

RICHMOND CANOE CLUB – MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018

Date of meeting: Saturday 17 March 2018

Time of meeting: 1300

Venue: Richmond Canoe Club, Landsdowne Boathouse, 81-83 Petersham Road, Richmond, TW10 6UT

Attendees: Tom Sharpe (Chair), Mike Pigott, Brett Irvine, Lizzie Broughton, Jane Swarbreck, Sam Cox, Mike Webb, Klaudia Galucka, Colin Greasby, Hazel Greasby, Sharon Waszkiewicz, Neil Camp, Peter Loy, Nick Cotton, Enrique Vallano, Kirstin Field, Jemima Johnstone, Tom Walker, Clive Feris, Elly O’Connell, Eva-Maria Griesbauer, Robyn van Maltzahn, Debborah Mendes, Tony Gregson-Newman, Ludy Hills, Anthony Spicer, Boris Mavra, Nick Garner, Richard Hendron, Simon Wood, Marcus Gohar, Tony Waszkiewicz, Alex Flockhart, Coraile Vial, Tim Gould, Sonia Jacobs, Thomas Sibley, Ashley Whittaker, Guy Peters, Lucy Ross, Catherine Pickering

Item 1: Apologies for absence and appointment of proxies

1. The following members had sent apologies and appointed proxies:

Apologies from	Proxy appointed
Stefan Dums	Peter Barnes
Andrei Busuioc	Mike Webb
Susie Cox	Peter Barnes
Tim Killip	Peter Barnes
Andrew Hunt	Klaudia Galucka
Shane O’Cuinn	Sean Martin
Sean Martin	Tom Sharpe

Item 2: Adoption of the minutes of the AGM on 18 March 2017

2. The minutes of the AGM on 18 March 2017 were approved. The motion was proposed by Peter Barnes and seconded by Tom Sharpe

Item 3: Commodore’s report

3. See Annex A.

Item 4: Treasurer’s report

4. See Annex B. The following points were raised in discussion:
 - a. The water, power, heat and lighting costs were significantly higher in 2017 (£7,539) compared to 2016 (£2,027). In part this was because in 2016 the Club had a rebate on its bill. Guby Peters was in discussion with British Gas about the bill – the Club has a meter that is not on the

British Gas database. The water bill alone was also £1,800. The water was metered. Guy was getting smart meters installed soon, which might reduce costs.

- b. The 2017 AGM had agreed that the Club's accounts should be 'audited' this had not happened for the accounts presented at this AGM. The Committee had also not seen the final accounts before they were presented to the AGM and nor had the Club's Directors. There were errors in the income and expenditure sheet that was attached to the accounts that were first published for the AGM. The errors had been corrected in advance of the meeting, but had the accounts been 'audited' these would have been picked up on.
- c. It was important to have a third party 'audit' the accounts, rather than just the Treasurer produce them. This was likely to be particularly important if the Club got involved with schools canoeing.
- d. The role John Warren played previously was not to 'audit' the accounts. The Club has never had an audit. His role was to help prepare the accounts and act as an independent third party providing scrutiny. This provided some degree of assurance and protection to the Committee. It was good practice to do so. It didn't necessarily need to be someone external to the Club, but it should not be a Director or a member of the Committee. Tom Sharpe agreed to try and identify a suitable candidate in advance of next year's AGM.
- e. There were questions about specific items on the income and expenditure sheet attached to the accounts. For example, why the 2017 figure included profit on Club kit sales but the 2016 figure did not. Guy Peters explained that the new accounting system meant some of the lines of income and expenditure were not directly comparable.
- f. The accounts had a very low figure for the fixed assets (e.g. Clubhouse, raft, and boats). This was probably did not reflect their actual worth. It was however very difficult to value them. The Club had trouble doing so years ago when it did not own the freehold to the Clubhouse during rent reviews. This was not a significant issue as the Club (as a company) did not have shareholders it had to account to.
- g. The regulations on what constitutes a 'fixed asset' had changed recently. This might affect the depreciation costs in the accounts.
- h. There were questions about the Eric Allen fund and why the Committee had not spent any money from this during 2017. The fund was a legacy left by a former Club member who requested that the money be spent on juniors. It was not a restricted fund and it was not binding on the Club that the money be spent in this way. It was shown in the accounts as a separate figure (£31,519) because the money was held in a separate bank account. In previous years, the fund had been used to

buy a junior K4 and for junior development events organised by Jeff Lindsay.

