



ACA Board Meeting **[Video Conference]**

Wednesday, August 16, 2023
[Draft Version]

Prior to the formal meeting, there was a 30 minute video social beginning at 7:00 p.m. David Lumian opened the formal meeting at 7:30 p.m. The published agenda which also formed the general format for the minutes is in Appendix A.

Attendance. Attendance was taken from the video logins. **BOD Present:** Hunter Branstetter, Suzanne Britt, Beverly Cosslett, Thom Crockett, Pam Dillon, Jerry Dunne, Dan Henderson, Kenny Kasperbauer, Robert Kauffman, Anna Levesque, Zach (Bud) Lokken, Dave Lumian, Risa Shimoda, Andrea White.

BOD Not Present: Jack Wallace.

Staff Present: Beth Spilman, Emma Walther, Kelsey Bracewell, Mark Parrish. Steve Kelly, Jed Hinkley.

Other Attendees: na

A motion was made to approve the June minutes and seconded. There were no additions or subtractions. The motion was approved.

STAFF REPORTS AND UPDATES

The staff reports are provided in Appendix B. Updating the auditor's report, Beth indicated that the audit was complete and that we had a clean audit.

BOD COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Properties Committees. Jerry Dunne provided the report for the Properties Committee. He updated the activities at Lake Sebago and Sugar Island. He noted that a committee was formed, consisting of both Americans and Canadians. Discussions were beginning.

Grievance Committee. Jerry Dunne updated the group on the activities of the Grievance Committee. He noted that some of the grievance have been completed. Several grievances remain open. He is working with SEIC and Dave on SEIC grievances involving instructors. Issues that they are addressing include anonymous grievances and determining what constitutes an injury.

Finance Committee.

Suzanne Britt indicated that the Finance Committee has had one meeting this year, and in accordance with the bylaws are planning to have a meeting between September 7th and 15th, before the closing of the books. They are working closely with Beth. In addition, she has talked with Jerry and the Properties Committee to develop a closer relationship.

Competition Council. Dan Henderson provided the Competition Council report. At this time, he indicated that they there was not much to report. They will have their next meeting on the 24th of this month. They should have a report at the next meeting.

Regional Activity Council (RAC). Andrea White was in transit. Beth provided her report. They are working with SEIC to provide Level 1 and Level 2 updates. They have advanced the grassroots movement with additional certifications, including certifying several new paddlesport angler instructor trainers.

SEIC. Anna Levesque provided the report from SEIC. She noted that the executive committee has been busy processing a large number of IT and ITE applications. In addition, they are addressing two grievances internally. In response to a question, Anna indicated that the next meeting of SEIC is on September 26th beginning a 7-9:00 p.m. and on September 27th. The next meeting is on December 2nd beginning at 10:00 a.m.

DISCUSSION AND BUSINESS ITEMS:

U.S. Performance Center. Beth indicated that they had signed the agreement and followed up with some minor details.

Strategic Plan. Beth provided an update on implementing the strategic plan. She noted they were working on a status report. Working with staff input, they color coded each of the tactics. Red indicates they hadn't started or had minimal work on the task. Yellow indicates that they had made progress or were active. Green documents that the task was substantially complete. Second, they found that many of the tasks overlapped in their completion. Third, Beth indicated that they would open up the process to interested board members. Fourth, Beth shared the printed version of the strategic plan on the website. Pictorially intensive, it looked good. The group agreed.

Fredericksburg Land. Beth provided a brief history of the four acres of land donated by the real estate developer. She indicated that there were four options.

1. Sell the land outright
2. Sell it back to the real estate developer.
3. Sell a conservation easement. A little more complicated, the option involves a land trust, tax credits and selling the tax credits.
4. Do nothing or status quo.

Regional Activity Council (RAC) proposal re Member Engagement (Appendix C) Andrea White was still in transit. The group discussed the proposal and made the following motion.

