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Niagara Falls Curling Club Meeting Minutes

December 21, 2021

Call to Order

A meeting of the NFCC Board was held on Tuesday, December 21, 2021 through a Zoom format. The meeting began at 5:07 pm and was chaired by Board President, Jackie Lynch.

Attendees and Regrets

Directors in attendance included:

Jamie Brunaccioni, Randy Elliott, Claire Fish, Stephen Fish, Jeff Glover, Schelley Hiebert, Jackie Lynch, June Lumber, Spencer Maves, Rob Walters and Tim Williams.

Regrets: Karen Willams

Staff in Attendance

Sean Ford

Approval of the Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting was made by Spencer Maves and seconded by Tim Williams. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Draft minutes for the October 18, 2021 & November 15, 2021 Board meetings were distributed prior to meeting.

A motion to accept the October 18, 2021 Minutes was made by Tim Williams and second by Spencer Maves. Motion carried.

A motion to accept the November 15, 2021 Minutes was made by Tim Williams and second by Spencer Maves. Motion carried.

Draft minutes from the November 22, 2021 AGM meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. Board members did not have any revisions or additions for the draft which will be presented at the 2022 AGM meeting.

New Business

Board Executive Elections:

Jackie Lynch discussed the up-and-coming Board elections (for executive positions). Current Club Bylaws address the general election of Board members but fail to identify the process for the Board to elect directors to executive roles that include Board President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

A draft procedure was circulated prior to the meeting on the process to elect directors at the next Board meeting. Directors were in favour of the procedure which will be followed at the next Board meeting.

Interested Board members should submit an expression of interest (EOI) to Jackie Lynch at least 10 days prior to the next Board meeting which is tentatively scheduled for January 10, 2022. If necessary, an internal election will be held to fill each open position. Further comments and questions should be directed in Jackie Lynch.

Covid 19 Evolving Guidelines:

Jackie Lynch suggested the guidelines be discussed during the Curling Affairs report by Spencer Maves.

Business Arising from Minutes (Via Jackie Lynch)

Jackie Lynch led the discussion on the following items:

AGM of Monday, November 22, 2021:

Reported the meeting had excellent attendance, and feels this represents the membership's interest in the Board and Club along with activities and planning.

Open House at the Club:

An Open House was held on Saturday, December 4, 2021. Attendance was less than ideal but everyone who attended had a good experience. Covid may have influenced attendance. Jackie recommends hosting future Open Houses.

Committee Reports/League Reports:

Jackie acknowledged the early submission of Committee Reports by Board members. Submitting Reports prior to meetings allows Board members to review information and prepare for discussions. This will also assist in reducing the length of Board meetings.

New Year's Day Bonspiel:

Due to Covid restrictions, this event may not proceed. We are monitoring the situation.

Valentines Bonspiel:

The event is sold-out with 24 teams signed up. We are monitoring the situation given the increasing number of Covid cases. The event is currently scheduled for February 12 and 13, 2022.

Manager's Report

Club Manager, Sean Ford, provided the following updates:

Membership continues to slowly grow. Current membership is estimated to be 269 (this includes the Girls Rock Program participants.)

Increasing Covid numbers (Provincial numbers reached 4,177 cases as of Sunday) has brought new restrictions to the Club. Changes for the Club include:

- 50% reduction in building capacity which must be posted;
- Bar sales must stop by 10:00 pm;
- Lounge must be close by 11:00 pm; and
- Lounge table capacity is capped at 10 people/table

Further restrictions are expected from our Regional Health Department under Section 22. Other clubs have chosen to close this week and reopen in January.

Until otherwise notified, January 4th marks the date when the enhanced QR code is the only evidence that the Club will accept to confirm fully vaccinated status.

Thanks to Schelley Hiebert for compiling our COVID-19 records and cross-referencing them with our membership database.

The new 'Point of Sale' (POS) system continues to be programmed. The official launch date for use will be announced. The ProShop and Shrimp Sales will be added, and the system will be linked to Club's QuickBooks, inventory/supply, card processing (with or without internet), scheduling and ordering.

Ice-Plant: Gordon Wight's work has been completed with labelling on the machinery as required by TSSA regulations. System is running well.

Some of the side boards have rotten sections which are contributing to debris on ice. It is recommended that board be replaced to prevent debris on the ice.

Sean extended a 'Thank You' to Jackie and Steve Murphy for cleaning the running bands on all the rocks after the first week of curling.

Ordering beer for the bar will be placed on hold until the leagues are back in place in the new year. Wine inventory is high. Wine will be offered for sale to club members at cost to reduce inventory. Interest should be directed to the Bar. A sign will be posted at the Bar.

