

The Fort William Curling Club and Athletics Club

Membership Meeting Minutes

Date | time September 28, 2023 / 7:30pm | *Meeting Number* Semi-Annual | *Location* FWCC Lounge

Meeting Call to Order - Kevan Stranges - 7:32pm

Minute of Silence for Departed Members - Kevan Stranges

Welcome and Recognition

Past Presidents: Ken Kopechanski, Denise Hardy, Rick Sutton, Stan Nemeč, Dave Kawahara, Sam Barbisan, Jack Kallos Jr., Kris Woznesensky, Terry Douglas, Alf Childs, Ellie Stecky, Ron Campbell, Ed Wakewich, Fred Coulson, Peter McCallum, Ron Babcock, Jack Kallos Sr.,

Life Members: Dave Forester, Heather Houston, Lorraine Lang, Diane Adams, Tracy Kennedy, Gloria Taylor, Pat Moran, Tom Tod, Al Hackner, Rick Lang, Bob Nicol, Bruce Kennedy, Ian Tetley, Pat Perroud, Jack Kallos Sr.

Honorary Members: Peter Hnatiw, Jason Repay, Aaron Skillen, Scott McCallum, Trevor Clifford, Eva Wilson, Bob Kosloski, Warren Johnston, Dave Buttars, Tracey Larocque, Samantha Morris, Corie Adamson, Rebecca Carr

Acceptance of Minutes - Semi - Annual Meeting April 27th, 2023

Motion: Fred Coulson Secunder: Ted Baker **All in favour**

Acceptance of Agenda - Semi Annual Meeting September 28th, 2023

Motion: Tricia Sampson Secunder: Ken Yanishewski **All in favour**

Business Arising from Semi - Annual Meeting April 27th, 2023

Committee Reports

1. Finance - Ken Kopechanski

- a. **Year End Financial Statement - Susan McCutcheon** - Susan reviewed annual finances and remained for any questions, no questions were asked in regards to finance to Susan.

As you've just heard from Susan, we had a pretty good year last season, financially.

It looks like we've finally turned a corner and can successfully run the club without the subsidies required during the COVID shutdowns, which were major sources of revenue during those seasons.

However, we are also going to have some fairly large equipment repair and replacement items in the near future to keep our curling ice in good shape and improve our club facilities. We are doing our best to secure grant funding for as much of that as we can, but the Club will likely have to cover some of these costs, so any surpluses we have recently accumulated will help with that.

On that note, I would like to recognize Dave Kawahara, as chairperson for the upcoming 2-Person Stick Provincials, for his efforts in pursuing numerous grant applications to various agencies in support of this event. This will leave a legacy for the Club, in the form of new equipment, as well as raising our profile in the community. This is just another example of how we can benefit from hosting these major competitions, even though it may mean having to give up some of our curling ice time.

The last item I would like to point out is that our Bar revenue, together with rent for the Kitchen, made up over half of our Gross Profit last year, so are obviously an important part of our business. We really appreciate your patronage at the bar and the kitchen and hope to continue to delight you and your friends and family while serving you this season and more. There has also been a considerable amount of behind-the-scenes work invested on the bar and lounge area over the summer, and I understand still more to be done, but I want to acknowledge the efforts of Justin, Bob Dykes, Kevan, Tricia and their other helpers for the time they have spent planning and doing this work in time for opening this season. It is definitely time and money well spent and appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Kopechanski

2. House & Facilities - Stan Nemeč presented by Len Hunt

Welcome back for another year of fun, friendship and curling at FWCC. You may notice my absence but my speech is still the same length as usual. Sorry to the person who is reading this on my behalf. After three years of waiting. I have finally had one of my total knee replacement surgeries done on my left knee at the Dryden hospital on September 18th which is the reason I am not here today.

Facility improvements have been happening to some extent all summer. A famous un-named but much appreciated volunteer along with Justin have done many maintenance and painting tasks for the club over the summer as was Dave Forester and his 1016 paint and maintenance crew helping to repair tiles, washrooms, paint and miscellaneous items both inside and out throughout the club.

Brent & Justin must be busy installing the ice after a slight delay with the mining and exposition show that was just held at the Gardens and the Curling Club. Thank you to both these individuals for the time and effort they put in every year to get us ready for the start of the curling season.

New parking signage is in place or will be shortly to keep our parking lot open for our patrons of the club and kitchen

Tricia and her marketing & branding committee have been working over the summer to revisit our image and appearance to be more receptive to our curlers and guests. This is a multi-year work-in progress initiative to modernize our club and lounge, Many of you may notice some of the changes to our facility and more are planned.

The board has chosen a facilities team of myself, Bill Nigro and Ken Yanishewski. I would like to thank this team and those volunteers from our membership that helped with many tasks and maintenance needs that occurred this summer and early fall. The club would be lost without your efforts and support.

The FWCC board is committed to moving the club forward in trying to bring in new members and showcase what an excellent facility we have. We hope to present our vision to the community of what a jewel our curling club is and can be even better with some hard work, will and vision.

