



ACA | Canoe - Kayak - SUP - Raft - Rescue

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American Canoe Association Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

Date: Sunday, February 28, 2021

Location: Virtual

Board Members Present: Robin Pope, Heather Davis Miller, Scott Mann, Lili Colby, John Traendly, C.C. Williams, Adam Joseph, Rainey Hoffman, Brandon Slate

Non-voting attendees: Gerry Seavo James

ACA Staff: Beth Spillman, Rok Sribar, Kelsey Bracewell, Brett Mayer

1. Call to Order

Mr. Pope called the meeting to order at 12:13 PM EST.

Mr. Williams called roll and noted that a quorum was present.

Board members declared their potential conflicts of interest.

Ms. Spillman requested that each director review, complete and mail to the office the required conflict of interest statement

2. ACA February 17, 2021 Meeting Minutes Approval: C.C. Williams

Ms. Colby moved, and Mr. Traendly seconded the motion to approve the meeting minutes from February 17, 2021. There was no comment and motion passed unanimously.

3. Properties Committee Update: Beth Spilman

Ms. Spilman included a brief update about the financial status of the ACA properties in her Executive Director Report

4. Finance Committee Report: Lili Colby

Ms. Colby summarized the Treasurer's Report. She provided an overview of the current account balances, and reviewed current budget status.

There was some discussion among the Board about the current status of the budget, profits and losses. Mr. Traendly noted that when the current budget was set up significant effort was made to be conservative with projected incomes due to ongoing impacts of COVID-19.

Ms. Spilman reported that the ACA received two different loans from the Paycheck Protection Program. Ms. Spilman noted that based on the requirements of these loans, she expects the ACA to meet the requirements for these loans to convert to grants.

5. Executive Director Report: Beth Spilman

Ms. Spilman reported that there are currently two ACA staff positions open; one in the Safety, Education, Instruction (SEI) Department and one in the Membership Department. These positions have been advertised. Staff roles and responsibilities are currently being evaluated and adjusted to better meet current needs and maximize staff strengths. There was discussion among the Board about the length of these staff vacancies and any impacts these might have on the current budget and grant obligations.

Ms. Spilman reported that the ongoing financial audit continues to proceed as expected and responded to several questions from Board members about current and potential changes to financial internal controls.

Ms. Spilman provided a brief financial update for Camp Sebago and Sugar Island and responded to several questions regarding budgets and financial controls for these properties.

Ms. Spilman reported that work on the website update continues. This cost of this website update was covered by funds from the USOPC.

Ms. Spilman reported that the ACA currently has 36 athletes registered for Spring Trials in Florida.

Ms. Spilman requested that Mr. Pope provide the Board with an update and overview of the Paddlesport Safety Facilitator (PSF) course. There was discussion among the Board about potential markets for this course, options for converting portions of the PSF course to a virtual format, and potential grant opportunities to help expand this course offering. Mr. Pope also reported that a grant application has already been submitted to help expand the PSF course availability and fund creation of virtual course materials. Mr. Joseph noted that a potential market for this course could be the large retail stores that could utilize this program to train their employees about best practices so that they could pass this information along to potential customers and paddlers.

6. Public Policy Outreach Update: Robin Pope

Mr. Pope updated the committee about recent successful efforts to work with the United States Coast Guard (USCG) to get the requirements changed so that throwables will no longer be required for boats between 16 and 25 ft. in length if all aboard are wearing lifejackets. Final implementation of this is pending Congressional approval.

Mr. Pope reported that a grant has recently been submitted to the USCG Trust Fund to get funding to train USCG Auxiliary members in paddling in 2022.

There was discussion among the Board about the need to better inform our members about the work our staff, Board members, and general membership are doing with our partner agencies (e.g. Scouts of America, USCG, USCG Auxiliary, etc.).

7. Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Committee Report: Heather Davis Miller & Gerry Seavo James

Ms. Davis Miller provided an overview of the scope of work and history of the DEI Initiatives. Ms. Davis noted that at the last Board meeting a formal DEI Committee was approved. There are currently three Board members serving on this committee: Heather Davis Miller, Lili Colby, and John Traendly. The committee is currently working on recruiting two athlete representatives. Ms. Davis Miller also reported that the work of the DEI Committee is happening alongside the work of the Paddlesport Action Committee (PAC), and she provided an overview of the scope of the PAC.

Ms. Spilman highlighted that the general membership of the ACA has shown significant support for the DEI initiatives and expressed her appreciation for the work of the DEI Committee.

There was discussion among the Board and Mr. Seavo James about the DEI Committee and the PAC. Mr. Seavo James noted that the committees are requesting that the Board designate additional funds to support their work. Mr. Pope noted that \$25,000 has been raised or allocated to support the DEI & PAC Committees efforts.

8. Stewardship & Public Policy Report: Brett Mayer

Mr. Mayer reported on two recent stewardship issues that ACA staff and members have been involved with. Mr. Mayer and the Washington State Director provided comment, on behalf of the ACA and its members, to oppose legislation in Washington state that would have required all paddlers to register their craft with the state and receive a boater registration card. Their comments to legislators about this proposed legislation included alternative plans that could be used to accomplish similar goals. Mr. Mayer also reported that he and Mr. Pope were interviewed by Paddling Magazine about their efforts with this issue.

