



## American Canoe Association (ACA) Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**Date:** October 3, 2018

**Location:** Teleconference

Attendance:

Voting Board Members Present: Robin Pope, Kirk Havens, Staunton Collins, Marsh Jones, Bill Micks, Anne Maleady, William Irving, David Bell, Peter Sloan, Scott Mann, Lili Colby

Non-voting attendees:

ACA Staff: Wade Blackwood, Executive Director

The meeting was called to order at 1937 by President Peter Sloan.

A quorum was established with 11 of 14 voting members present.

Wade noted that ACA is at a critical point and need to look at our budget and membership structure. With any changes to membership changes, it's important to be revenue neutral.

Wade plans to have a budget to us by next Wednesday for voting at our regular October Board call on 17 Oct 2018.

Several Board members have individually reviewed

Wade feels we spend about 300K per year just managing incoming membership data.

He proposes these new levels

- Membership (individual) – 25
- Competition – membership + 45
- SEIC - membership + 35
- Club – 125
- Affiliate – 5

Wade notes that this, at current membership, will reduce income 20K plus, but will simplify staff activity and will make marketing our membership easier. Staff is working on how to implement this. Final decision is pending on Board action.

Wade noted that our bookkeeper left in September, which has created extra office work.

Scott asked about the rationale behind increased rates for competition members (and by extension SEIC members). Wade noted that competition (and SEIC) members have an increased burden on staff, so those extra fees will help cover those costs (e.g., extra staff, staff travel, event costs, ...). SEIC fees have been present for decades and have helped develop our strong program.

Peter then noted that some of these details are quite in the weeds. He suggested backing off and trying to look at underlying assumptions, statements of the problem, and suggestions on how proposed changes will affect the underlying problem. He suggested trying to create some graphics to help the Board understand assumptions and proposed outcome.

Wade suggested that the bottom is a membership cost reduction for 90% of our members, and that will lead to a net decrease in income.

Marsh asked about a difference between junior and senior membership in competition membership, and was concerned about that impact on junior membership. He felt that would negatively impact youth membership. He next suggested that coaches also need to have some type of membership classification. Third, he suggested that we have to be able to show why we have a bump in the competition membership. He described it as a competition license. It allows members to compete nationally and internationally, to get coaching feedback, and to get use of competition supplies. He stated “we need to change our sales case” and get all competitors enrolled as members and clubs as PACs.

Robin noted his concern that current instructors who are PAC members are our members most likely to have a price increase (20% or \$10 per year). We need to know how many people would be affected and to have a feel for worst case impacts.

Peter emphasized that we don't want to micromanage, but instead need to have a big picture because we simply don't spend as much time on this as Wade does. We need to be able to look at this on a big picture view rather than focusing on the tactical elements. Scott noted agreement. He also suggested looking at other ways to realign income, including a more diversified income stream including capital campaigns.

Wade noted that a recent capital campaign with a 50K goal earned a little more than \$600, and 2/3 of that was from staff. This really emphasized the importance of crafting a well designed campaign. Wade's first goal is to simplify membership levels, and then use that to bring people in so they can listen to our message.

Discussion followed on how to effectively support our high-performance program, and the role that high performance falls within the overall ACA family. Peter noted that with all this discussion, once we vote a decision that's when the real work begins. He also noted that it's important we have good documentation of what our assumptions and expectations were, so we can reflect back on them, evaluate success, and adapt as needed. General agreement followed and Wade will present this in graphic form with his upcoming budget.

Wade then turned to staff issues. Our bookkeeper recently resigned and we're using part time staff. We're currently looking for a replacement.

Next, we discussed property. Per our auditor's request, Wade plans to begin work to obtain fair market value. This does not mean we plan to sell the properties only that we're assessing them per our auditor's request.

USOC has advised us we'll stay at a flat or decreased funding level. Athlete performance directly affects USOC funding. Scott asked if we funded athletes directly and how we arrived at that decision. He noted the importance of how athletes are chosen and funded, and the importance of clearly stated publicly available criteria for this. Marsh noted agreement. Lili suggested that the Board would benefit from some more background information on this. Further discussion will follow up off line.

Kirk asked about money for Paralympics; we have received funding, which will be reflected in the upcoming budget. Marsh noted that slalom paddling recently had TV coverage for world championships, which should help increase sport awareness. Peter noted that attending the USOC assembly and that it did help emphasize the role that the Board and the ACA play in high performance paddling.

Wade and Peter briefly discussed opportunities to pool resources with other similar sized NGBs, to better market our programs.

Kirk reported that he and Wade had discussions with Liberty University about free on-line classes for athletes. They will follow up in the near future. Liberty University is a non-profit university "dedicated to providing biblically sound, academically excellent online degree programs that prepare students for successful careers."

Wade asked that if we have input on the agenda, to please let him know in advance. He's happy to add time for topics as needed.

Robin advised the Board that he is working with the USCG Auxiliary to help develop Coast Guard paddling programs, and will keep the Board informed as to any progress there. He plans to encourage partnership between the two organizations, as suggested by the existing MOU between them.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 2032.

Submitted by,

Robin Pope  
Board Vice Chair  
ACA Board of Directors