- i. There was a discussion about whether the Club should do more to encourage members racing. The Club only qualified for the Hasler final in fourth place, albeit members did compete in other races such as DW, the Hare and Hounds series, surf ski races etc.
- j. The Club did not make a significant profit from hosting races. It made most money from the Frank Luzmore K2, rather than the Hasler race (or the Hasler final this year). To date, the Club had tried to keep the entry fees low to encourage people to race. Other clubs did the same. Richmond did however have higher costs than some other clubs, for example paying the PLA for the river closure. The Club could charge more including (perhaps) charging members less to race than people from other clubs. There was a balance to be struck between the need for members to help organise the race and having them race themselves.
- k. There was a discussion about the possibility of the Club getting local schools involved in canoeing. No decision had been taken yet by the Committee. In part, it depended on whether the Committee thought this was a good way of getting more junior members or whether the sole aim was to raise money. It was likely to involve significant amount of work, including ensuring that the Club was up-to-date with whatever additional requirements the schools might require. The Club had done this in previous years, they were mainly council run courses in the summer holidays. Another option for growing the junior members was a targeted approach. A potential downside of schools canoeing is that this might mean there had to be restrictions on members use of the Club, and the changing rooms, when the schools were using it. There was a question about how important new junior members were for the future of the Club, as there was a regular influx of novice adult members.
- l. There was a discussion about the coaching costs for 2018. Most the costs for 2017 had been spent on the 'performance' junior group. The juniors do not pay extra for this coaching. Not all the members of that group were under eighteen.

Item 5: Membership Secretary's report

5. (A note on membership numbers was handed out before the meeting.) Tom Sharpe said this was self-explanatory and highlighted the current membership of 378 and the membership at the end of the last membership year (October 2017) of 412. The Club had a high turnover of members each year.
6. Tom Sharpe said that there was no proposal to change the membership fees for the next membership year (beginning October 2018).

7. The Committee did however propose to make a change to the renewal process. The current process is that new members pay the full membership rate on joining. Their membership fees for the following year are then paid pro-rata, with the amount owed depending on when they joined the Club during the previous membership year. The Committee proposed changing this to new members pay a pro-rata amount when they joined, until the end of the membership year. They would then pay the full amount for the following year.
8. The Committee also proposed to introduce a £50 joining fee for all new members. The following points were raised in discussion:
 - a. An alternative was that juniors should not pay this fee and only the parent joining would pay.
 - b. Another option was that social members should not have to pay the fee, given they were (predominately) adult members who were parents of juniors and not using the Club themselves.
 - c. In part, the aim of this proposal was to put off any prospective members just joining (at the pro-rata rate) for the summer and then not renewing (at the full rate) in October. Including a joining fee would, hopefully, ensure that only those who were likely to renew joined.
9. Following the discussion, Tom Sharpe revised the proposal: only adult members should pay the joining fee. But this would apply to all adult members, including social members.
10. The motion to change the renewal process (paragraph 7) and introduce a joining fee (paragraph 8) was approved. Tony Waszkiewicz proposed it and Roly Lucas seconded it.

Item 6: Election of honorary members

11. The current holders of the following positions and their successors were nominated for reappointment as honorary members of the Club until the 2019 AGM:
 - a. PLA Assistant Harbour Master - Recreational (Darren Knight)
 - b. MP for Richmond (Zac Goldsmith)
 - c. President of Twickenham Rowing Club (Paul Davis)
 - d. Group Scout leader – Petersham and Ham Sea Scouts (Karin Noble)
 - e. Chairman of Kew Bridge Canoe Club (Steph Aldridge)
 - f. Commodore - Twickenham Yacht Club (Mark Marston)
12. The motion was approved. It was proposed by Simon Wood and seconded by Sharon Waszkiewicz
13. The following who have given long service to the club are nominated for appointment as Honorary Members until the 2019 AGM.

