



Ontario Fencing Association AGM
Sunday, September 23, 2018
Fairview Library Mall Meeting Room 1
35 Fairview Mall Road

Minutes

Attendance List

Name	Representing
Lucie Hamelin	OFA President
	Metroblades
	Stratford Fencing Club
Michael McDonnell	OFA Treasurer,
	Newmarket Fencing Club
	Trent Valley Fencing Club
	Kingston Fencing Club
Bogdan Damjanovic	OFA Secretary
Thomas Nguyen	Officials Committee Chair
	University of Toronto Fencing
Howard Simmons	OFA Director, Toronto Fencing Academy Sword Players
Fidelia Ho	OFA Director, University of Toronto
Alice Lu	Canadian Fencing Academy
Allan Fein	McMaster Varsity Fencing
Brendan Thomas	Excelsior Fencing Club
Carol Christie	Mustang Sword Club
	University of Western Ontario
Dan Banks	Axis Fencing Club
David Howes	Cutting Edge Fencing
Francesco Sabatini	Toronto Fencing Club
Patricia Howes	Queen's Fencing Club
	Royal Military College of Canada
Sam Hardwick	Ryerson Fencing Club
Pat Wong	Scarborough Fencing Club
Perry Stevens	Beaches Sabre Club
Kristina Han	Officials Committee, OFA Admin
Prahalad Donny	Humber College Intern
Brad Winder	Western University
Gabby Weisz	Veterans
Max Brinck-Croteau	Tech Director and HP Committee
Nader Abdelkader	Vango



1. 8:45 Registration Opens – Pre AGM Meet & Greet
2. 9:30 Welcome
 - i. Call to Order and President's Welcome
 - ii. Introductions of Board and Staff
 - iii. Roll Call and Credentials

25 votes total. Quorum reached (minimum 22 required).

3. 9:35 Approval of Agenda as presented & Call for other business

Motion: *That the agenda of the 2018 OFA AGM be approved.*

Moved by Dan Banks, Seconded by Bogdan Damjanovic. **APPROVED unanimously.**

4. 9:36 Follow up on 2017 Vulnerable Sector Representation

Many other sports have regulations and rules in place for interaction with the vulnerable sector, aka young children. The OFA asked in previous years for a voluntary background checks for individuals involved in working with the Vulnerable Sector. Reception and communication has been low. This year the OFA has asked for this to be no longer voluntary. The CFF has engaged Sterling BackCheck - \$25 processing fee. Many of the universities already need it, the Coaches Association of Canada also requires that members do a background check. The OFA does need a record of this – not extraneous but a record at the OFA that coaches have done so. Note that police checks are required for specific affiliations, and cannot be copied as legal documentation.

Suggestion to also add a checkmark for all applying/renewing coaching membership that they acknowledge that a background check is required as a coach. Additional suggestion that everyone who is involved in an OFA-affiliated event (like Ontario Winter Games) must have a background check to ensure that staff are checked.

Enforcement – how does the OFA enforce this? OFA risks losing provincial funding if we are found liable. Need to know what Sports Ontario and OFA Insurance is capable of checking and how much is required.

Motion to make Background Checks by Sterling BackCheck or another satisfactory service provider (updated every 3 years) mandatory for any coach that works with the vulnerable sector.

Moved by Dan Banks. Seconded by Patricia Howes.



Discussion – How do you define Coach? Any individual who works with the vulnerable sector should either be a coach or be working under the supervision of a coach. It is up to the judgement of the club, as the owner/coach is the supervisory role that is ultimately responsible for the vulnerable sector.

Vote – unanimous. Motion Passes.

Further Discussion – repercussions of not providing background checks for coaches working with the Vulnerable Sector. Suggestion that all club coaches and members are no longer a member of the OFA and CFF – no access to membership or insurance, within 2 months of the new season (by **September 30th** of the season). Current year will be by **November 30th, 2018**. OFA will also send a reminder to all members 15 days prior to the season deadline.

OFA to recognize a list of clubs who have provided these background check and host it onto the OFA website – only those clubs who are approved will be listed.

