020 RCA Annual Meeting on September 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. PDT and welcomed the attendees at the online meeting via Zoom Video Conference.

131 member clubs and associations were in good standing and eligible to vote and 98 members cast a ballot within RCA's secure online voting system.

The agenda for the meeting included reports by the President and CEO Terry Dillon, along with certified online voting results including consideration of the Audited Financial Statements, Appointment of the Auditor and Election of Directors.

### **Report of the President**

The following is a summary of activities from February 2020 to present. A full report on annual activities will be included in the RCA Annual Report published in January 2021 in both French and English.

As I sat down to create this report, I realized that our world is still full of questions around the COVID-19 pandemic and what the future holds. I hope all is well with your family and friends and that you have been able to manage this crisis.

We kicked off our winter season with a slate full of indoor rowing events across the country. Included this year was the first Indoor Rowing Day in Canada - Coast to Coast! Initiated by the Provincial Advisory Council (PAC), this event was a great success, engaging athletes of all ages across our country. As we continue to grow rowing, our events are changing to engage more diverse groups and we welcome new and creative ideas.

As we moved into spring, our rowing opportunities were curtailed by the coronavirus. As the leaders of our country grappled with what to do, so did we all, but we did it together. Peter Drucker once said, "The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence - it is to act with yesterday's logic." Some very

difficult decisions had to be made and some very new practices had to be put in place, but we managed to move forward based on the most up to date scientific information.

We, the rowing community of Canada, worked together to bring our sport through these difficult times. There are many people whom I am thankful for in their leadership and I would like to highlight a few.

I will begin with the RCA Board of Directors for their support throughout the COVID-19 crisis that affected our spring and summer rowing season in 2020. The Board played an important part in supporting and endorsing the tough decisions that had to be made in the interest of the safety of our community in navigating these unprecedented times.

I am particularly thankful to Jennifer Fitzpatrick and Dr. Michael Wilkinson.

Dr. Mike, our Chief Medical Officer, has worked tirelessly for and on behalf of our community and Rowing Canada. It cannot be overstated the role he continues to play for Rowing Canada, alongside his work for the Olympic Medical Committee, and the FISA Medical Commission, and as the Canadian Olympic Committee's Chief Medical Officer and a member of the Canadian Sport Science, Sport Medicine Advisory Committee and the COVID-19 Taskforce providing advice to Sport Canada and Own the Podium. His expertise and guidance have been critical over the last few months.

I would also like to recognize the many, many hours spent by Jennifer Fitzpatrick working with Dr. Mike to make sure our guidance fit with the needs of our community. Her facilitation of a nationwide dialogue with Provincial leadership through many Zoom meetings, the work with our community in support of their risk assessment, and development of return to water strategies was world class. What we have seen is a thorough and pragmatic response that perfectly met the rowing specific related risks created by the pandemic. It was pleasing but not surprising to see RCA's Return to Sport Plan highlighted as one of the top ten international COVID-19 initiatives by the World Health Organization in a media release.

Also, I thank Terry Dillon, CEO of RCA, and his team for their professionalism and perseverance through this difficult year. Working nationally and internationally to ensure the best for this organization required many hours of time and skill to maneuver the ever-changing landscape in the early months of the pandemic and as we move forward.

Particular thanks should go to Tom Hawker, RCA Treasurer, working with Kim Bell, RCA Finance Lead, managing RCA's financial position, developing numerous

budgets as the financial picture changed, investigating federal funding opportunities and thinking creatively of ways to support club needs throughout the quiet spring and summer seasons in rowing communities across the country.

And also, I would like to note the work done by our High Performance Director, Iain Brambell, Director of Operations Adam Parfitt, with Michelle Boss and the HP Staff and Coaching Team for keeping the National Team athletes safe during the pandemic. Progressive consultation and thoughtful decision making created a metered transition back into the daily training environment in a respectful yet purposeful way. Our athletes are now back training in two quadrennials: the pathway to the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics and the pathway to the Paris 2024 event.

And to the many volunteers across the country who worked together to implement protocols and get athletes back on the water, I thank you. Your local decision-making processes are where the rubber hits the road and you made the difference to ensure success.

Throughout this difficult time, there were many activities of note. Although our regatta season was cancelled, clubs, PRAs and RCA created opportunities for athletes to challenge themselves with competitions and participation activities connecting, via online, with our friends from across town, across the province or across the country! From coast to coast, virtual events were held within provinces, creating incentives for our rowing community. Once we returned to rowing, athletes across the country shared stunning photos reminding us of the beauty of being on the water! Virtual international competitions like the “One Minute Challenge” and “Row to the Moon” engaged us even though we stayed in our homes. Online education for coach development and the weekly RCA webinar series with a range of topics for clubs, coaches, and para and able bodied athletes of all ages kept people connected and were well received. Also, a number of committees were able to lean in and complete important work on moving forward our Safe Sport policies and procedures and a successful bid for the 2023 World Rowing Indoor Championships to be held in Toronto! We also took a hard look at ourselves and created the RCA Statement and Action Plan on Racism and Inequality informing our practice going forward. And through it all, we learned how to participate in Zoom meetings! A lot happened these past few months, just differently.