- a. Peter Davey
- b. Wendy Dodson
- c. Ramsey Gohar
- d. Brian Greenaway
- e. Doug Parnham
- f. Trevor Wetherall
- g. Roxanne Dunne

14. The following are nominated for appointment as Full Members on an honorary basis until the 2019 AGM:

- a. Peter Barnes
- b. Hazel Greasby
- c. Richard Gayton

15. The motion was approved. It was proposed by Lucy Ross and seconded by Alex Flockhart

Item 7: Election of the Committee

16. The following members were elected to the Committee for 2019. The motion was proposed by Hazel Greasby and seconded by Simon Wood.

Position	Post holder
Commodore	Tom Sharpe
Vice Commodore	Nick Garner
Treasurer	Guy Peters
Secretary	Mike Pigott
Membership Secretary	Lizzie Broughton
Rear Commodore	Robyn Von Maltzahn
Marathon Secretary	Richard Hendron
Coaching Representative Novice	Jemima Johnson
House Steward	Tony Waszkiewicz
Harbour Master	Tom Walker
Boathouse Secretary	Peter Barnes
Volunteer Coordinator	Will Abson

17. Tom Sharpe said there was a new role Committee Role of Volunteer Coordinator. The aim of this post would be to implement the same approach (of using lots of volunteers) for other areas of Club life, as was done at the Hasler final. Members would be more aware of opportunities to help and be thanked for doing so.

18. Hazel Greasby said that several Committee members changed posts over the course of the 2017-18 membership year. If this happens in future then the Committee should inform members of the changes.

19. Catherine Pickering volunteered to act as the interim Club safeguarding officer, as Anna King had stood done.

Item 8: Any Other Business

20. Eva-Maria Griesbaue asked about progress on fixing the floor in the ladies' showers. Tom Shape said that the contractor had provided a quote two weeks ago. This was the next job the Committee would focus on. The exact timeframe was still to be confirmed. Fixing the men's showers took about ten days.

Mike Pigott
Secretary

ANNEX A – Commodore’s report

The Hasler Final of 2017 was the event that brought the club together. Once again the Richmond spirit was strong with over one hundred club members contributing to the running of another successful event. Despite not winning this competition for a few years, we are now known as a club that can run these big events well, and a large part of that reputation is down to Will Abson. Will is stepping down from the role of organising club races, and has set the bar very high for whoever replaces him.

A different club competition that we did win last season was the MacGregor Sprint Championships. This victory, our third in the last four years, now takes our total to 10 since the competition was first introduced, and means we are the joint most successful club at this championship. The depth we have from juniors to masters, canoes and kayaks, in crew boats and on our own has been the strength that has brought so much success.

We all know this club is run by volunteers and without the time everyone puts in there would be no club. Events like the Hasler Final show what can be achieved when everyone is working in an organised way, and the committee are hoping we can extend this organisation to more general club activities. Will is taking on a new role of Volunteer Coordinator, with the task of making enabling any member to easily identify tasks they can help with around the club.

Since the last AGM the club has become part of the Jack Petchey Award scheme, thanks to some hard work from Ludy Hills. We have already been able to announce three awards to junior members: Marko, Maia and Max, and one leadership award to Peter. Our membership of the scheme has been renewed and the junior coaches will soon be seeking nominations for the next set of award winners.

This year has seen the successful implementation of our new membership system, and this has helped us have the best renewal rate for a long time. Often we have to chase non-paying members throughout the year, but this year we had the vast majority of members up to date by January. At the last AGM our membership report showed us as having 307 paid up members, whereas this year we are now at 378.

Last year I brought a proposal to the AGM to pursue an idea of building a mezzanine floor in the Blade House boatshed for the purpose of adding a space to relocate our paddling machines. Progress on this has been slower than I hoped for but there are some updates I want to share. First of all following the discussion at the last AGM where concerns were raised about the air quality potential for rat infestations we make some changes to the design. The mezzanine will now have walls that extend up to the ceiling of the boatshed with doors at either end where the stairs will be. The long wall facing the river will have opening windows to allow natural air and light in, and there will also be air conditioning to provide heating and cooling. Separately I have been in discussions with the residents of Blade House, where some of the residents committee have not approved of the idea citing requirements of our lease that would prevent us doing this project. I have had advice on this and in fact there are no such restrictions on us. Finally, my expectation that this will be fully funded by grants is still the case, but with updates to the design and therefore cost this has not yet been finalised.

