

OTTAWA ROWING CLUB
Annual General Meeting

When: March 1, 2009
Where: Colonel By Secondary School
Who:

MINUTES OF MEETING

- Chris Waddell gave opening remarks.

Motion: A motion was put forth to approve the minutes from the 2008 AGM.

Moved by: Wes Kuran

Seconded by: Stewart Taylor

Motion: Approved

- No business arising from the 2008 AGM Minutes
- There were no applications for the Wes Kuran Award. It was decided that no decision will be made until the first athlete meeting in May, during which a reminder will be given for applications.

REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS

President

- Mike Walker will return in July and has agreed to take the position of President for the next two years.
- 2008 was a very successful year, and he has some good plans for 2009 upon his return.

Vice President – Administration Chris Waddell

- Chris has worked on developing and maintaining the ORC's relationship with the City of Ottawa. In particular, the City paid for the replacement of the roof on the new boathouse.

- The High School Regatta will be moved to June 6, and will coincide with Doors Open Ottawa, leading more people to visit the Club.
- The ORC has saved money by installing the gas tank. With a provincial rebate, the ORC has 2 years to pay off the \$1600.
- The canteen broke even this year. There needs to be discussion about the pricing of the items in the canteen because it can be used to raise money.
- The Interpretive Centre generated significant revenue.
- The Summer Youth Camp is being planned, and there may be a wage subsidy again this year.
- The ORC applied for a Trillium Grant, but the application was returned because audited statements are needed for the amount of money being requested.

Head Coach – Siobhan McLaughlin

- Two ORC athletes on the world stage were recognized at the Annual Banquet in November. There were a number of coaches recognized whose time and energy allow the club to function.
- The junior development program was commenced during the summer. The goal of the program is to lead to skill development and learning the basics of rowing, with a view to moving into the competitive program. This progression did happen with a number of athletes, and the Club will continue to work on improving this program.
- Indoor training began in November at the Carleton University gym. This represents a new partnership and there are 150 people who are training at the gym with full access. Those without full access are able to use the ergs without cost.
- In January, eight club coaches were supported by the ORC to attend a coaching conference in Montreal. This was a very good learning opportunity.
- Siobhan thanked the ORC for allowing her to participate in a training camp, during which she worked on part of her Level IV. She also thanked the Executive and Brian Adams for their assistance during her first year.
- Her focus for the ORC in 2009 is the following:
 1. continued program development;
 2. continued coach development; and
 3. developing a safety policy.
- Siobhan will be a coach for Team Ontario at the Canada Summer Games.

- Eric Aubin asked about winterizing the ORC. It was explained that this is a ¼ million dollar investment, which the Club does not have at this time.
- Cliff Brimmell asked why the junior development program is considered to be a new program when there has always been this type of program. Siobhan responded that the difference to this program is that it is not a competitive program; the athletes do not compete in any regattas and they are registered as sport rowers.

Vice President Competitive Programs – John Muir

- All competitive issues were funnelled through Siobhan, and support was provided to Siobhan to allow her to become better aware of what it means to be the Head Coach at the ORC.
- Mel Bryce asked what the role of the VP Competitive was established to be. John indicated that the role was intended to help Siobhan. He indicated that the role was very well defined; he was not able to perform the role completely due to other competing interests.

Vice President Recreational and Instructional Programs – Andy Hall

- The recreational programs added members and added boats to the fleet. The oldest eights are scheduled to be replaced before the start of the season. There will be modest changes to the programs in terms of the training sessions and the regattas available to recreational rowers.
- There are some coaching issues as a result in the great swell of recreational rowers on the water. Andy thanked Scott Curda for his job in coaching the recreational rowers, especially given the increasing demands for coaching. Scott is moving to coach the Masters athletes next year and so there is need to fill his spot for the upcoming year. Andy also thanked Eric Aubin for all of his good work during the season. Andy acknowledged that it was helpful to have a recreational program coordinator to provide information and to prepare reports.
 - Eric presented his report on the Recreational Program. There were lots of activities during the summer, and it was a great year for the program. The recreational regatta will be moved to July 18, and will be sanctioned by Row Ontario. Eric continues to work to improve the regatta. Eric indicated that the learning curve for rowers is steep and some do not return from instructional programs or recreational programs and he is looking for recommendations on how to retain Learn-to-Row rowers in the recreational program. Eric talked about how communications need to be improved and increased, between the Executive and the rowers; rowers need to be involved in the decision-making process.
- Wes indicated that the Madawaska regatta is not sanctioned, and cautioned that these unsanctioned regattas will be reviewed at the national level. There are a

number of liability issues at an unsanctioned regatta. Andy indicated that the ORC could look at running the regatta.