***Summary** – Starting in the 2018-2019 season, the OFA is mandating that all coaches (as defined by any individual who work with, or supervises individuals who work with members of the vulnerable sector) undergo a background check. Background checks can be done through the CFF partner [Sterling Talent Solution](#), or through another satisfactory service provider. For more information on this partnership, please refer to the previous posting found [here](#).*

*Documentation is to be provided electronically to the OFA for record-keeping, and updated every 3 years, by **September 30th** of the current season. For the 2018-2019 season only, clubs are required to provide documentation by **November 30th, 2018**. Documents should be sent to web@fencingontario.ca as well as secretary@fencingontario.ca. Failure to comply will result in a) the removal of the club list from the OFA site, and b) removal of all coaches and members from the OFA/CFF membership list, and c) removal of access to club insurance through the OFA until such time that documentation is received by the OFA.*

Starting in the 2019-2020 season, a check-box will be added to the Club Renewal Form that indicates the club is aware of this requirement. The OFA will also send a reminder to all member clubs 15 days prior to the season deadline.

5. 10:20 Committee Presentations

i. Coaches Committee – Patricia Howes

Chair: Patricia L. Howes Ch.P.C. Accepted to the Chair position at the OFA AGM 2017

Committee Members: Kamil Karbonowski, Edward Ip, Paul Godin, Peggy Porter (resigned) seat is open

Tasks Accomplished in 2017-18

- Provides updates regularly to OFA Technical Director and OFA President – ongoing
- Terms of Reference for the Coaching Development Committee (CDC) – still waiting for input
- Chair wrote job descriptions for HP Weapon Leaders for the HPD Program – fall 2017
- Made contact and began discussions with CFF Coaching Coordinator Ildemaro Sanchez & Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) Fencing Consultant Marie-Pier Charest
- Began canvassing people at fencing tournaments for the CDC – winter 2018
- Call out for membership for the CDC – spring 2018
- Chair wrote updated content for the OFA Coaching pages of the OFA website – spring 2018 **including the Vulnerable Sector Background Check link**
- Coordinated with the CFF Coaching Coordinator to bring an English version of the French Pilot of the new Instructor Beginner Course (IB) to Ontario – winter 2018
- Ildemaro Sanchez, David Howes & Patricia Howes co-delivered the first IB Pilot in English at RMC in April and May 2018. There were 19 participants. All OUA connected coaches (either head coaches or assistant coaches) received \$300 in OFA funding to attend the course. There were some translation issues with the course, and many suggestions for amendments. Ildemaro has been working on incorporating these since the spring. Once the IB Course has been amended & edited, then it will be sent to CAC & Marie-Pier Charest for final CAC approval. Once CAC approved the IB Course can be delivered across the country.
- Learning Facilitators Course – LF Course was delivered by the CFF at Brock University post national championships. Attendance was from across Canada and 15 participants were from Ontario. Those who were recruited and received prior approval were given coaching development grants to offset the cost of the course. The goal was to encourage current experienced coaches to take the next step to become Learning Facilitators
- **“Coaches Corner”**, which is a Facebook Group for fencing coaches in Ontario fencing was launched. It is a meeting place for sharing ideas & tips, best practices, upcoming events, coaching jobs, and a networking hub for anyone coaching fencing in Ontario.
- CDC Conference Call was held June 18th, 2018. The Chair reviewed the status of coaching development in the province, new ideas were shared, tasks were divided up, and members are working on their specific areas. We will have another CDC conference call this fall.
- Two clubs, My Fencing Club and Vango, have requested Community Instructor and/or Instructor Beginner Courses to be offered in the GTA. I have consulted with Ildemaro and both courses are not quite finished, and still need to have CAC approval. He has assured me that once this is completed then the courses may be launched in Ontario. The course will be monitored and mentored by Master Learning Facilitators Ildemaro Sanchez & David Howes, and delivered by two of the new Learning Facilitators in Ontario. Katya Belkina has voiced an interest in being one of the LFs for the course. A second LF still needs to be identified.