As I close, we still do not know what the next few months will bring, but I do know that I am proud to be part of a rowing community that is working together to keep the sport of rowing moving forward.

Thank you,  
Carol Purcer

## **Report of the Chief Executive Officer**

I would like to start by also acknowledging the extraordinary times in which we find ourselves. In the time I have worked for Rowing Canada this has easily been the biggest challenge for our community. It has been made manageable because RCA Board, staff, and community have faced this together – one might even say this has brought us together. It has been an exceptional response in extraordinary times. As Carol mentioned, the work we did together was recognized by the World Health Organization – it also became the template for Return to Play across Canada for all sport, and we should all feel proud of our leadership and contribution in this.

Not to be overshadowed is the work we have done on Safe Sport. The appointment to the Board of a Safe Sport Director – thank you Marisha Roman – AND the introduction last year of an Independent Third Party complaints process should give us all more confidence that we have a robust way of surfacing and handling instances of Abuse, Harassment or Bullying in our sport. This is something we take very seriously. Our Every Coach Certified priority - ensuring every rowing coach has a minimum level of certification – now seems somewhat visionary (thank you Colleen Miller and Jennifer Fitzpatrick) as we see this become a standard expectation for all sport across Canada. By April next year we will be able to publish a list recognizing all registered rowing coaches of good standing in Canada. We continue to make significant positive steps forward as we work in partnership with Provincial Rowing Associations to navigate the jurisdictional complexities of a National approach. We have more work to do, but we are committed to providing a robust framework for safeguarding everyone in our sport.

I would like to give a big shout out to Jen Fitzpatrick's team – especially Colleen Coderre and Liz Montroy – who have been the driving force behind our hugely improved membership communications and all of the additional demands imposed by the pandemic. It started with a website, but it has become so much more, with a regular rhythm of news, features and announcements delivered as targeted circulars, general newsletters, webinars and feature articles. It has been great to see so much hard work pay off and bring this to life, and this enhanced communications capacity has proved invaluable in the current conditions created by COVID-19.

I have to say one of the most pleasing examples of engagement and communication was the Dues and Fees Consultation process prior to the Semi-Annual Meeting earlier this year. RCA Treasurer Tom Hawker and I were able to provide an unprecedented amount of information to membership drawn from the Web Registration System (thank you Stephen McMurray) and Regatta Central (thank you) and our Finance Team (thank you Kim Bell and Sukhraj Saraow). Both the membership webinar and the pre-meeting at the Conference created the conditions for overwhelming support for the recommendations of the Dues and Fees Committee. We hope to see this as a model for future consultation.

## And as we look forward to the remainder of this year...

The World Championships in Linz seem like an eternity ago now, but as we know we qualified six boats for Tokyo, and it is still our intention to look to qualify more boats in the New Year. That leaves us in the position of running a Year 5 campaign for Tokyo and starting up Year 1 of a Paris campaign. I cannot say enough about the work that has been done by Iain Brambell, Adam Parfitt, Michelle Boss and the HP Staff and Coaches to create the additional capacity across three sites – Elk Lake, Shawnigan Lake and Quamichan Lake – while navigating the pandemic.

It is also that time in the four year cycle when we review our Rules of Racing. You can expect to see an announcement about how we will form a Review Committee and a framework for consultation to be published shortly after. We may expect to see some of the more routine updates as well as further enhancements to reflect the growth of our sport, particularly the discipline of coastal rowing.

Finally, but most importantly, we will be reaching out to membership to consult on our Strategic Priorities for the next four years. We are pleased to be working with Nora Sheffe, who will help facilitate a broad dialogue that builds on the consultation we began at the Conference in January as well as some more targeted consultation with interested parties to better understand the risks and opportunities as we consider the growth coastal rowing, indoor rowing and a national event strategy. This work will set the priorities for our sport for the next four years and beyond. Where our previous strategy was focused on consolidation and foundation, we expect the next Strategic Plan to present a plan for diversification and growth.

Finally, I speak to you today as your CEO proud to be able to say that despite everything we have had to deal with this year, we are in good shape financially and operationally and ready to give you, the membership, the support needed as we emerge from the pandemic.

I would like to thank once more the RCA Staff for their energy and hard work, acknowledge the support of the RCA Board, and recognize you, the membership, who continue to volunteer countless hours of your time, without which none of this would be possible.

Terry Dillion, CEO

## **2020 RCA Annual Meeting Voting Results**

There were 3 questions considered by the membership through RCA's secure online voting process:

1. Audited Financial Statements

2. Appointment of the Auditor
3. Election of Directors at Large.

## **1. MOTION: Annual Financial Statements and Report of the Auditor**

Moved by: St. Catharines Rowing Club

Seconded by: False Creek Don Rowing Club

*That RCA accept the audited financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2020 as reported on by Grant Thornton LLP, Chartered Accountants.*

A brief report on the financial statements was provided by RCA Treasurer, Tom Hawker:

### **Treasurer's Report for the Year Ended - March 31, 2020**

The audited financial statements for the Canadian Amateur Rowing Association for the year ended March 31, 2020 were provided for your review and approval.

