



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Detailing Board Meetings held in April 2024

Greetings/Bienvenue!

A brief but important meeting was held on April 15<sup>th</sup> where the Board members learned the news that Terry Dillon, CEO, had handed in his resignation letter and will leave the organization as of June 30<sup>th</sup>. This was difficult news for the Board to hear as Terry has been a strong and dedicated leader of RCA for the past 7 years through many difficult times. The Board discussed options going forward as we manage this change in the organization.

The announcement can be found here: <https://rowingcanada.org/rca-leadership-update/>

A scheduled meeting of the Board was held on April 27<sup>th</sup>. A full day teleconference meeting was decided upon instead of a two day in person meeting as part of a cost-conscious strategy. All Board members were present except for Dana Thorne who had resigned. It was with sadness that I accepted her resignation but understood her need to leave for personal and professional reasons. We will miss Dana's insightful contributions and her thoughtful considerations at the Board table.

Please see the attached **Appendix 1 Treasurer's Report to RCA Board of Directors - April 27, 2024 (Summary)** for an update on RCA's finances.

In a report from the National Training Centre (NTC) Project Committee, Director Enns shared that work continues to move the NTC project forward. In the months ahead, we will continue a phased approach that will balance operational needs and available resources.

Director Charles Minett updated the Board on the needs of the Board as we begin the Nominations Committee's process for electing two Board members in September at the Annual Meeting. Directors Fred Enns and Paul Fritz-Nemeth's terms end in September. Here is the link:

<https://rowingcanada.org/rca-board-of-directors-call-for-nominations/>

To improve our Governance roles, the Board will engage in an annual assessment plan which is being developed at this point. It is intended that implementation will begin before year's end.

After lengthy discussions regarding the *U19 LWT Rowing Review Working Group* report, the Board accepted Recommendations 1 - 6 to improve safety in our sport. The Board also accepted Recommendation 7 in that U19 Lightweight rowing should be discontinued. Thank you to the Working Group for their time and dedication to the research and the report. Chair Diana Sinnage led a dedicated team which included Scott Anderson, Jacob Giesbrecht, Rebecca (Camplin) Kennedy, Meghan Montgomery, and Meredith Smith. We need to build on the research of the *U19 LWT Rowing Review Working Group* to determine alternative categories and a timetable for implementation. A communication to the membership was released on May 17, 2024. The full report is embedded in the announcement. Here is the link: <https://rowingcanada.org/update-on-the-u19-lightweight-category-review/>

CEO Terry Dillon presented the Terms of Reference for the *U19 Rowing Fair and Meaningful Competition Working Group*. This group will review the findings and recommendations of the *U19 LWT Rowing Review Working Group* and will explore the consequences in discontinuing U19 LWT rowing, propose alternatives and develop an implementation plan with timelines. Also, it has come to our attention that there will **not** be an updated Canadian Sport Governance Code for implementation. Sport Canada will add rigour to its expectations for funding and the current code will continue to be used as a guide.

The Board received a report from the Accountability Committee. In the report it spoke to the importance of pre and post event surveys and discussions to gauge the effectiveness of the NTC culture and ensure continuous improvement. The Committee has also spent some time learning about projects to help guide cultural evolution and ensure sustainability. The Committee recognizes there has been significant progress against the recommendations made in RT report.

The Board Members also discussed a transition plan to manage our CEO's decision to resign. The Board fully endorsed the appointment of Jennifer Fitzpatrick, Director of Partnerships and Sport Development to the position of Interim CEO effective July 1, 2024. We look forward to working closely with Jennifer in her new role!

As always, there is much happening in Rowing Canada Aviron! Coming up quickly are the Paris Olympics in July and the 2024 Worlds Mega Championship in August and many regattas across the country!

See you on the water!

Carol Purcer,  
President

# Appendix 1

Treasurer's Report to RCA Board of Directors – April 27, 2024 (Summary)

## **Fiscal 23/24 Update**

March 31 is RCA's year-end. While there is still a significant amount of closing activity to be completed, we are currently projecting an operating deficit of approximately \$70,000.00 for the 12 months ended March 31, 2024. This is a significant improvement in performance compared to the approved budgeted deficit of 135k for the same period. The reduction to the operating deficit is a combination of many factors, including but not limited to slight increases in revenue regarding registration, seat fee income and interest income and ongoing refinements with oversight and already solid internal controls.

We are currently in the process of finalizing the audit plan with our auditors and targeting the first week of August for presentation of the audited statements to the Board for approval.

As the Board is aware, Kim Bell has resigned her position as of May 1. She has agreed to continue support RCA on a limited, contract basis, until her replacement is in place. The hiring process is well underway, and we hope to have a replacement in place and onboarding completed in June. We are very appreciative of Kim's commitment to ensure a smooth transition and help us complete the 23/24 audit.

Given the "state of flux" we are naturally in because we are in the process of closing the fiscal year and preparing for the audit, and adding the staffing position we are in for the short term, we will not be issuing interim statements for the period ending March 31 as originally indicated.

## **2024/25 Budget**

The financial environment for Rowing Canada remains, and will continue to be, very challenging for the foreseeable future. As revenue continues to be a struggle with registration and seat fee income expected to be relatively flat (in real dollars), no expectation of any increases in Core funding from Sport Canada, which has not increased since 2005, uncertainty of other grant opportunities and a confirmed Enhanced Funding (OTP) cut of 14%, resources are very strained.

Despite revenue constraints, with the work of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), we are recommending a budget with a 22k operating deficit for the 2024/25 fiscal year. Steps that have had to be taken to achieve this recommendation include, but are not limited to:

- Elimination of the annual in person conference – the January 2025 conference and semi-annual meeting will be conducted virtually.
- Additional cuts to discretionary travel, which was significantly reduced in 23/24.

- No face to face, committee, PAC, or Board meetings\* ---- there may be specific governance grant funding for 1 face-to-face Board meeting, but that is yet to be confirmed, and is not assumed.
- General cuts across all programming areas - including HP.

Given the current financial environment, it is now imperative that RCA go through a “right-sizing” exercise to determine the best utilization of our available resources going forward. This work has already begun and will continue through the summer and into the fall, with some recommendations expected late fall/early winter. It is important to recognize that this may result in some meaningful organizational restructuring, and such restructuring will have associated short-term costs. These costs are not yet known or can be reasonably estimated and are therefore not included in the proposed budget.

The near future will be challenging, but I am confident that with the proper work, RCA will be able to continue to deliver high quality programming and support to the membership while also living within our means.