Future Work

- The OFA urgently needs an up to date database of all active coaches and their official coaching education and certification. The CFF has asked for this info and there is currently no up to date

database. The CAC database info is very out of date, as it includes many coaches who no longer are actively coaching or who are deceased. CAC has been updating the certification and education of coaches with NCCP numbers and has been transferring over credentials into the new NCCP system since last year. The OUA keeps records of all coaches working in the OUA League, so this is at least a place to start, as there are 13 OUA fencing programs. There are many club coaches working in Ontario with no certification, outdated certification, or foreign certification that need to be accounted for to give the OFA a better picture of the current situation. The process for foreign-trained coaches to receive certification is posted on the OFA coaching page. The coaching equivalency information was provided by the CFF Coaching Development Coordinator. This information is important, not only for provincial programming, but also for Sport Canada, Coaching Association of Canada, and funding opportunities. It is also important for future national level programming such as Canada Games and the CFF is currently re-applying for inclusion in future Canada Games – growth and linkage between Ontario Games, Canada Games, Pan-Ams, etc. Finally, from a marketing standpoint, it is important for the PSO to have qualified, certified, and up to date coaches delivering fencing programs across the province.

- **Allen Feine** will send raw data information to both Max and Patricia
- **Patricia** will also work with **Kristina** to generate a survey for all OFA members and coaches to generate/update a current list of coaches and certifications/equivalencies
- New content for the Coaches Corner FB Group, new content for the Coaches Page on the OFA Website
- Consolidating the Terms of Reference for the Coaching Development Committee -
- Complete training for the Ontario Master Learning Facilitators, Learning Facilitators and new Instructor Beginner Coaches
- The CDC welcomes requests, ideas, and any content related to the profession and practice of coaching
- September 22-29 is National Coaches Week across Canada. Remember to thank a coach today. If you use social media the hashtag is #thankscoach

Dr. Hugh Munby – head coach of Queen’s Fencing Club for a long time. He is currently in palliative care with health complications. QFC is currently looking for a new head coach.

ii. Competitions Committee: Kristina Han in Tim Stang’s absence

Active committee sanctioning events – the OFA competitions calendar is full, and there are a few weekends with more than one competition. The committee works with competition organizers to avoid this situation, and if not possible, to ensure that there is little overlap in the pool of attendance. They are aware and acknowledge that this does split resources, but are hopeful that the conflicts are minimal. The focus this year is to ensure that all sanctioning parameters are met, including proper medical staff on site and proper floor plans.

iii. Complaints and Discipline Committee



Christopher Kalantzis – Chair has stepped down as he has moved out of province. The Committee is currently looking for a new chair and the call for Chair will send out after the AGM. No complaints this year.

iv. High Performance/Quest Committee: Maxime Brinck-Croteau

Committee was created in 2016 in parallel with the QfG program to give athletes more resources (camps and clinics) to achieve their HP goals. All athletes are invited but targeted towards those competitive in Cadet, Junior and Senior categories to train together. We have doubled in HPDP membership in this second year, increasing the number of training camps. Second year also provided subsidization for out-of-town athletes to ensure that athletes who wished to attend could. Current year will include an increase of clinics and camps, separating the weapons to increase weapon-specific training. Clinics and camps will also be incorporated together to reduce the travel time required for athletes and to build in break-time for the participants. Looking into consolidating HPDP/HPP/Club camps into one to hopefully lighten the load for athletes and parents.

Youth HPDP is also being developed in parallel with the HPDP – run at the same time as the HPDP programs, but targeted at the youth group to generate high performance from an early age. The goal is to be able to develop both streams in the future that makes sense for both Youth and Cadet/Junior/Senior competition season.

v. Officials Committee: Kristina Han in Thomas Nguyen's absence

We have added a new member – Adrien Sparling to the committee as Piotr Pilaszewich has resigned. Ontario's official program is the only one in all provinces that is accepted and recognized by the national refereeing program as an entrance acceptable level. The current list of active officials has been updated, and reflect those who have been active in the last two years.

