



ROWING CANADA AVIRON ANNUAL MEETING

September 19, 2024
at 5:30 p.m. PDT

Via Zoom Conference

MINUTES

Board of Directors:

Carol Purcer, President
Lindsay Bergen, Athlete Director
Mike Bryden, Director
Fred Enns, Director
Paul Fritz-Németh, Director
Derek Ventnor, Provincial Director, Treasurer

RCA Staff & Scrutineer:

Jennifer Fitzpatrick, Interim CEO/Director of Partnerships and Sport Development
Nicole Golden, Governance Assistant
Jeff Lay, Scrutineer

The following members in good standing participated in the online voting process and cast their ballots by 12 Noon PDT, September 18, 2024:

Club / Association	Weight
Alberta Rowing Association	1
Antigonish Rowing Club	2
Argonaut Rowing Club	6
Association quebecoise d'aviron	1
Aviron Knowlton / Knowlton Rowing	3
Branksome Hall Rowing	2
Brentwood College School	4
Brockville Rowing Club	1
Burnaby Lake Rowing Club	4
Burnstown Rowing Club	2
Calgary Rowing Club	5

Canadian Henley Regatta Joint Commission	1
Canadian Henley Rowing Corporation	1
Canadian Indoor Rowing Association	1
Canadian Secondary Schools Rowing Association	1
Canadian University Rowing Association	1
Cascadia Regatta Association	1
Central Alberta Rowing Club	1
City of Welland	1
Claremont Sports Institute Rowing Academy	2
Club d'Aviron d'Alma	2
Club d'aviron de Boucherville	3
Club d'Aviron de Laval	3
Club d'aviron de Montreal	4
Club d'aviron Terrebonne-GPAT	3
Club d'aviron de l'Universite de Montreal	2
Deep Cove Rowing Club	4
Delta Deas Rowing Club	4
Dominion Day Regatta Association	1
Don Rowing Club	5
Durham Rowing Club	3
Edmonton Rowing Club	4
False Creek Rowing Club	4
Fort Langley Community Rowing Club	2
Fort Langley Youth Rowing Society	2
Georgian Bay Rowing Club	2
Gorge Narrows Rowing Club	4
Guelph Rowing Club	4
Hanlan Boat Club	4
Hatchets Training Centre Inc.	1
Havergal Rowing Club	2
Island Lake Rowing Club	3
Kamloops Rowing Club	1
Kelowna Rowing Club	3
Kennebecasis Rowing Club	3
Kingston Rowing Club	4
Lakeland Rowing Club	2
LaSalle Rowing Club	3
Lillooet Rowing Club	1

Lloydminster Rowing Club	2
London Western Rowing Club	3
Manitoba Rowing Association	1
McGill University Rowing	2
Muskoka Rowing Club	2
North Star Rowing Club	3
Notre Dame Rowing Club	3
OARCA Coastal Rowing	2
Ontario Rowing Association (Row Ontario)	1
Orillia Rowing Club	3
Ottawa New Edinburgh Club	2
Ottawa Rowing Club	6
Peterborough Rowing Club	4
Pinawa Sailing and Rowing Club	2
Prairie Fire Rowing Club Inc.	1
Prince Albert Drifters Rowing Club	1
Queen's University Rowing	2
Regina Rowing Club	3
Ridley College Rowing Club	2
Ridley Graduate Boat Club	2
Rockies Rowing Club	1
Row Nova Scotia	1
Rowing British Columbia	1
Rowing New Brunswick Aviron	1
Rowing PEI	3
Rowing Prince Edward Island	1
Royal Military College	2
Salt Spring Island Rowing Club	2
Saskatchewan Rowing Association	1
Saskatoon Rowing Club	3
Shawnigan Lake Rowing Club	3
Shuswap Rowing and Paddling Club	2
Somba K'e Paddling Club	1
St. Catharines Rowing Club	6
St. Catharines World Rowing	1
St. George's School	2
St. John's Rowing Club	3
Sudbury Rowing Club	2
Thunder Bay Rowing Club	2

Thunder Rowing Crew	3
Toronto Sculling Club	1
Two Rivers Rowing Club	1
University of Calgary Rowing Club	2
University of Toronto	3
University of Victoria Rowing Club	3
Upper Canada College Rowing	2
Vancouver Rowing Club	6
Vernon Rowing and Dragon Boat Club	3
Victoria City Rowing Club	5
Victoria Rowing Society	1
Wellington Sculling Club	1
Winnipeg Rowing Club	3

a. Call to Order & Territorial Acknowledgement

- President Purcer called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. PDT and followed with a Territorial Acknowledgement.

b. Establishment of a quorum.