Motion 2308: Move to accept the proposal as written with input and modification from Beth and the staff. [Disposition: motion passed unanimously]

Nomination Committee and BOD Election. There was a brief discussion regarding the composition of the nominating committee. Representation is by formula. Composed of six people, it includes two representatives from SEIC, one from RAC, one from the Board, and two athletes. A motion was made to have Ann Berry chair the committee. She chaired the committee last year. The motion was seconded. It passed with one abstention.

October and February BOD Meetings. Dave Lumian discussed the logistics of the next two in-person meetings. Next Meeting is an in-person meeting, Friday, October 6th through Sunday the 8th. There was a discussion regarding doing the February meeting either at Fredericksburg or in California. In addition, there was a discussion regarding the annual meeting. No formal decision or action was taken on either item.

Budget Submissions. Beth indicated that councils should submit their budget needs on September 1st. She noted that there are a couple of days' leeway on the submission date.

Adjournment. A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 9:00 p.m. The motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,



Robert B. Kauffman
Secretary

American Canoe Association Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

June 13, 2023

Appendix A

Welcome and Approval of Meeting Minutes: Dave Lumian (5 minutes)

Staff Updates: Beth Spilman (10 minutes)

Because the staff updates were provided in advance, we will only spend a few minutes answering questions.

Committee Updates: (30 total minutes; 5 minutes each)

Properties - Jerry Dunne

Grievance - Jerry Dunne

Finance - Suzanne Britt

Competition Council - Dan Henderson

Regional Activity Council - Andrea White

Safety Education & Instruction Council - Anna Levesque

Discussions:

Regional Activity Council proposal re: Operating Policies and Procedures - Andrea White (10 minutes)

BOR Inservice Training and Outreach - Robert Kauffman (10 minutes)

US Performance Center proposal - Beth Spilman (15 minutes)

Strategic Plan - Beth Spilman (10 minutes)

Fall In-Person Meeting - Dave Lumian (2 minutes)

American Canoe Association

Board of Directors Package

Appendix B

STAFF REPORTS

June 7, 2023

As always, the staff has been very busy since our last meeting. I hope you will enjoy reading about their activities and accomplishments. Nate Humberston has left the ACA (and his other two part time jobs) to take a full time position with a software company in San Diego. He will continue to train for the World Championships and the Pan American Games, so he will not be a stranger. Azusa Murphy has replaced Nate as the Athlete Safety and Compliance Manager. Sheppard McVey, a rising college senior, is interning with us this summer and will support many staff members.

I'm happy to report that membership revenue continues to outpace 2022 and exceeds budget whereas our expenses are below budget. The 2022 audit is almost complete (I am reviewing the draft report) and the filing of our 990 will follow the completion of the audit. I am thrilled to share the proposal from the US Performance Center with you as part of this board package and look forward to discussing it at our meeting on Tuesday.

[Kelsey Bracewell - Safety Education & Instruction Department](#)

The current two USCG grants are on schedule and going exactly according to budget. The digital marketing campaigns for each project have been initiated and have each seen significant impressions and engagement within the first full week of their respective campaigns. In addition to tracking the campaign engagement data, we are tracking conversions which include: taking the online course, clicking through landing page to learn about membership benefits of contacting a staff member, join/renewing, or subscribing to the ACA newsletter (available for non-members to subscribe without becoming a member yet).

For the FY 2023-2024, the USCG released their grant competition several months late which pushed the grant writing season uncomfortably close to busy paddling season. Two notable new changes have been made to their competition: they will accept a maximum of four proposals per organization, and the funding request must fall between \$50,000 and \$250,000 per proposal. The SEI Department authored four proposals:

1. Scan If Found QR Code Sticker Program
2. Nationwide hosting of Community Paddlesports Leader (CPL) courses
3. National Paddlesport Safety and Leadership Steering Committee formation and work
4. Expansion of free PSF online course to include three modules about:
 - a. Flatwater self and assisted rescue techniques for entry level paddlers
 - b. Paddlecraft angling
 - c. Nautical rules of the road
 - d. All three of these would be translated into Spanish as well

The date that the USCG has indicated they'll make funding announcements is 8/31/2023.