- There was discussion about how the whole certification process has changed in terms of achieving coaching levels. Level I and II are no longer offered. There is a process by which certifications can be upgraded. Siobhan noted that there is a difference between being “trained” and being “certified”. Sophie and Jennifer asked about the overall cost associated with the certification process. Siobhan discussed the need for the ORC to determine the best way to support the coaches, but also obtain a return on investment. This is still a work in progress. Siobhan explained the cost structure of the process. Kate indicated that the new process is actually now more cost effective. Scott expressed some concern about the certification process.
- Andy indicated that it is recognized that there is a learning curve from Learn-to-Row to the recreational program and this needs to be addressed. One method to consider is whether to expand the program beyond the 5 days. There is a need for coaches for instructional programs next season. This is a good opportunity for competitive athletes to offset their fees.
- ARL: this is the final season that Mel and Brian will be running the AR program. The financial and social benefits of these programs are huge. Coaches are needed for this season. Mel and Brian gave their report, talking about the amount of revenue the program generates for the club, including the migration of ARL rowers into the recreational program. The program works because of the 25-30 volunteer coaches as well as all the other volunteers who are involved. It is necessary to cap the number of crews because of the pressure on the boats and the coaching. The focus has to be:
 1. quality coaching;
 2. equipment;
 3. volunteers; and
 4. dock use.

In order for the program to be successful, support is needed from all facets. It was agreed that fees can be raised to \$215 because of the switch to higher-performance shirts. Mel and Brian have committed to mentoring their replacement(s) this year to ensure a smooth transition. Jennifer Shortall reinforced the need for mentorship and corporate memory. Mel indicated that she will still be around the club and therefore available for some guidance. Brian commented that the restriction on growing the programs are the boats that are available. Deirdre Waite thanked Mel and Brian for all their work over the years, and indicated that the competitive coaches recognize the impact that their program has on the equipment.

- Andy reminded everyone that the upcoming season is his last year as VP Recreational and Instructional Programs, and recommended that anyone who wants to take the job should get involved this year in terms of shadowing and asking questions.

Registrar Lana – Burpee

- In 2008, the ORC had 900 rowers in various programs. The budgeted numbers were met for all the programs. The tier program was eliminated. Lana indicated that there are more competitive programs at the ORC than in some provinces. There were a lot of high school and university rowers in 2008. Jennifer Shortall asked about the possibility of e-transfer of funds. Lana indicated that this can be investigated, but a program that costs the club money is not an option.

Athletes' Representative – Julie Shearer

- Julie indicated that she wanted to become involved as a new member of the ORC, and she learned a lot by being involved. She indicated that she didn't realize the work done by the Executive. She raised a number of issues during the year on behalf of the athletes, but it is necessary to come up with solutions, and not just problems. She started the athletes' fund this year, which she hopes will be continued in the future. Her view is that the ORC is a competitive club and needs to promote its competitive athletes better. Chris Waddell reminded everyone that the Athletes' Representative is open in the spring.