- The RCA Board of Directors appointed Jeff Lay as Scrutineer for the 2024 Annual Meeting.
- The Scrutineer stated there were 142 total member clubs and associations in good standing recorded as of the voting registration deadline 21 days prior to the Annual Meeting – August 29th. Those members carried 322 weighted votes - a quorum is 162 votes.
- 101 members cast a ballot, carrying 223 weighted votes; therefore, a quorum was present in accordance with paragraph 5.2 of the CARA By-Laws.

c. Report of the Scrutineer

The Scrutineer

- i. Confirmed that Notice of the Annual Meeting was sent to all members at least 21 days prior to the meeting;
- ii. Confirmed that the balloting procedure under the by-laws was provided to all members;
- iii. Confirmed that all members in good standing had the opportunity to cast their ballot;
- iv. Confirmed that ballots were appropriately weighted according to each member’s number of registered participants and coaches;
- v. Confirmed that voting opened August 30th and closed at 12 Noon PDT, September 18th, 2024.

d. Report of the President and Chief Executive Officer

Reports presented at this Annual Meeting covered the affairs of the corporation for the period April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024.

Rowing season highlights and reporting were covered, for the most part, in the Annual Report published in January 2024 for the 2023 calendar year.

A full report on annual activities will be included in the RCA annual report published in January 2025 in both French and English.

Report of the President

Over the past seven years in my role as President I have seen much change in our system. We have developed programs to open doors in order to invite athletes from all backgrounds to join our sport. We have recognized the power of diversity to join in our thinking to grow rowing, whether it's coastal, beach sprints, indoor or classic rowing and in turn to grow our clubs within our communities.

We have built community partnerships as never before and raised the recognition of our sport in our neighborhoods. We will continue to have different approaches to success and make a difference.

Congratulations to all of our rowing volunteers on the work that has resulted in the growth of club membership and increased participation in the many regattas across the country and in the number of volunteers supporting our sport. Your enthusiasm and persistence are driving recovery from the COVID years. It is encouraging to talk with coaches and administrators who have taken an approach or idea and nurtured it into success for their club - please keep up this wonderful work!

On the world stage we must recognize our national team athletes and their accomplishments at the 2024 Paris Olympics:

In the Lightweight Women's Double Jenny Casson and Jill Moffatt finished 8th.

Our Women's 8+ won the silver medal - that team included Coxswain Kristen Kit, Jessica Sevic, Caileigh Filmer, Maya Meschkuleit, Kasia Gruchalla-Wesierski, Avalon Wasteneys, Sydney Payne, Kristina Walker and Abby Dent. An exciting finish in a very competitive field. Congratulations to these women for their grit and determination for this podium spot.

We also had a chance to cheer on Jacob Wassermann in his Paralympics debut as he came 9th overall in the PR1 Men's Single event. Jacob is looking forward to continuing to learn and prepare for Los Angeles in 2028.

Also on the world stage, 83 Canadian athletes competed in the World Senior, Under 23, and Under 19 Championships held in St. Catharines. It was exciting to watch our developing Canadian athletes compete so close to home where families and friends could travel to cheer them on. Congratulations to organizing committee Chair Bill Schenck for his leadership, presenting the 2024 Mega Worlds at a world class standard. Over 700 volunteers came forward to ensure the event's success.

The RCA Board will continue to work to modernize our governance, and we also appreciate the diligence of the RCA Governance and Policy Committee. Improvements to policies and procedures will be shared with the membership in the coming months.

As we undergo a transitional period, we are preparing to release details for a community consultation in the coming weeks regarding a revised strategic plan.

Rowing Community input is very important as we move forward, and we are excited about the work ahead as we move into a new strategic period.

We are also in the midst of a search for a new RCA CEO which will come to a conclusion in the late fall.

I would like to say thank you to our current Board of Directors. As a volunteer board these members are balancing day jobs, children, and family responsibilities and continue to bring the passion and commitment needed to move our organization forward. A special thank you to outgoing Director at Large Paul Fritz-Németh. Paul actively contributed as a team member right from the start with ideas and suggestions to improve our organization.

Thank you to the RCA staff as they have adjusted to the many changes over these past few months and to Jennifer Fitzpatrick for stepping into the Interim CEO role. The number of shifting responsibilities has been complicated but successful thus far.

We also thank High Performance Director Adam Parfit for his leadership of the RCA National Team.

As I move into my final year as President, I will continue to fully participate in growing our sport across Canada to ensure a solid and bright future for the organization. There is more work to be done so let's move forward together - reviewing change with fresh eyes, solving issues and continue to open doors.