Lastly, the SEI Department has begun work on a handful of new projects: continuing the SEIC monthly newsletter (began in December 2022), initiated revised procedures for billing of SEIC dues for brand new instructors, brainstorming outreach plan for assessment/PSF/TL participants (not instructors), and the curriculum formatting project was delegated to a contractor for further refinement and presentation to the SEIC Discipline Committees.

2023 - Instructor Revenue

January	\$15,940
February	\$19,805
March	\$24,284
April	\$27,260
May	\$31,595

2023 - New Instructor Certs Each Month

January	34
February	50
March	66
April	102
May	204

[Kaycee Maas - Communications, USCG Grant support](#)

[Summer Solstice Celebration](#)

- 21 events have been organized as a part of the SSC
 - 18 public / 3 private
 - Over 700 stickers requested so far
 - Events organized in 19 different states, 2 different countries
- [Media Kit](#) available for further promotion
 - Has been sent to State Directors and Board Members (thank you Andrea and Dave!)
 - Flyers from the Media Kit have been given to Jed and Steve to distribute to coaches
- Essay & Photo Contest
 - Will bring in content to be shared throughout the year
 - Will allow us to better engage with our audience
 - Great prizes available! Be sure to spread the word!

[Newsletter](#)

- Continued elevated engagement since changing the newsletter format

- Emphasis ACA's policy efforts in response to Strategic Plan survey

Social Media

- Facebook Post Engagement (likes, comments, shares) up 13.6%
- Instagram Post Engagement (likes, comments, shares) is up 38.3%
- Instagram post engagement statistic aided by post collaboration with @officialusacanoekayak and current instructor of the month award recipients (posts being shared from both accounts)

Michelle Flynn - Membership

Membership numbers are increasing slightly. In May of 2022 we had 15301 Individual members and 16,355 including Clubs, Organizations, and event members. At the end of May 2023, we had 15,909 individual members, and 17,056 including clubs, organizations, and event members 17,056. That is an increase of 4% over last year at this time. From a revenue perspective, May was our highest membership revenue month in the past 4 years.

In April of 2023 we had 492 brand new members sign up to be ACA members and in May 2023 the ACA had 798 new members join. It is great to see all of the new members of ACA.

Just so you are all aware, our members are contacted multiple times prior to this point, the month after their due date, about their renewal. I am currently exploring ways to increase this retention and have our members renew on time.

Kristal Pastell - Insurance

April and May have been very busy for PACs, Affiliates, and Instructors. Sanctioning fees in April were over \$1300 and in May over \$2000. Additional insured revenue was over \$1000 in both April and May. Event memberships had a bit of a dip from April (\$13,274.00) to May (\$7,805.00) but both were higher than this time last year. Clubs event organizers are very happy with our recent change in procedures with requesting insurance. We are continuing to work on how to improve our relationships with other organizations such as the OLG program.

Lily Otu - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The LEAD initiative has been active in both Tampa and Austin. We have 8 participants signed up and 3 mentors from the Iowa group assisting in Tampa. For Austin we have two mentors and are still building the roster. In addition, a workshop on giving and receiving feedback, the first of four trainings will be ready to pilot to staff at the end of June and ready to deliver to ITE's for the fall. Jordan Taylor and Lily welcome the Board to participate in the 90 minute training series at some point. The Summer of Understanding series will also be launched to encourage intercultural dialogue and promote understanding within our community.

Jed Hinkley - Competition, Slalom

I have begun working on Fundraising, and am currently creating a plan that will include an online fundraiser, an in-person fundraiser, and a potential third ask of ACA members to support youth

engagement in Paddle Sports. A generous donor has agreed to cover the cost of Worlds Uniforms for athletes, as they were having to buy their own previously.