Committee Reports:

*Finance Report: Jeff Glover provided an update as follows:

- Bank/Cash \$112,641
- Income \$ 99,947 (total)
- Expenses \$ 86,476 (total)
- Profit (YTD) \$ 13,471
- Short term debt \$ 8,500
 - (OCA loan) \$ 6,000

- OCA Fees \$ 2,500
- Long term debt \$121,000
- Gov't loan \$ 40,000 (payable December 31, 2022)
- Debentures \$ 81,000 (to be paid out over 14 years)

Jackie shared that 7 names are planned to be drawn for debenture pay-outs in January, 2022.

Jackie discussed the OCA loan which has \$6,000 remaining to be paid back to the OCA. The final payment was due in May 2021 but was deferred due to COVID-19.

It is uncertain if OCA will permit the final payment to be extended again due to COVID-19. Further discussion on these topics will be held during the January 2022 Board Meeting.

Facilities: Tim Williams provided an update as follows:

Tim reported that the Club's 'street sign' is deteriorating, and is not expected to last very long. Tim and crew attempted to update the sign with a vinyl overlay, but the existing features (lumber and frame) are no longer viable. The sign will likely not survive a strong storm. This situation might present an opportunity to look at new options for roadside signage.

Ice Shed column supports need reinforcement. Tim reported that Dave Grimo is looking at the support and reinforcement options.

The ice shed end wall is significantly discoloured (upper section). Tim indicated he did not think it was a hazard but that the discolouration might be a form of mould. Tim suggested that a closer examination of the area is needed to determine next steps. He anticipates the area will need to be scrubbed, prepared for painting and painted at the end of the curling season when scaffolding can be erected.

Tim also discussed the side-boards in the ice shed as mentioned during the Manager's Report. He indicated that the wood is splitting and debris is present, and suggests that

a plastic product (puck board) be researched/used to address problem(s) and protect wood. If applied, life of the boards will be extended and wood chips from boards would cease.

Jackie indicated the Board will need to make future decisions regarding these pressing issues. Sean will conduct further research. Estimate cost of \$650 for steel and braces.

Jackie asked Tim to investigate the costs/options associated with a new street sign. This presents an opportunity to consider a sign that is modern, stable and lights-up for improved viewing from Morrison Street.

Communications: Stephen Fish provided an update as follows:

- Social media posts continue. 200+ posts, with approximately 820+ followers.
- Stephen participated in a radio interview to promote the Club with Rod Mawhood of NewsTalk 610 CKTB (Niagara Sports Report) on December 4th. The interview was later used to create an article in the December 10th of the Niagara Independent.
- Bethlehem Housing has written a press release promoting the Club's new junior league and donation by teams to Bethlehem House in lieu of a participation fee. It has also been shared on their social media. Feedback has been very good.
- \$115 of budget spent on online advertising during the past month.
- Promoting Christmas Gift Certificates for Learn to Curl sessions on social media and website.

Curling Affairs: Spencer Maves reported the following:

2021-22 season began November 29th with success. Appreciation is extended to Sean Ford and other club members for achieving ice installation.

A new Linked-In page has been created, and Spencer is working to remove an old Linked-In page that was created but never used. Please search for new site and add to your network to help promote new page and Club visibility.

Lynne Coull (OCA – Curl On) sent an email update addressing new protocol including the January 4th date for QR codes.

COVID-19 Update- As of December 17th, lounge capacity has decreased to 50% capacity but ice shed capacity is not impacted. Signs should be posted for Club members to reinforce important directives.

Spencer reiterated restrictions including:

- 10 persons per lounge table
- 10 pm final sale of alcoholic beverages
- 11 pm closure of lounge

Further discussions on restrictions will take place at the January Board meeting when more information is known and schedules are confirmed.

Jackie suggested making available sheets on given nights (such as Monday) to those members from other evening leagues who do not wish to curl the late draw. This will allow member to curl earlier and take advantage of the lounge after their game.

Spencer reiterated that our public health department may apply further restrictions under Section 22. We will monitor and shared when such details are known.

Continues to plan Learn to Curl events with dates and times to come (once further restrictions are known). Volunteers will be needed for these events. Gift Certificates for Learn to Curl are being offered for sale through the Club's website and social media channels.

A Trivia night is being planned for the new year. Date will be confirmed once COVID-19 restrictions and regulations are known.

Men's Provincial Tankard Qualifier is taking place at the Welland Curling Club on January 7th to 9th. Good curling to watch. Please promote to Members. Please note, date of event may change due to COVID-19 situation.