Hope to see you soon and wish you all a great curling season ahead.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stan Nemec

3. Membership - Dan Desautels

Hello Everyone,

Welcome back and I hope you all enjoyed your summer. As part of the cabinet shuffle this year, I've been asked to take the lead on the membership committee. So I'd like to give a quick update on how we're doing so far and some of the changes you'll see this year.

Registration for all leagues started online on August 1st this year. Thanks to Tricia's Facebook posts, we got off to a great start with online registrations. We also hosted a registration night last Thursday and it was nice to see familiar faces as well as some new faces coming in to chat with us about what we have to offer.

As you may have heard at our April AGM, we have brought back our Doubles League to compliment Open League on Mondays. Doubles is scheduled for 5:30 and Open League will start at 7 pm. Our Saturday Wreck-reational league is back. This time for a full season. And we have a series of Curling 101 sessions and Adult Learn to Curl posted starting in October.

So far, we have:

14 Open League teams and 9 Doubles teams on Monday,

12 Open League teams Tuesday

24 Open League teams on Thursday and

12 Wreck teams on Saturday.

I'll let Chris speak to Mixed and Stick League numbers, but registrations are looking good from what I've seen.

We've had over 200 registrations across all the leagues already online but there are still many teams with only 1 or 2 members registered. So please remind your teammates that everyone needs to be registered before they step on the ice on opening night on October 10th. And if possible, do it online. It completes your waivers and saves Justin and our bartenders time and a lot of paperwork. If for some reason you can't pay online, you can still pay at the bar by using the "At the Club" payment option on checkout. And those of you who don't have anyone from your team registered yet, please do so asap. I'd like to have our exhibition weeks for Open posted

before the long weekend. We have 11 more days until opening night and we'd prefer not to be altering draw schedules last minute.

I'd like to introduce Len Hunt, one of our new board members and a familiar face to most of you. He will be helping with Open League draws this year. So thanks to Len for volunteering and go easy on him!

Speaking of volunteers, you may have already noticed some of the changes here in the lounge area that some of our board members and volunteers have worked hard on this summer to freshen things up and make things more inclusive and inviting for everyone. You may be wondering where the draw schedules will go. But don't panic, they will still be posted in the lounge on the board near the ATM for marking results. However, we will be removing team contacts and phone numbers so we can comply with the privacy act since the lounge is a non-member area of the club.

We do realize that team and skip contact information is vital for communication purposes for opposing teams – so for now, we will send a private email to the skips with the contact lists for their leagues. The league coordinators will still have their number on the draw sheets if needed. We are looking at options for setting up user account access to the website and other software options for managing draw schedules, results submission and team contact info. We hope to have something to test and update on at some point this season. Finally, I should also draw your attention to the page in your handout with the "Upcoming Events" list for 2023-24. Mark your calendars now because it's going to be a busy year. Bonspiel season starts with the World Series on November 3rd. You'd better register now before it's full. The Heritage Classic is our first Doubles spiel since 2019. We have send offs for Team Bonot and Team Despins. We will be hosting the first ever Stick Provincials. And the Ontario Winter Games will be here in February. Then we wrap up with the Power of Hope in April.

Sounds like a lot of fun to me. So have a great season everyone and we'll see you on the ice.

Respectfully submitted, Dan Desautels

4. Bonspiels, Social Events & Fundraising - Chris Schiiler

Fellow Members,

Bingos have been going well. We need more volunteers. We have 12 at the moment. It's nice to get more volunteers so we can schedule one member once over 3 months and so on. These bingos are great for money income for the club. Anyone interested please let me know.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris

5. President's Report including Bar Report - Kevan Stranges

Semi-Annual Sept 2023

President Comments

Good evening and thank you all for taking the time to attend our meeting tonight. A big thanks also goes out to my fellow board members for their reports and support.

For those of you that may have missed our April AGM, we have two new board members to welcome to our team. I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Len Hunt and John Hari. I think I speak for everyone when I say we appreciate you stepping up to fill these vacancies and look forward to what you both will bring to our team. We've included an outline of the board of director positions as part of the package you received today.

Well, here we are yet again. The bittersweet feeling between our two seasons, summer and winter. Last season was certainly a busy one and I expect nothing less from the upcoming year ahead. On top of our regular events, this season our club will be hosting the Wheelchair Provincials, Ontario Winter Games and the brand new 2 Person Stick Provincials. I'd like to take a moment to recognize and thank Dave Kawahara and Ken Kopechanski and their team on the work they have done to both secure and begin to plan the 2 person stick provincials. We've also included this seasons Events Schedule as part of your package this evening.

The marketing committee has worked hard over the summer, along with the support of facilities committee and volunteers, to make some improvements to our facilities! They are starting the process of creating a more welcoming and fresher look to our lounge – as you can see the bar has been painted, and our World Championship Banners have been relocated to be the focal point coming off the elevator.