I am working on organizing Slalom Age Group Nationals with Montgomery Whitewater, and just sent out the registration. I continue to seek partnerships with companies, communicate with Parents and clubs, and am supporting Junior Worlds Logistics as well, in addition to other tasks.

[Brett Mayer - Stewardship and Public Policy](#)

Brett will be devoting four weeks this summer to full-time work. He will be in-office June 11th through June 16th and again at the end of July. His work will focus on moving several key projects forward in support of our strategic plan.

The list of summer projects provides an update on key initiatives.

- **Pilot Program for How Paddlers Pay Into the System**

One of our central regulatory policy issues relates to how paddlers pay into the system to support infrastructure, access, law enforcement, and search and rescue programs. We have been in conversation with the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources for more than a year, Tom Guess and Stacey Brown, and they are very interested in partnering with the ACA to come up with a pilot program in Virginia.

- **Learning Management System Review**

Learning Management Systems go beyond our current CMS. This is relevant to policy work, particularly related to legislation that might mandate paddle sport education in different states. We need to make sure we have the right tools in place to make our curriculums available. Yes, we have the online PSF course, which we created with a substantial grant from the U.S. Coast Guard, but there may be a need for tools that are more sophisticated. There are a few specific notes below that outline this work further.

1. Beth has been looking into Learning Management Systems with Drew Story (a competition volunteer and Project Manager for Patagonia) and Brett may join this effort as one of his summer projects.
2. Module for on-land portion of certification for civilians
3. Module for already certified instructors for how to teach this program

- **Volunteer RAC Training Resources**

In order to strengthen our grassroots policy work, we need to provide our volunteers with the best available resources. This summer, Brett will explore how we might use our current CMS to create a module-based volunteer training program.

All resources are living and breathing resources. One focus is how we get all of these to the point where they can be most useful. We should not need to write any new content for volunteer resources.

Potential Tools, Links, and Ideas

- *Congressional Management Foundation Policy Training Webinar*
- *Loom (Educator video software) Based Training Modules instead of recorded Zoom Sessions*

- **NASBLA Conference Planning**

The September NASBLA Conference is a real opportunity for the ACA to re-engage and strengthen our policy efforts. Robin took the lead on rewriting selected course curriculums to match the National On Water Standards. These materials were turned over to the SEIC for their review. Andrea and Brett submitted proposals to NASBLA to lead sessions. One proposal is an on-water session for interested state officials. Dave Lumian committed to be the on-water instructor if the proposal is accepted.

In the coming weeks we should find out which proposals are approved. Brett will take the lead on planning the on-water logistics. We have already reached out to potential partners in Colorado.

- **Policy Web Library**

This relates to resources for RAC volunteers. We need a stronger list of resources, similar and perhaps concordant with resources that NASBLA has on their site, that allow members and volunteers better access to relevant information.

[Emma Walther - Accounting](#)

We have completed the information gathering processes for the audit. The reports for the Employee Retention Credits have been submitted to the auditors.

We have added an accounting assistant and I have been training her in all the accounts receivable processes.

Currently I am working on updating the accounting procedures documentation and implementing a few of the suggestions that the auditors documented. We already had procedures in place; they just needed to be updated based on changes Beth and I have implemented in the last year including:

- Journal Entry Documentation
- Updating the expense classifications for our functional expense allocation
- Updating the reconciliation process for athlete fees
- Drafting edits to our employee manual and procedure documentation



Appendix C

ACA National Activity Council Regional Activity Council (RAC) Operating Procedures

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ARTICLE I. NAME

This National Activity Council shall be known as the Regional Activity Council of the American Canoe Association (ACA). In these operating procedures, whenever the acronym RAC appears, it shall be taken to mean the ACA Regional Activity Council (RAC).

ARTICLE II. MISSION

The Regional Activity Council (RAC) serves and represents the members residing within states, regions, and affiliated clubs to promote the ACA mission and goals at the grassroots level.