Query regarding Armoury Certification process: is in progress, committee hopes to post a clinic announcement in the winter.

vi. Veterans Committee: Lucie Hamelin

Two co-chairs: Ann Jolly and Vera Belaoussouf (congratulations from Gaby Wiese- CFF Veterans Chair). Members are Rob McLean, Maxime Brinck-Croteau, and Kyle Foster. Replaced chairs after two years of inactivity. Maxime: small update regarding the planning for this year (clinic in east, west, and central).

vii. Youth Committee: Lucie Hamelin

Youth Committee has been a little delayed in activity with switching from Ontario Summer Games to Ontario Winter Games – resulting in 6 months less of qualifications. The timing in March also did not help with planning the dates, as well as the lack of points associated with the competition. Calling upon clubs to encourage developing athletes to go as a team-building



experience and a first look at how the Canada Game and World Games are structured. Suggest a “countdown” at the Ontario Provincials for Summer/Winter Games.

Addition – Proposal for New Committee – Medical and Health Committee (Nader Abdelkader)

Nader has been working for the past few years as the Medical person for competitions, as well as leading clinics on sports training, preventative training, health and wellness. Committee would be tasked to oversee all medical and health-related interests affecting fencing in Ontario, and tie the requirement for medical personnel with the sanction categories that are already in place. Developing a list of medical individuals accessible the same way as the Officials Committee will also aid Organizers in planning competitions. Committee would also engage and promote professional health workers to support athletic development.

Suggest to add a list names of certified individuals as part of the club list during the Club Membership Renewal/Registration forms.

Motion to create a Medical and Health Committee, with the goal to create medical policies and outreach that supports athletes, coaches, and competition organizers in their training and development.

Moved by Dan Banks. Seconded by Patricia Howes.

Discussion – Promoting professional health services within the community to address injury prevention and management – perceived Conflict of Interest, possibly. There will also been a call out for committee members as well. Also consider adding mental health section. Suggest also to add some inter-disciplinary and athlete/organizer/coach input (possibly through the Competitions and Coaching Committee). Comments and advice to go to n.abdelkader21@gmail.com.

Motion passes unanimously.

6. 12:00 to 12:55 PM Lunch Break

7. 12:55 President update – CFF AGM updates

New CFF President – Jackson Wang

New Board Members – Yann Bernard, Jean-Marie Banos, Paige Backman, Dmitry Balashov, Frank Meunier.

CFF is now operating on more transparency – meetings are now open to all PSOs.



New priorities – grow CFF membership to 20,000. Currently under 5000 overall. OFA wants to grow but also retain their membership over the long term. First to determine what is required by PSOs to achieve said goal.

2019 – Year of Development in Fencing, also the 40th anniversary for the OFA as an association. Welcome to discussion on how to reach this goal.

Increasing Membership - School Programs

Ontario only has a few full-time fencing jobs/career paths. First goal is to create a need for the school programs and fill it with coaches. Currently have two programs running that need a coach/individual, and soliciting more throughout the province. Max is looking for anyone interested in teaching full-time with school programs around Ontario, and is hoping that the word can be spread through clubs to see if anyone is interested. Current impediment is finding someone to fill in after-school teaching position as it is before all work is finished. The OFA needs to know what is existing out there to support, promote, and grow the programs.

ONSite Education (8-12yrs of age) – Friday fairs that does medieval-themed fairs at schools with fencing being the most popular activity. Tim Svidnitsky also goes into schools to run a PE class.

Suggestion for going into Elementary Schools instead of High Schools as the parents are still somewhat involved. Retention rate for high schools is low after one week of classes – continual exposure may change that. Suggestion also to tap into the Physical Education programs and teaching programs in Universities so that graduates take that to their future placements. Problem is also how complicated fencing is and how “inaccessible” it is – make it more fun and more “watered down” to make it is a sport just like any other sport.

PE Teacher training - implement the program into their own classes and loan out equipment kits. There needs to be a basic fencing program framework that teaches the fundamental technical pieces of fencing – all encompassed into the Community Instructor program.