As you may have also noticed, we have removed all memorabilia around the club to start the process of digitalizing the material. The goal of the committee is to create picture panels of our notable, current and upcoming members, and champions past and present to help showcase the deep curling roots that our club offers. They are also focusing on the fun and recreational aspect of curling along with community involvement. We have secured a photographer that will help develop the panels as well as take some random and organized pictures this season.

We're also working on upgrading our website for next season which will help streamline some of our operations – and provide some new features to our membership – including a nifty app to access draw schedules!

The committee has been in contact with other clubs who have gone through similar changes to move into a more digital and modern display – with emphasizes of preserving our history and traditions. The committee plans to call a meeting to invite all past presidents to explain the ongoing plans and hopes to interview each of them to gather relevant information that occurred during their presidency.

A big thank you for all the great work from the Modernization committee – incl. Tricia Sampson, Kate Dwyer, Diane Imrie and Heather Houston. Additionally, none of this facilities work gets done without the great support of our volunteers. Thank you to facilities committee – Stan, Bill and Ken, with special thanks to Bobby Dykes – who has spent a ton of time at the club over the summer always helping with our requests or finding something to improve. Bobby also did a great job painting the bar. As always, much thanks to Dave Forester and the 1016 paint crew who do a great job year-over-year making our club sparkle!

A couple of weeks ago our own facilities along with the Gardens were rented by the Mining Exposition. This provided the club with some extra revenue, and we have high hopes that this event will continue in future years each September. Special thanks to kitchen for providing food services during the event and to Dykes and Wozzy for running the bar during the event.

I'm happy to announce that our Board of Directors have started a Diversity, Inclusion and Equality Committee. This committee is being led by Tricia and Len. The goal of this committee will be to review our current policies and programming, help educate our existing membership of the current challenges, as well as to broaden our image to include all newcomers – those of all ages, backgrounds, identities and so forth.

As you can see from the financial report, our business has shown another positive year – backed mainly by increased revenue from the bar, events and bonspiels, an uptick in membership and increased dues compared to the previous season. We hope to continue that positive momentum into the following season.

With that in mind, I've challenged our board here with some primary objectives over my expected term as president.

#1 Growth

When I refer to growth, it's on numerous fronts. While we need to remain diligent and find new and innovative ways to draw members into our existing leagues and events, we also must challenge ourselves with new revenue opportunities – whether it would be leagues (like Wreck League, Doubles, Triples), events like the Power of Hope or even new hosting and rental opportunities.

Additionally, we're also focusing on our own growth within our board of directors. On top of having two new individuals this year on our team, almost every committee has someone new to each committee this season. Those that are leading a committee have been encouraged to always share what they do, their processes, and decisions within their groups. Growing the skillsets amongst our team ensures we are setup for success in the future.

#2 Our Work with our Sponsors & Partnerships

Simply put we need to ensure we are always looking for new sponsorship and partnership opportunities. Our marketing committee has been developing a sponsorship/advertising package alongside Justin & Brent to help showcase some of these opportunities to our prospective sponsors.

At the same time, we also want to ensure we keep good-standing relationships with our existing sponsorships and partners.

#3 Modernization

This one is relative to the look and feel and culture around the club. We need to keep the foot on the pedal in terms of the great work the marketing committee has begun to deliver. While we remain diligent to the standards, traditions and culture that goes hand-in-hand with curling and its clubs, we also need to break through some barriers – bringing us into the digital era, supporting creativity and an updated culture that can bring new business through our doors.

I strongly feel that placing emphasizes on these items will help us remain successful over the upcoming seasons. We have an extremely talented board of directors team that has proven their capabilities to deliver outstanding results.

With that - I would like to thank all of my fellow board members for their support – without you we would certainly not be as successful. I would like to thank both Brent and Justin for their tireless efforts as the ice is being installed. A huge thank you to Justin, as per usual for everything you do for this club. Justin is a man of many-many hats around the club – from an Ice Technician, to an Office keeper, Facility Coordinator – and on some days even a firefighter. Justin puts his heart and soul into this place, so next time you pass him make sure you remember to say thank you!

Finally, I would like to mention a special thanks Trish for all of her efforts as our Vice President. For any of you that have had the pleasure of working closely with her, you would know she is one-of-a-kind. Thank you for all of your support – between yourself and Justin you sure make my role a lot easier!

That's it ~ I look forward to seeing you back on the ice.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevan Stranges

Call for Acceptance

Motion: Fred Coulson Secunder: Gail Overall **All in favour**

New Business

1. NOCA Awards - Trevor Bonot presented on behalf of NOCA the following awards:
 - a. Club of the Year

- b. Volunteer of the Year - Kevan Stranges, Andy Davidson
- c. Lifetime Member - David Forestor

Items from the Floor

None

Motion to Adjourn

Motion: Rick Sutton Second: Sam Barbisan **All in favour**

Meeting Adjourned at 8:10 pm