ARTICLE III. RAC GOVERNANCE

A. On behalf of the ACA, the Regional Activity Council (RAC) is established by the ACA National Board of Directors as an integral part of the ACA to promote major programs and activities at the local and regional level in the areas of

- membership,
- diversity,
- recreation,
- stewardship and public policy,
- amateur competition, and
- regional safety, education, and instruction.

Where another Activity Council or other ACA entity already exists, the mission of RAC is to support but not to replace an entity recognized by the ACA National Board of Directors.

1. RAC Officers and Representatives

- a. An RAC Council member may only hold the same position in successive elections for three terms (for a total of 6 years).
- b. Suggested responsibilities for all RAC members are described in the RAC policies.
- c. An RAC Council meeting will have a quorum when half plus one of the filled Council seats are in attendance.
- d. In the case of a vacancy of a State Director or Regional Chair or in the event of a resignation or removal, the RAC Council will request the affected Region to select a replacement before opting to appoint a replacement via RAC Council majority vote.
- e. RAC Council members will fill out the standard ACA Conflict of Interest form at the beginning of their term or when the conflict arises and follow standard ACA Conflict of Interest protocol. Any disciplinary actions undertaken by ACA for RAC Council members should be conducted in conjunction with RAC Standards Committee. Appeals will be directed to the ACA Ethics Committee.

B. The RAC operates under the authority of the ACA National Bylaws and the ACA National Board of Directors. All programs, plans, and policies developed by the RAC Council shall be subject to final authority of the ACA National Board of Directors. When operating as an official sub-division of the ACA, all region and state financial and grant applications using the ACA 501c3 tax ID must be approved by the ACA Board or Staff in advance. No ACA region or state may maintain independent finances including banking accounts.

C. The RAC represents all current members through State Directors, Regional Chairs, and the Affiliated Clubs Representative.

1. The ACA Affiliated Clubs Representative to RAC will be elected by State Directors at the time of Regional Chair elections.
 2. Each state (including designated territories) elects a State Director. The State Directors represent and support ACA programs and concerns for affiliated clubs and members at large within their regions.
- D. Elections are facilitated by the RAC Council and the ACA National Office at the state level, each state is encouraged to form a State Executive Council. The members of RAC may consist of up to fifteen voting members to include:
- Chair
 - Vice Chair
 - Secretary
 - Immediate Past Chair
 - One (1) elected ACA Affiliated Clubs Representative.
 - Ten (10) Regional Representatives
- E. State Director elections will happen every 2 years in the fall of even number years. RAC elections will happen in the fall of odd number years. All RAC representatives are elected by current State Directors and RAC Council members. Terms will be for a period of two years.
- F. Ex-Officio and Liaison Members (non-voting)
- The RAC welcomes ex-officio, non-voting liaison participation from the ACA Board of Directors, the Safety/Education/Instruction Council, the Competition Council, and the ACA Properties Committee.
1. Non-voting liaison member(s) may be brought onto the RAC Council by a majority vote of the RAC Council.

ARTICLE IV. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- A. RAC Executive Committee shall be comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Immediate Past Chair, and Affiliated Clubs Representative. An ACA Board appointment may also serve on the Executive Committee as a non-voting member in an Ex Officio role.
- B. CHAIR. The chair will be the RAC nominee for ACA board member according to ACA National Bylaws and procedures. The Chair's duties shall be to prepare agendas, call and preside over meetings of the RAC Council, appoint special committees and workgroups, and represent and act on behalf of the RAC between RAC Executive Committee and full RAC Council meetings. Resignation of the RAC Chair requires resignation from the ACA National Board of Directors.
- C. VICE CHAIR. The Vice Chair shall help coordinate operations and special projects for RAC. The Vice Chair shall preside over meetings and take minutes as needed in the absence of the Chair and/or Secretary and be responsible for developing and delivering RAC programs.
- D. SECRETARY. The duties of the Secretary shall be to provide notice and a written agenda to RAC Council members prior to meetings, keep and distribute minutes of meetings, and keep all appropriate RAC Council records. They will also be the lead liaison for the RAC instance of the Club Express page.
- E. IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR. The Immediate Past Chair will serve as an advisor to the Executive Committee and participate in projects as needed. In the absence of the Chair, Vice Chair, and/or Secretary, the Immediate Past Chair will fulfill the duties of the vacant Officer until the Officer is able to resume their responsibilities or is replaced.