Report of the Chief Executive Officer

We received over \$1.3M for programming and resource development as part of the Community Sport For All Initiative of Sport Canada and we had over 40 clubs across the country deliver programs for equity-deserving populations. Many of the clubs are wrapping up programs now and we're looking forward to learning about the outcomes you achieved and how this has changed your club's way of doing things.

The World Championships were held in St. Catharine's and the excellent feedback really is a testament to the experience and wisdom that exists in event delivery in St. Catharine's and we are very grateful to Bill Schenck and the team for delivering such an extraordinary event in Canada. We also had many Canadian Umpires on site in many roles. Some were at the event to complete their World Rowing Umpire Licensing Exam - congratulations to Kris Davis (British Columbia,) Audra Vair (Alberta), Richard Koo (Ontario), Marie-Sophie Desaulniers (Ontario) and Julie-Ann Vincent (Nova Scotia) who are now World Rowing Umpires.

In the winter our Safe Sport Working Group shared the findings from the community consultation, and they have been working over the spring and summer, taking on your feedback on the policy manual and they have now entered the phase of consultation with the PRAs. This is incredibly important work and in the next few months we'll be able to share more detail on the phases and how the revised policies will impact the organizations on the local level.

As we aim to grow awareness about the growing discipline of beach sprint rowing, this summer we supported several beach sprint events in ON, BC, and NS as part of a National Beach Sprints Tour. We provided them microgrants to help cover costs of event delivery and we are expecting to grow the number of events that take part in those next summer so hopefully more of our membership is interested in getting involved.

2024 was a busy year for the High-Performance program. The 3 years between Tokyo and Paris had anything but a normal rhythm to it. This past year the priority at the National Training Centre was to elevate the 2023 performance of the qualified W8+ and LW2x as well as attempt to qualify the W4x and M8+. We are very proud of the W8+ for their Silver medal in Paris as well as the other athletes and staff who competed for or contributed to the Paris team. While agonizingly short of qualifying the W4x and M8+ we are committed to maintaining the progress in both Women's Sculling and the Men's sweep program. We are actively connecting with athletes of potential and rolling out a broader strategy to offer more transparency of the path to the National Team Program. On the Para front, progress has been made to build out a younger pool of athletes, some with previous sport experience, with eyes for podium in 2028, and more realistically 2032. A highlight of the year was the late qualification in the PR1 M1x and the attention that it brought to Para rowing in Canada.

During the World Championships, Team Canada had some successes mixed in with some disappointing results. The opportunity of hosting a major championship led to incorporating the use of open trials for selection to a majority of boats. The strategy was intended to activate goal setting and regional programming to a larger number of crews and coaches. While debriefing and reflection of the process is ongoing, it is clear that a significant number of athletes and coaches were exposed to the international standard, that they otherwise wouldn't have been. Our collective challenge is to turn those experiences into elevated programming along the pathway. The rowing community has a high association and connection with success that represents the talent of Canadian rowing, an outcome of which is being on the podium. We want to be on the podium. We know that a better job needs to be done in the connection and enrollment of athletes and coaches in the pathway and this is one of our top priorities. The future HP program will be leaner and more focused as we adjust to financial realities, and we remain confident that we can expand our placings on the podium in Los Angeles.

Looking ahead there is a new Sport Canada funding framework that we are anticipating will be rolled out this fall. All NSOs have been advised that there is no additional funding however there are benefits for our planning and operations as this new and modernized approach will provide funding approvals further in advance to what we have become accustomed to. We've been advised there is no additional funding, and our finances are already strained so over the past several months we have been undertaking some challenging work to right size the budget to our current and anticipated financial realities.

Work on the 2028 Strategic Priorities began in January 2024 with the provinces and has continued throughout the past several months. The wider membership can expect to receive a survey within the next week so you can provide feedback on certain priorities.

Voting at the 2024 RCA Annual Meeting:

There were two business matters considered by the membership along with the election of directors:

e. Annual Financial Statements and Report of the Auditor

Moved: [Cascadia Rowing Association](#)
Seconded: [Hanlan Boat Club](#)

That RCA accept the audited financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2024 as reported on by Grant Thornton LLP, Chartered Accountants.

Treasurer Derek Ventnor provided the following report on the audited financial statements:

Treasurer Ventnor noted that a webinar was recently hosted that provided a detailed review of the audited statements and the opportunity for members to ask questions. The presentation during this meeting will be much higher level and more succinct.

Treasurer Ventnor noted that according to the auditor's opinion statement, RCA has gone through a very thorough process resulting clean audit.

Membership fee revenue reflects that participation has rebounded to near pre-pandemic levels – This is a positive trend that will be considered through the Dues and Fees process later this fall.