New Business

Treasurer Derek – Howe

- Derek indicated that the ORC is not budgeting for big increases for 2009; the Executive would rather be conservative than over budget.
- Derek reviewed the budget for 2008, in terms of budget versus actual costs. He noted that the ORC did not pay the full Head Coach contract for 2008 but the full amount will have to be paid in 2009. This savings on the contract for 2008 was expected, and the extra money was put towards the club. Derek reviewed the equipment budget and the capital expenditures. The ORC had additional money and therefore spent money on equipment. He noted that the Executive is not holding onto the extra money, but is trying to buy boats for the club.
- Wes asked about the money, if any, that the club has in the bank. Derek indicated that this information does not get posted on the website. The balance sheet shows \$150,000 in the bank. This leaves about \$40-50,000 to operate from December 1 to May 15. The club needs to be able to operate for this period of time without any revenue coming in. Derek had a copy of the balance sheet.
- The fee schedule was presented for membership review. The fee schedule was incorporated into the budget for voting. Derek noted that the ORC used to have

lots of money in the past when there was no Head Coach. All this additional money has been rolled into the Head Coach contract; there is a new head coach but no new source of income. The club no longer has extra sources of income, and the club cannot be maintained with discretionary funds. The ORC's fee schedule is comparable in cost to other big clubs but these other clubs do not have head coach costs. The club has not passed on the full cost of the head coach to the membership and never will.

- Brian and Mel noted that the fee for ARL has been increased to \$215 to offset the cost of the new shirts.
- Derek noted that the Executive tried to have a fee working group, but this did not get done for a number of reasons. However, the start/finish dates for the various memberships were changed in order to address the concerns raised last year.
- A member asked why coxies are charged fees when they are in short demand. Siobhan answered that coxies are as much a part of the club as any athlete, they need to be registered and they are getting the same benefits as other members of the club. Derek pointed out that the club does not make any money from coxies registration fees because of payment to Rowing Canada and Row Ontario. Wes noted that it was a coxie who originally suggested that the club should not lose money on coxies. Harry noted that it becomes an issue of supply and demand, and there are not enough coxies. Julie said that fees make them members of the club. Eric argued: (1) recreational cox should not pay same as competitive cox; (2) there is not the same fee increase across all the programs; and (3) whether there is a start date of August 1 for the recreational programs. The response was that the fall recreational program is set for August 1 to November 1. All of the coxies, whether recreational or competitive, benefit from being part of the club, and they are valued members.
- Derek explained that the club invested in specific programs, which led to an increase of fees for those programs. There was an increase for all full members and now there is an increase in the instructional programs, although it is recognized that the club makes money from the instructional programs and cannot price them out of the market. There have been complaints from the university programs so those are being addressed by trying to increase support to these programs.
- Martin raised the issue of coxies again, and noted that the recreational program never had 10 coxies, and therefore it does not make sense to charge the same amount for a competitive cox as a recreational cox. John answered that it needs to be taken to heart that recreational members subsidize competitive members; the club mandate is to be a competitive club. Stewart noted that it would be an administrative nightmare to keep creating new categories it takes a lot of effort to make a balanced budget. All of these categories have been looked at in the past, and now there is just tinkering in terms of the fees. Each category uses the services differently. Cliff wanted to know where the club is going in terms of

membership growth, and had questions about converting from instructional program into full memberships.

- Sophie would like the fee schedule one week before the AGM in the future. Lana answered that the Executive struggled until the last minute to come up with a good fee schedule, and budget.
- Kevin asked whether the budget takes into consideration the current state of the economy. Chris answered that it is hard to know what is going to happen with the economy, but we did not consider 2008 as the base for the budget. Derek indicated that the plan was to be conservative with the budget, so it was based on 2007 numbers and assumed 2008 to be an aberration. Deirdre reminded everyone that there is always a good rebound after an Olympic year.
- In terms of the budget, the Executive was asked to increase the coaching stipend. Derek noted that salary commitments are half of the membership revenue. The proposed budget was reviewed. We are relying on discretionary income to operate the club. It is possible that the Interpretive Centre may not generate the projected revenue; the bookings for 2009 are not as many as they were at this stage for 2008.
- In terms of where are we going, there is only \$30,000 in the operating budget. The Executive wants feedback. At the moment, the club cannot budget for ergs, trucks, trailers, docks etc – we should be replacing lots of things but are unable to do so. Cliff asked how much money is generated from bingos or casinos. The answer was \$50,000 per year, but Wes advised that bingos are oversubscribed in Ottawa so it drove out the ability to make any money with them; bingos are hard to get into and casinos are hard to man. Peter asked for details about donations or sponsorships. Derek advised that there was an anonymous donation of \$12,000 in 2008, and ARL sponsorship represents the remaining money. Jim stated that the club needs to focus on cutting costs, and not increasing revenues. Wes advised that the club was losing the Nevada money, but adding value with the head coach and Brian. Derek indicated that the Executive is going to look at generating data about the expenses per member to give an idea of the costs associated. The Executive has discussed having athletes paying regatta entry fees – other clubs have gone this way. Jen indicated that she would prefer to pay entry fees rather than increase fees every year. Chris advised that the Executive has looked at a number of ways to address the gap between costs and revenues. Scott noted that we need to make sure not to price ourselves out of the market. Harry asked about a boat repairman. Derek asked in return whether the membership wants to pay for that. Jim suggested a survey about increasing revenues versus increasing fees. Cliff asked whether the recreational members feel that they are getting good value? Eric answered yes. Jen estimated \$6 per session, assuming a season of April 26 to November 1. Derek noted that this estimate does not account for amortizing the equipment. Harry noted that rowing is one of the cheapest sport. Derek noted that there may be discussions about hiring a second coach in 2010 as there are not as many volunteer coaches at this time. Elia noted that the