Mr. Mayer reported that, due to a recent log jam on the Neuse River, the City of Raleigh, North Carolina Parks and Recreation Department contacted the ACA to assist with getting key stakeholders together to

discuss a plan for how best to move forward with river closures, openings, etc. What emerged out of this is rethinking and repositioning our stewardship efforts to include community engagement. This area specifically is where I see the stewardship/policy work intersecting with the DEI work.

There was discussion among the Board about the necessity of informing the membership about successful stewardship efforts like those reported by Mr. Mayer. Mr. Mayer reported that any successful advocacy efforts are communicated to the membership via the monthly newsletter and the “What’s New” tab on the ACA website. There was general agreement among the Board and Mr. Mayer that, as an organization, we need to increase our efforts to educate members about successful advocacy and initiatives.

9. ACA Olympic and Paralympic Elite and Development Programs Update: Rok Sribar

Mr. Sribar presented an overview of the current goals for the Elite Programs

- Retain the existing slalom, sprint, and paracanoe elite athletes and high-potential junior and U23 competitors to successfully represent the U.S. in Paris 2024 and L.A. 2028.
- Develop and implement systematic, data-driven athlete and coach, development programs, and ensure consistent high-level coaching at existing training centers and clubs.
- Introduce intramural canoe/kayak leagues with regional and national racing system.

Mr. Sribar provided an overview of the 2021 Olympic and Paralympic race and event schedule.

Mr. Sribar provided an update on the 2021 International Canoe Federation (ICF) Supercup that will be held in Oklahoma on August 21, 2021.

Mr. Sribar requested that the Board consider designating funds from previous donations to pay for hiring a Project Manager and support the development of a paddling league in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Mr Sribar provided an overview of a draft budget for the paddling league. There was discussion among the Board and Mr. Sribar about funding for the Project Manager, potential scope of work for a Project Manager, and the draft budget for the paddling leagues.

10. National Governing Body Status: Robin Pope

Mr. Pope reported on the changes expected to the Board and governing committees required by the recent amendment to the Ted Stevens Act. The USOPC is requiring that athlete representation be increased to 33.3% on the Board and all governing and financial committees by January 1, 2022. Changes to the ACA Board Bylaws will be required in order to come into compliance with the Ted Stevens Act amendment. The changes to the bylaws will require a vote of the full membership. There was discussion among the Board as to the timing and implications of the required changes.

11. Budget Allocation for New Initiatives

There was discussion among the Board about the designating funds for a Project Manager Staff Position and funds for contract work related to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committees initiatives.

Mr. Mann moved, and Mr. Hoffman seconded the motion, to allocate \$28,000 in funding for a project manager staff position that will report to the high performance director. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Mann moved, and Ms. Colby seconded the motion, that the Board is committed to building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive sport that creates opportunities for all that want to participate in paddlesports. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board requested Ms. Spillman to work with the DEI Committee to draft a specific set of objectives that could be used as the basis of a contract to hire an independent contractor to assist with the DEI Initiatives.

12. Safety, Education, & Instruction Council (SEIC) Report: John Traendly

Mr. Traendly reported that the SEIC had a very productive meeting on Saturday, February 17, 2021. Mr. Traendly reported that in response to COVID-19, many Instructor Trainers (ITs) and Instructor Trainer Educators (ITEs) moved the classroom portion of their Instructor Certification courses to a virtual format. The success of these virtual sessions has led to a broader conversation about utilizing more virtual learning in the various SEIC curricula, especially for Instructor Certification courses. Mr. Traendly also reported that the SEIC Instruction Committee is beginning the process to update the Instructor Manual and add more online resources and video content.

Mr. Traendly reported that the Collegiate Paddlesports Association continues to provide financial support for the Course Management System (CMS) buildout. Once the CMS buildout is complete the program and support team will move to support mode and full ownership of the program will be transferred to the ACA. Once in support more maintenance cost is expected to be minimal.

Mr. Traendly reported that there are currently only two engaged athlete representatives participating in the SEIC committees. Mr. Traendly also reported that there has been great interest from the SEIC in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion workgroups progress and initiatives. The SEIC plans to schedule a separate meeting in the next few months to discuss the DEI initiative and explore ways they might assist with this effort.

Mr. Traendly provided a review of the seven motions passed by the SEIC on February 17, 2021. After the opportunity for discussion and questions **the motion to approve the seven items passed by the SEIC at their February 17, 2021 meeting passed unanimously.**

13. Additional Comments

Mr. Pope reminded the committee of key takeaways from the meeting:

- The Board needs to continue discussion on strategic planning for the next 10 years.

- At the next meeting we will get more information from staff and the DEI Committee about key objectives for potential contract work to support the DEI initiatives.
- Ms. Spillman will provide additional information on potential youth paddling leagues.

Mr. Traendly moved, and Ms. Colby seconded the motion, to adjourn the meeting. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 PM EST

Respectfully submitted,

C.C. Williams
Board Secretary