Ventnor highlighted that the organization ended the year with a small surplus, whereas in the previous year, the organization experienced a deficit.

On the Statement of Financial Position, accounts receivable and accounts payable are higher than normal due to the timing the funding from Sport Canada for the Mega Worlds in St. Catharines. The value of the RCA organization was also reflected on the Statement at \$2,564,637.

Multiple questions regarding the NTC Development Project were posed and Ventnor repeated the commitment made in the pre-AGM webinar that RCA would host an Information session dedicated to this topic in the late fall.

There was a question regarding quarterly financial reports being provided to the membership as agreed.

Treasurer Ventnor stated that the Board is committed to providing quarterly reports. September 30th quarterly report will be available at the Committee on Dues and Fees meeting to be held with the membership in the late fall.

MOTION CARRIED

f. Appointment of Auditor

Moved: Montréal Rowing Club
Seconded: Alberta Rowing Association

That RCA appoint Grant Thornton LLP, Chartered Accountants, as auditors for the year ending March 31, 2025 at a fee to be decided by the Board of Directors.

MOTION CARRIED.

g. Election of Directors:

Under the terms of Section 11 of the RCA By-Laws, the RCA Nominating Committee submitted to the Membership, an initial slate of candidates for the Board of Directors to be elected at the 2024 RCA Annual Meeting.

In accordance with paragraph 11.6, members in good standing were able to resubmit nominations or submit further nominations for election to the Board of Directors, provided such nominations meet the eligibility requirements set out in paragraph 9.3 and are received by the registered office of CARA in the form set out in paragraphs 11.7 and 11.8 no later than 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting (August 20, 2024).

We note that the final closing date has passed and four additional nominations for Director at Large were received. Therefore:

Candidates For Election - Final:

Directors at Large (2) to a term to end at the 2027 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 and four additional candidates were nominated by the membership as follows (sorted in alphabetical order by last name):

- Rebecca Abelson has submitted her intent to let her name stand for election. The Nominating Committee supports the nomination of Rebecca Abelson for election to a Director at Large position based on her expertise and experience.
- Tracey Black has submitted her intent to let her name stand for election and has been nominated by the Alberta Rowing Association and the Hanlan Boat Club. These organizations support the nomination of Tracey Black for election to a Director at Large position based on her expertise and experience.
- Margherita Braga has submitted her intent to let her name stand for election and has been nominated by the LaSalle Rowing Club and the Thunder Rowing Crew. These organizations support the nomination of Margherita Braga for election to a Director at Large position based on her expertise and experience.
- Katie Burke has submitted her intent to let her name stand for election and has been nominated by the OARCA Coastal Rowing and Pinawa Sailing and Rowing. These organizations support the nomination of Katie Burke for election to a Director at Large position based on her expertise and experience.
- Current incumbent Fred Enns has submitted his intent to let his name stand for re-election. The Nominating Committee supports the nomination of Fred Enns for election to a Director at Large position based on her expertise and experience.
- Jane Stamp has submitted her intent to let her name stand for election and has been nominated by the St. Catherines Rowing Club and the Ridley Graduate BC. These organizations support the nomination of Jane Stamp for election to a Director at Large position based on her expertise and experience.

- Alexandra Wrage has submitted her intent to let her name stand for election. The Nominating Committee supports the nomination of Alexandra Wrage for election to a Director at Large position based on her expertise and experience.

Election Results:

For the positions of Director at Large:

Tracey Black	122 weighted votes
Jane Stamp	83 weighted votes
Rebecca Abelson	77 weighted votes
Fred Enns	66 weighted votes
Margherita Braga	56 weighted votes
Alexandra Wrage	44 weighted votes
Katie Burke	22 weighted votes

Tracey Black and Jane Stamp were congratulated on being elected to the RCA Board of Directors.

Rebecca Abelson, Fred Enns, Margherita Braga, Alexandra Wrage and Katie Burke were thanked for putting their names forward for election.

President Purcer thanked Fred Enns for his deep commitment as a director of the RCA Board.

Committee volunteers were also thanked for their continued commitment and hard work to better our sport.

2025 RCA Semi-Annual Meeting

RCA Semi-Annual Meeting will be held virtually this year on January 26th, 2025. Further details to be provided via e-mail, social media, and on the RCA website.

Other Business:

President Purcer also noted that RCA and staff will be recognizing the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation on September 30th.

Question:

Prior to adjournment, there was a question regarding a report from the RCA Accountability Committee and results of that work to be shared with the membership:

President Purcer noted that she has been recently advised that a report will be shared soon.

h. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m. PDT