Last summer we took the decision to employ two paid coaches, Gabor and Marcus, who we pay for a combined total of 13 hours a week. They had both been British Canoeing employed coaches until this time last year, when funding was withdrawn from the club coach programme they were employed under. Gabor has taken the lead on running the performance junior group, and sets them a programme of up to twelve or thirteen sessions per week. This gruelling training regime is producing results, with countless national championship winning performances, international selections and even a couple of World and European Championship medals. Paid coaching is a model that almost all top performing canoe clubs are now adopting, and I think will become a standard arrangement in clubs serious about producing high end talented athletes.

Looking ahead to the rest of 2018 there are a few things that me and the committee are currently working on:

We are conscious of requirements to make clubhouse improvements, and this will be starting with the ladies changing room where similar work is required as was done in the men's

We are looking at options for a new coaching boat, designed to give off little wash, while being able to keep up with our fastest paddlers.

We are planning to develop links with local schools, in order to create a pipeline of new talent.

And finally I will be in discussion with British Canoeing about their Partnership Club Programme. This is a new programme that British Canoeing are rolling out, and Richmond has been accepted as one of the first clubs to be signed up. The focus of this programme is for British Canoeing to be able to give support to clubs, both financially and through other services, and is something I am keen to make the most out of. There will be meetings to discuss the content of this partnership in May, and I will update the club on what we agree.

Commodore's Award

This year I am using the Commodore's award to draw attention to two members who have made a continuous contribution to junior coaching for several years, but are perhaps less well known than some other coaches. These two members have been described by Lucy as "the most steadfast part of the junior coaching team, who fish children out of the river, adjust their footrests and provide self-knitted hats after they capsizes". This year's Commodore award goes to Nic and Caroline.

ANNEX B – Treasurer’s report

What we have tried to do with this year’s accounts is simplify them as far as possible so that they are understandable by those of you – probably most of you – who aren’t used to reading accounts. We’ve also tried to give you a more detailed breakdown of where we’re generating revenue and spending money.

It has to be said that my first attempt at this wasn’t entirely successful – whilst I got the accounts that we’re legally obliged to file correct – in putting together the final version late one night I managed to miss out a line of revenue and three lines of costs and transpose the wrong total into the final version of the Income and Expenditure Analysis. My excuse is that I’m currently juggling 3 jobs – excluding this one – but that doesn’t really excuse a few simple errors that I should have spotted – but which luckily Hazel spotted before this meeting.

I’ll go through the accounts as they’re presented for statutory purposes and then get to the detail at the end – which is more revealing and helpful in understanding our Income and expenditure.

I should make the point that whilst we’re trying to look at the club in a more business-like fashion, we’re not trying to run it as a for profit business. But we are trying to ensure that we

- i). cover our operating costs out of current income;
- ii). maintain the club itself and the club kit in good condition;
- iii). comply with modern health and safety requirements; and
- iv). make sure that we continue to develop the club for the future – which encompasses the club itself, the kit and the paddlers.

1. Income & Expenditure Account

Page 3 of the Accounts shows our Income and Expenditure at a very high level. I’ll get on to the detail at the end – but the headline is that whilst we generated quite a lot of revenue last year, we still made a c£2k operating loss.

Given the changes we’ve made to the accounting policies, that is a real cash loss, not just an accounting figure because this year we stopped depreciating the assets we have because they are already in our books at a value substantially below what we consider to be their true value.

The actual loss was mitigated a little by the interest we earned on the cash we hold – which I believe to be largely the result of legacy donations, although I haven’t analysed the history to any degree to be entirely sure. In practice I don’t think it matters because in my view we shouldn’t be using accumulated cash balances from the past to pay our year to year running expenses, although I have no objection to using that cash for investment purposes e.g. acquiring new boats or equipment or developing the building for example – things that will benefit all members for years to come.

2. Balance Sheet

Page 4 of the Accounts shows our Balance Sheet. A balance sheet is supposed to show what we own at a particular point in time – taking into account any liabilities we have at the same time. The date in question here is 31 October 2017.