The following is a summary of the year's results:

1. Our loss for the year from operations is \$43,694 compared to the budgeted loss from operations of \$55,897.
2. The Membership Fees were down \$20,017 from 2019 and budget as early March COVID-19 resulted in reduction of activity.
3. The reduction in Sport Associations and Foundations income by \$29,526 was the result of a funder in 2019 not continuing with contributions in 2020. The offset is increased in Donations during the year.
4. The year's contributions from Sport Canada and COC were higher as the Olympics were to be held in June 2020 and this is offset by the High Performance increases on Schedule 2.
5. The Communication, Marketing and Initiatives was reduced as the NSF Enhancement Funds were no longer available as in past years.
6. The Gain on sale of Tangible Capital Assets of \$65,618 is the result of the sale of the recreational fleet. The gain was transferred to Internally Restricted Net Assets to be used for future financial needs.
7. The Prepaid Expenses are at the level of \$360,358 as funds were expended for travel and accommodation for Olympic and World events that occurred after the year end or due to COVID-19 were not utilized and returned post year end.
8. Cash resources at the end of the fiscal year were \$1,008,277 and the tangible capital assets was \$191,293. Our total fund balances are \$1,197,325.

The net profit for the year was \$21,924 after inclusion of the gain on sale of tangible capital assets of \$65,618. This compares to a loss of \$5,860 in 2019 fiscal.

The year was difficult in the last quarter due to the impact of COVID-19 and the resultant cancellation of the Olympics and World Rowing events. The staff have done an admirable job of getting us through this difficult time and again have managed the operations in a manner that has kept the operational loss to a level below the budgeted outcome.

### **Voting Results - Audited Financial Statements**

For: 195 weighted votes / against 0 / abstained 34

MOTION CARRIED

## **2. MOTION: Appointment of the Auditor**

Moved by: St. Catharines Rowing Club  
Seconded by: False Creek Rowing Club:

*That RCA appoint Grant Thornton LLP, Chartered Accountants, as auditors for the year ending March 31, 2021 at a fee to be decided by the Board of Directors.*

### **Voting Results - Auditor**

195 weighted votes / against 4 / abstained 30

MOTION CARRIED

## **3. Announcement of the Election of Directors**

NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION - RCA ANNUAL MEETING

[Click here](#) to view the 2020 FINAL REPORT from the RCA Nominating Committee.

Elected by Acclamation:

**Provincial Director to a term to end at the 2023 Annual Meeting:** The Provincial Advisory Council nominated Carol Hermansen to this position and Carol has confirmed her intention to stand for election.

In accordance with Paragraph 11.4 of the RCA Bylaws the Nominating Committee endorses the nomination of Carol Hermansen to this position.

## Candidates for Election - Final:

**Directors at Large (2) to a term to end at the 2023 Annual Meeting:** The Nominating Committee conducted an open call for Expressions of Interest and reviewed potential candidates for these roles.

For the **two positions** of Director at Large, three candidates were endorsed by the Nominating Committee as noted below (sorted in alphabetical order by last name):

- Current incumbent **Tom Hawker** submitted his intent to let his name stand for re-election. The Nominating Committee supported the nomination of **Tom Hawker** for election to a Director at Large position based on his expertise and experience.
- **Marisha Roman** has submitted her intent to let her name stand for election. The Nominating Committee supported the nomination of **Marisha Roman** for election to a Director at Large position based on her expertise and experience.
- **Don Telfer** has submitted his intent to let his name stand for election. The Nominating Committee supported the nomination of **Don Telfer** for election to a Director at Large position based on his expertise and experience.

### **Voting Results - Election of Directors**

Listed in order, highest number of weighted votes:

- Marisha Roman - 173 weighted votes
- Tom Hawker - 168 weighted votes
- Don Telfer - 108 weighted votes

Therefore, Marisha Roman and Tom Hawker were elected to the RCA Board of Directors.

Carol Hermansen, Provincial Director; **Marisha Roman** Director at Large; and **Tom Hawker** Director at Large were congratulated. They join current Board Members Jennifer Walinga, Peter McClelland and Doug Vandor along with President Carol Purcer.

The 3 year terms for the elected Directors began immediately after the Annual Meeting on September 24, 2020.

On behalf of all members of RCA, **Don Telfer was thanked** for allowing his name to stand for election. All of the well qualified individuals that submitted an expression of interest for the positions on the Board were also recognized.

Heather Holden, whose term as Director expired as of September 24, was thanked for her enormous contribution to RCA over the past two years.

A special thank you went to the RCA Nominating Committee led by the Chair, Andrew Lamont; Peter McClelland; Tracy Brooks; and Susan Wilkinson.

### **Next Meeting**

RCA's National Conference and Semi-Annual Meeting will be held in January 2021. These will be virtual meetings due to current travel/hotel restrictions, but there will be a number of strategic online sessions designed to assist our membership as we move forward into the new rowing year. Keep watch for further details via email, social media and on our website - [rowingcanada.org](http://rowingcanada.org).

The meeting was adjourned by the President at 6:05 p.m. PDT.