- F. **AFFILIATED CLUBS REPRESENTATIVE.** The duties of the Affiliated Clubs Representative (ACR) will be to serve and represent Paddle America Clubs and other ACA Affiliated Clubs' concerns and initiatives and serve as Chair of the PAC Council.

ARTICLE V. RAC COUNCIL COMMITTEES

- A. As described in the RAC policies, Standing Committees may include the RAC Standards Committee, Budget Committee, Nominating and Operating Procedures Committee, Communications and Social Media Committee, Paddle America Clubs Council, State and Local Public Policy Committee, committees to support other Councils such as safety/instruction and community-based competition, and other committees as needed.

ARTICLE VI. RAC COUNCIL MEETINGS

- A. The RAC Council shall meet in-person or virtually either before or at the ACA Annual Membership Meeting and at least quarterly during each year. Additional communication, including face-to-face meetings and electronic discussions are held, as needed. The business of the RAC Council may be conducted through telephone, email, or other electronic methods between meetings.
- B. RAC meetings will operate by the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, most recent edition.
- C. Proxy voting is prohibited.
- D. No individual, including those representing dual entities, may cast more than one vote.

ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENTS

- A. Amendment to these Operating Procedures shall be by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members of the RAC Council. The vote may be conducted during meetings or by other means as determined by the RAC Council. RAC Operating Procedures amendments will be submitted to the ACA National Board of Directors for approval.
- B. Any item not covered by these Operating Procedures shall be guided by the ACA National Bylaws, the RAC Policies and Procedures, and *Robert's Rules of Order*, most recent edition.

BOD In Service Training and Outreach

In order to remain competitive in this quickly changing world it is important for organizations to remain current. This includes the BOD. It is very easy for all involved to become insular and focused on their current tasks within their “silo.” Benefits to the BOD of in service training and outreach include:

- Determine what the competition is doing,
- Develop new alliances and connections,
- Identify new trends that can affect the organization, and
- Improve operations.

Typically, the session accompanies the board meeting but it need not do so. It can be the night before the main meeting. It could be a hour or hour and one half session prior to the meeting. Four events a year would seem appropriate with one of the events occurring at the in-person meeting. Normally, it is the responsibility of the Chair of the BOD, but that does not preclude input and topics from other board members and staff. The person or persons presenting should receive an honorarium.

I have jotted down some topics that might be germane or of interest. Consider this a starting point for topics.

- **Developing an Olympic Championship Team:** What were the significant factors that led to their championship. Can we emulate?
- **The Outdoor Recreation Market:** Research findings regarding trends in outdoor recreation including demographics. This is our future?
- **Marketing to Gen-Z:** This is also our future?
- **Outcomes-Based Education:** Education and academe embrace Outcomes-Based Education. Although it has yet to be adopted in the outdoor field, it may be an eventuality or something we do to improve our educational programs.
- **Public Education:** New education approaches to meet new markets and needs. How can we reach paddlers and leaders who we are not currently reaching? Can we make it a profit center?
- **Paul Sanford:** The ACA’s role in stewardship in the past, stewardship trends and needs today, and the ACA’s potential role in the future.
- **Water Trails:** The executive director of American Trails. Can we collaborate and can they help us? Can we help them as well?

I am requesting that we consider this topic as a discussion item at the next BOD meeting.

rbk