List of OCA Playdowns:

December Playdowns 2021

- Ontario Winter Games – Dec 10-22
- Master Men and Women – Dec 15-19

January Playdowns 2022

- Ontario Scotties – Jan 5-9
- Wheelchair – Jan 13-15

February Playdowns 2022

- Ontario Winter Games – Dec 10-22
- Master Men and Women – December 15-19

March Playdowns 2022

- Senior Mixed – March 11-13
- Silver Tankard – March 25-27

April Playdowns 2022

- Silver Tankard – April 2-3

Spencer updated the Board regarding introductory discussions with the City of Niagara Falls to host a profession curling competition. More information will be provided in the new year on possible options which would likely be in 2023 or 2024.

Spencer provided the Board with 3 revised Club logos to be considered in refreshing the branding of the Club. Logos were well received by Board.

A motion to commission a new Club logo was made by June Lumber and second by Randy Elliott. Motion carried.

Thank you, Spencer, for taking the initiative and starting the process to refresh the branding of the Club.

Stephen Fish suggested that a second logo (without words) might also be considered. This idea was well received by the Board and will be considered during the refreshing of the brand.

Strategic Planning Committee: Rob Walters provided an update as follows:

Rob advised that the Strategic Planning Committee will be establishing various committees for the strategic plan roll-out in the new year. Tracking sheets will be used to gage progress.

Implementation of the Plan will include:

- A webpage on the Club site to track/demonstrate progress has been created (www.niagaracurling.com/strategic-plan)
- A visional profile/poster to promote the Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles (posted in common area of Club lounge)
- Committee(s) developed to engage and lead social media, communications, events, fundraising, marketing, recruitment and maintenance project

Success of the Plan will be based upon the effective engagement of members who are able to contribute time and expertise.

Rob Walters also provided a further update on the situation regarding COVID-19 and the Omicron variant.

According to a report that Dr. Hirji, Niagara's Acting Medical Officer of Health provided on Friday to Regional Council, it will likely take about 6 weeks to complete the third booster rollout. The Omicron wave is expected to increase cases significantly after the Christmas holiday and cases will likely peak in mid-January. The entire wave is likely last for 6-8 weeks. Leagues may not start as planned on January 3, 2022. The start time could be pushed out in late January and possibly into mid-February.

Jackie Lynch suggested that the Board take a 'wait and see' approach while following the updated restrictions and guideline. Further discussions will be held once more information is available.

Section Reports

Day Men's: Randy Elliott reported the 10 am start time has been well received and is working well. He estimates a 60% membership for Monday and Tuesday. Christmas bonspiel was a fun day with \$200 profit that was donated to the kids' programs.

Day Ladies': June Lumber reported that the Poinsettia Fundraiser was extremely successful raising \$1250.00 for the Club. Group is considering a spring/Easter/Mother's Day plant fundraiser.

June raised concern over the mats located at the end of each sheet. She described them as shedding and unsafe. This problem was discussed a few years ago but mats were not replaced.

Karen Williams provided the following report which Jackie Lynch read:

Monday Night: Starting week 4 with 6 teams (12 partners). Teams will be shuffled after January 3rd and a new schedule will be created.

Tuesday Night: Starting week 4 with 14 teams. Reindeer Games is scheduled for this week and will have 1 draw because teams have withdrawn. All games will begin at 6:30 pm.

Ice conditions have been great. Hacks have 'popped' up (especially on glass side of sheets). Appears only to be a few hacks.

Curlers have requested that garbage cans be brought back to the ice shed. Some curlers are picking up small 'bits' on the ice and dropping them on the end carpets because garbage cans are not easily accessible.

Another request is to have the broom racks and tissue holders returned. At present, Club brooms are displayed in a large garbage can.

Brodie: Jamie Brunaccioni stated there were no issues with the Wednesday night league and everything is running smoothly.

Youth Curling: Claire Fish provided the following update :

Everything is going well. John Darch (parent of Carter Darch) has donated 20 brooms for youth curlers and has sponsored the snacks for Little Rocks.

Girls Rock:

2 weeks of the program and things are going well. A number of coaches come out to help and include Nicole and Chris Young, Jason Jackson and Mike Pozzebon (parents). Approximately half of the kids are new to curling.

Junior Curling:

2 weeks of the program. There has been strong growth – with 17 registered. Jason Jackson is running the Junior program this year and is looking for help with coaching. Due to the number restrictions, we can only have 2 scrimmage games running after instruction and drills.

Junior League:

New league hoping to start in February 2022. Teams will come from all over the Niagara Region. An anonymous donation from a member and funds from Curling Canada and Sr Men's Section will assist in upgrading the team shirts to sweatshirts.

Other Business

None

Acceptance of Reports

A motion was made to receive all presented reports by Tim Williams and second by Spencer Maves. Motion carried.

Adjournments

A motion to adjourn was made by Stephen Fish

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

Next meeting scheduled for January 10, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. Zoom/location TBD.