



Draft Minutes of the 62nd Annual General Meeting

of Canoeing Ireland – 12th June 2023

Hybrid Meeting – In Person Sport HQ and Via Zoom Webinar

1. President's Opening Address and Report

The 62nd Annual General Meeting of Canoeing Ireland was opened by the President, Lynda Byrne at 7.00pm.

The following Board members were present and were introduced by the President to the attending members – Lynda Byrne (President), Marcus McInerney (Honorary Treasurer), Brendan Quinn (Independent Director), James O'Connor (Non- Olympic Discipline Rep), John Murray (Executive Member online), Heather Wilson (Executive Member, online), Colette Lawlor (Munster Rep, online), and Moira Aston (CEO) was also in attendance.

The President welcomed all members to the AGM and confirmed that Canoeing Ireland are legally entitled to host an AGM via conferencing and that the meeting will be recorded. She advised the members that the AGM is being held within the required timeframe as set out in the company's constitution and rules.

The various methods of interaction and voting were explained to and tested by delegates.

President's Report

It has been a great year for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Not only do we now have a gender-balanced board but we also have more women members and more participation by women at many of our events. We have been asked by the International Canoe Federation to host the first International Women's Symposium, to bring together women in paddle-sports across the globe. This event will be held in September 2023 in Dublin and we expect over 100 women worldwide to come along. It is an exciting new event – we'll have inspirational speakers, action-based workshops, discussion forums and lots of opportunities to network with like-minded women. Our intention is to showcase what we've achieved in Ireland so far through our work with the Bridge the Gap Programme, give participants a sample of Irish Culture, help them to see what they are capable of and give them the impetus to make that happen.



We have created a series of Paddle-able videos showcasing the interests and journeys of our ambassadors. These will be rolled out over the next few months. We are also working with National Rehabilitation Centre to help give people with disabilities an option of canoeing as a sport they can get involved in.

Our events and focus have changed from being Dublin-centred to being more geographically spread. Our Instructor Symposium, the first of its kind for many years, was held in Gartan, Donegal with 56 instructors taking part. We've been in discussions with Mayo Sports partnership about creating a hub in Castlebar and we're recruiting a Paddle Sports Officer to head up this important new venture as we speak. Our Board and our staff are spread across many parts of the country. Board meetings are run on Zoom to make this change happen.

The Sea Kayak Award Review Group did a huge amount of work to develop a brand-new award scheme for sea-kayaking in Ireland. They've started by rolling out the Levels 1-4 Sea Skills Award. This brings together the best up-to-date thinking in awards schemes.

The Canoeing Ireland Club Coach Award has been developed over many months. We're working with Sport Ireland to roll this out during the summer. This will give many clubs, qualified coaches, to work with both their junior and senior members and should encourage more participation.

We rolled out some new constitutional changes for Discipline committees during 2022, updating and streamlining terms of reference and standing orders. We continued this process of updating and improving our governance by working on a new constitution to bring our documentation up to date and more easily understandable. This was ratified at our EGM last month.

Our flagship event, The Liffey Descent was moved from September to May to get better and more reliable water levels. 6th May was a bright and sunny day, with very high participation and perfect water levels. Here's to many more like that.

Last week we're sad to say, we lost one of our previous board members, Kevin Murphy. Kevin was a member of Salmon Leap, an active sprint and marathon paddler since the seventies. He was Team Manager at 4 Sprint World Championships and Olympic Sprint Team Manager at the Atlanta Olympics in 1996. He was one of our Board Members for many years in the 1990's, as well as being Sprint Committee Chairman. He will be a sad loss to his family, friends and to Canoeing as a whole. Rest in Peace Kevin.

In May this year, we were short-listed in 3 out of 8 categories in the Irish Sports Industry Awards, including best NGB. We were the most nominated out of the 100 NGB's. We didn't win any of them

but to be in the top 5 in 3 categories was a proud moment for us all, and there's always next year! We were described that night as 'a small NGB punching way above our weight!'

On a personal note, many of you know I've been on my own Cancer journey this year. I want to thank all of you for your unwavering help and support. It showed me just how amazing our paddling community is. Because I had the support, I was able to keep paddling even through the worst of the treatment, the Board and staff turned out to events which I'd normally have been at and took on all sorts of extra work and you, the members, sending all your best wishes kept my spirits up no end. More than anything, it shows what a fantastic community we have, one we should cherish. Keep reaching out in all disciplines to give what help and support you can, to anyone who is having a difficult time. We are more than a community of skills – we are a community of people. Let's work to keep it that way.

More than ever, we have a strong team in the office, headed up by Moira Aston, our very able, enthusiastic and professional CEO. The significant changes we've made over the past year just wouldn't have been possible without the commitment, creativity and hard work of the entire team who are a credit to us.

As always, you, our wonderful team of volunteers continue to make great things happen on the ground. A huge thank you to all of you who give so much of your time to help our sport to grow and flourish and for good things to happen for so many people. I know you do it because you love helping others and you are passionate about the sport, but you also do it because you care. Thank you.

2. Roll Call

All members in attendance were invited to respond to a roll call and confirm the votes associated with them.

3. Apologies and Correspondence

Aisling Hoey (Honorary Secretary) informed the meeting that no apologies or correspondence were received.

4. Adoption of the Agenda for the 62nd Annual General Meeting

The following Agenda for the meeting which had previously been circulated to members was approved by the meeting.