universities are pitching into the programs to decrease the fees. On that note, Siobhan discussed the plan by Row Ontario relating to satellite centres for the Road to Excellence program, which Ontario is spearheading in terms of subsidizing clubs affiliated with universities and high schools; this is a work in progress.

- Derek asked whether the recreational members would pay for a dedicated “paid” coach. The discussion seemed to suggest yes but questioned whether it was worth it for a beginner. Paid workshops were discussed as an option.

Motion: A motion was put forth to approve the fee schedule, with an increase to \$215 for ARL and the change in the fall recreational date.

Moved by: Wes Kuran

Seconded by: Peter Burpee

Motion: Approved

Chris thanked Derek for all his work on the budget and the fee schedule. Wes thanked the Executive for their work.

Elections

- The following positions were acclaimed:
 - President – Mike Walker
 - Secretary – Jennifer Shorthall
 - VP Competitive – Chris Masson
- Chris thanked Chantal and John

New Business

- Chris indicated that the Executive was looking at purchasing eights. It was reiterated that club communications take place through the website. Purchasing additional singles have not been ruled out, but the focus is to buy eights.
- In respect of the safety policy, there are a variety of issues to be addressed, including equipment on the water and in the coach boats. There needs to be a procedure for dealing with conditions on the water, such as fog; coach boats must stay on the water until all crews are off the water; lights; times to go on the water; cold water policies; coach:athlete ratio; swim test; and testing before being allowed in a double. Contact Lana if interested in being involved in working out the safety policy.

- Chris noted that the registration forms are being changed. Derek asked whether the membership would support everyone having a lifejacket in the boat? John answered that it depends on the ratio, which Kate seconded.
- Chris indicated that the club will apply to Trillium for motor boats once the club has audited financial statements to support the application.

Motion: A motion was put forth to appoint Mackay & Duff as auditors.

Moved by: Stewart Taylor

Seconded by: Deirdre Waite

Motion: Approved

- A question was asked about winterizing the club. Derek answered that the Executive would love to do that but there should be a committee struck to liaise with the Executive about this. Wes noted that it is a City of Ottawa building; there is no water in the new building; do we want to heat it; and will have to plow the driveway. It may be a tough sell. Andy answered that the Executive is not actively considering this at the moment; it is on the long-term wish list. Stewart noted that a more pressing issue is storage for the singles. Peter Thompson noted that it is necessary to come up with a plan.
- Peter asked about the adaptive program. Siobhan said she plans a meeting with athletes and coaches. There needs to be discussions about feasibility, as a coach is needed; and there is a need to improve the docks to make them more accessible. At the moment, there is only one athlete committed to training for the year, and no coach. Chris indicated that he has made contact with the City about this but the coaching issues need to be resolved first.
- Wes reminded everyone that there was an Umpire clinic the following week in Ottawa, as noted on the Row Ontario website.

Motion: A motion was put forth to adjourn the AGM.

Moved by: Scott Curda

Seconded by: Wes Kuran

Motion: Approved

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15pm