The PSO must communicate to the NSO that the **Community Instructor** program is critical in growing fencing in Canada.

Promotion and marketing – in the works with one marketing firm to determine how to reach the mass media.

Increasing Membership – Reexamining Membership

What’s the incentive for getting a membership? Olympic/National athlete visit? Link it to QfG or sponsorship programs? Funding for rent, equipment, coaching clinics, etc.? What is the incentive to move from Rec to Comp? Should Associate memberships be CFF members? Should there be a new membership category?



Increasing Membership - Recreational Clubs

. There is a large group of fencers who just want to have fun. Conventions? Clinics? Friday night Chat night, Friday night fight night. Promote it through media – star wars, medieval fencing, theatre shows, video to show the kids what they've done. Multi-club space (longsword/kendo) to also increase exposure in membership.

Value, incentive for recreational circuits – Div II/OCC circuit? It'll help with pre-competitive section of fencers.

Increasing Membership – Qualification Pathway

Tap into the kids and parents who want their kid to go to school through fencing – distinguish between competitive and recreational teams. University kids – want to get into Med or Ivy schools – letter of recommendation.

How to get people in the door, and how do you retain the number? Is it more important to hit 20,000 members or to hit less and keep the numbers? Fitness Centre model – quantity vs quality. Low membership fee, revolving door model. Value for their fees and getting the word out – fencing may need to work that way because we have a limited number of coaches and experts.

New Business Plans for Clubs

Max has been in communication with Humber College Internship Program. Operation Manual is in progress – what are the roles of fencing coaches, referee, etc. Business Plan Manual for how to start a club from different backgrounds and with different goals, including resources from the community.

New Club Opening

Financially risky even knowing that memberships are coming in, so if there is some financial support for opening clubs then there's more incentive to start.

8. 14:22 Budget and Financial Report (Michael McDonnell)

In the 2016-2017 year – both ED and Treasurer left the board without supplying the full set of information required for auditing, including two different PayPal accounts as well as three accounts under the OFA name, and no one appears to know what is going on. Those issues have now been resolved. Goalline is now one avenue of revenue – the OFA portion goes directly into one of the OFA PayPal accounts. Auditors review and gives one of three opinions – Unqualified (no issues), Qualified (some issues), No Opinion (cannot compute). OFA is currently sitting at Qualified, and Michael is working towards an Unqualified opinion. The current auditing procedure is also much more rigorous than previous years. OFA has turned



a profit in the last two years – our programs are either sustainable or making a profit, and competitions are generating more revenue. Membership is also drastically increasing to generate revenue. Large chunk of Operation cost was reduced due to the separation of full-time ED and travel to two part-time TD and AD with more local controls. Final statements will be sent to all clubs once completed.

Discussion to create invoices to track referees and officials for competitions and clinics – can create template invoices for officials and staff.

Motion to continue using Norton McMullan as the OFA auditor for the 2018-2019 year.

Moved by Michael McDonnell. Seconded by Allen Fein.

Motion passes.

9. 14:48 Approval of Membership Fees

Motion that membership fees for the 2019-2020 be accepted as-is.

Moved by David Howes. Seconded by Allen Fein.

Motion passes.

10. 14: 51 Election of Officers

i. First Vice President -Three Year Term

Nominees – Howard Simmons

Motion to elect Howard Simmons as First Vice President for another three-year term.

Moved by Lucie Hamelin. Seconded by Thomas Nguyen.

Motion passes.

ii. Treasurer – Michael McDonnell

Nominees: Michael McDonnell

Motion to elect Michael McDonnell as Treasurer for another three-year term.

Moved by Carol Christie. Seconded by Dan Banks

Motion passes.

11. 14:56 Other business



Selection of 2019 AGM dates – Sunday in September, later in the morning. Explore the option of Teleconference.

12.15:00 PM Adjournment

Motion that the AGM be adjourned.

Moved by Dan Banks. Seconded by Fidelio Ho.

Motion passes.

Minutes approved by:

Lucie Hamelin

President OFA