As a lot of people find this quite difficult, I'll explain it briefly. The Balance Sheet should be looked at in two halves – the top and the bottom and the bottom half should equal the same as the top i.e. it needs to balance.

The top bit is relatively easy to understand as it comprises our assets and liabilities, the bottom labelled Reserves is effectively just accounting convention – you can't actually find the figures anywhere in e.g. a bank statement.

Fixed Assets at the top is the value of the tangible things we own – detailed in Note 5 on page 8. The figures to look at are the net book values at 31 October 2017 – the rest is just history and doesn't even necessarily reflect initial cost.

Looking at that we have 5 categories of things we own:

- i). By far the largest of these is the Freehold – the building we're in now - and the Boathouse improvements – the long leases we have on the boatsheds and the things that were done to create the club when we acquired the freehold initially in about 2003 I think. The net book figure of £218,064 is, I'm sure you can all work out, an extremely conservative valuation of what we own.
- ii). Next is Canoes – in fact mostly kayaks – valued at £5,092 in the books but conservatively definitely worth a significant multiple of that figure.
- iii). Rafts, Safety Boats and Fixtures and Fittings are collectively in the books at £251 all together – and undoubtedly worth more than that.

Current Assets mostly comprise the large legacy cash balances we have, but includes just over £11k of cash subscriptions that we received just before the year end for 2018, plus some small debtors and pre-payments – adjustments in relation to bills we've paid which partly relate to the 2018 year.

Creditors are the £11k of cash subscriptions received early for 2018.

Reserves are the tricky accounting bit of balancing the balance sheet – the idea is that if you have net assets they must be represented by something. The reserves we used to show were split between various historic funds but we've decided to change the description this year and categorise them only into two funds – the Eric Allen Legacy which had a specific purpose to benefit junior development and a general fund for everything else.

3. Detailed Income & Expenditure Account

In this presentation on page 9 I've tried to show some more of the detail of our income and expenditure. With some of these there are always allocation queries – these are the sum of hundreds of journal entries and sometimes there is some debate about which go where but generally the picture should be accurate.

I have split the **Income** by type.

Subscriptions and Rack fees are fairly self explanatory.

Course Fees is from adult novice courses and the junior course we ran.

Race Entry fees are the fees we have received for the races we ran at Richmond, including sponsorship, car parking revenue, etc.

Galley income is almost but not quite pure galley profit.

Club kit sales is vests, t-shirts, sweat shirts, etc.

As for **Admin Expenses**, a couple of highlights –

Repairs and renewals – we have a historic building which is used frequently and intensively and needs a lot of maintenance. The largest item last year was the men's showers, but this year the ladies needs doing, the galley is looking a bit tired, some of the galley equipment is getting old, some of the boathouse doors are in need of maintenance, etc, etc. Large expenses are likely to be a regular feature of our P&L for the foreseeable future in my view therefore they cannot be viewed as one offs.

Race event expenses – shows the net result for the three races we ran in 2017: the Luzmore, the Richmond Hasler and the Hasler Final netted us a grand total of £3,600 of profit. The races were run very well, we wanted to do them and we didn't intend to make much out of them but we are undoubtedly operating on very slim margins – as much as anything down to where we are, what we need to pay for support and increasing health and safety considerations.

Coaching, safety and training – expenses here reflect an increased investment in coaching but also the costs of first aid and water safety courses for voluntary coaches. Necessary where we're earning course revenues.

Water, power, heat and light – expenses here show the significant costs we bear for operating a club that is often used across a 16 hour window at least 5-6 days a week.

Depreciation – as flagged above, we dispensed with a depreciation charge this year and will probably do so well into the future given the real values of the assets we own.

Social Events – you can see that we actually lost a small amount on social events, partly because we ran a reward event for Richmond race volunteers from the Hasler Final with a subsidised bar. These events are meant to be

socials not fundraising and I think we would rather generate income elsewhere than try to generate any profit from what should be fun events.

Club Kit Sales – you can see that we're sitting on stock significantly in excess of sales, some of which has since been sold since year end but there is still a decent supply available for sale for this season so please buy some new kit if you need it or have a particularly old and shabby club

ANNEX C – changes to the constitution agreed