1. President's opening address and report.
2. Apologies and correspondence.
3. Roll Call
4. Confirmation of the Quorum for the 62nd Annual General Meeting
5. Adoption of the Agenda for the 62nd Annual General Meeting.
6. Adoption of Standing Orders for the 62nd Annual General Meeting.
7. Adoption of the Minutes of the 61st (2022) Annual General Meeting.
8. Adoption of Minutes of the 2023 EGM.
9. CEO's Report to include Anti-Doping Report from Jon Mackey.
10. Presentation and adoption of the draft Audited Accounts for 2022.
11. Appointment of Auditor.
12. President's closing address.

5. Adoption of Standing Orders for the 62nd Annual General Meeting

Under rule 10.7, the standing orders were adopted by a majority poll.

6. Confirmation of Quorum

Sheena Carroll, Canoeing Ireland Operational Support, confirmed that the roll call has confirmed that in line with Rule 10.8 a quorum has been reached. (58 Delegates: 18 Clubs)

7. Minutes of the 61st Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the 61st Annual General Meeting which had been circulated to Members were approved by the meeting without amendment (proposed by Kris Kohls (Slalom Chair), seconded by Brendan Quinn (Independent Director)). There were no matters arising.

8. Minutes of the 2023 Extraordinary General Meeting

The minutes of the 2023 Extraordinary General Meeting which had been circulated to Members were approved by the meeting without amendment (proposed by James O'Connor (Non-Olympic Discipline Rep), seconded by Kris Kohls (Slalom Chair)). There were no matters arising.

9. CEO's Report

2022 was a busy year for the organisation. The annual report will give you a detailed update on progress, so, for tonight, I will focus on "the main points of the news" and give you a summary of what we have achieved and an overview of plans for 2023.



Membership

We have a goal of 5,000 members by the end of 2023. We are on track to achieve this, with new clubs forming throughout Ireland (9 last year). We have introduced a student membership option to support members in full time 3rd level education and we are working on new coaching awards and a coaching pathway for volunteers with a specific interest in competitive disciplines. The For the Love of It programme will underpin the coaching awards and give young paddlers the opportunity to try all of the activities our sport has to offer.

Communications & Connections

Our various social media platforms, website and monthly newsletters are our main connection points with members (other than the very popular phone call). In 2022, we had a 140% increase in Instagram post reach, 1,200 new followers on Facebook, 41% increase in average monthly view of our website and 9% increase in average monthly opens of our newsletter. As far as possible we try to include a balanced approach to performance, participation and inclusive events, always remembering that these channels are our shop window and support our ambition to grow participation and reach.

We also use these channels very effectively to promote safe practice. Please share our safety posts when they show up on your feed. We are aware that many people who take to the water are not currently members of the paddling community, so if you all share the safety advice you may help to save lives.

Facility Development

Facility development is a priority for Canoeing Ireland, which will continue beyond the timeline of the current strategic plan. Our goal is to ensure that facilities are available for a multitude of disciplines on a regional basis. We are currently working on development plans in Leitrim, Limerick, Galway and Clonmel.

Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)

We remain focused on our Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) responsibilities. Our work in this area is referenced throughout the Annual Report, however, given the significant global consequences of ESG, a specific strategy, with measurable goals, will be finalised this year.

We are committed to sustainable practices, fostering social inclusivity and upholding strong governance principles.



Canoeing Ireland recognises the importance of protecting and preserving our natural environment. In line with our environmental stewardship, we have taken several initiatives to minimise our ecological footprint.

We place a strong emphasis on environmental education and awareness among our members, through the Awards Scheme, National Campaigns (River Clean Up), and new programme offerings (Good2Go; For the Love of It). We aim to foster a sense of responsibility and care for the natural environment by promoting sustainable practices on and off the water.

Canoeing Ireland firmly believes in creating an inclusive and welcoming community for all individuals interested in the sport. We are proud of our efforts to promote diversity and inclusion within the canoeing community. We have implemented accessibility initiatives to ensure that people with disabilities have equal opportunities to participate in paddlesports. These initiatives include adaptive equipment, training programmes and partnerships with disability organisations.

We maintain a robust governance framework to ensure transparency, accountability and ethical conduct within our organisation. We have implemented comprehensive governance policies and procedures that adhere to best practices, covering areas such as board composition, conflict of interest, financial management and risk management. Canoeing Ireland expects all members, athletes, coaches, instructors and officials to uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct. We have clear codes of conduct in place which encompass fair play, anti-doping, safeguarding and respectful behaviour.

As we move forward, Canoeing Ireland remains dedicated to advancing our ESG efforts. We will continue to explore opportunities to minimise our environmental impact, foster inclusivity and diversity and to enhance our governance practices. We also actively seek feedback from our stakeholders to drive continuous improvement in all areas of our operations.

None of this would be possible without the huge team of volunteers in clubs and on various committees who continue to contribute to our sport. Finally, to the exceptional board and staff team, working together to deliver success.

RTP (Registered Testing Pool)

There are five Canoeing Ireland athletes in the Registered Testing Pool.

Discipline breakdown:

1 – Sprint (removal of POL)

4 - Slalom (addition of NH)

*one TUE applications in the last 12 months - International Testing Agency (Marathon)

RTP test totals

Period of report: May 2022 to 12th June 2023 (inclusive)

<i>Number of tests per agency</i>		
In-Competition tests (ICF/ITA)	Out of competition tests (NADO)	In Competition tests (NADO)
0	13	3

Sport Ireland (NADO) conducted doping tests at this year’s Liffey Descent. Two male (the winning K2) and one female (the first female in a mixed K2) were tested on site.

Negative test results

Canoeing Ireland issued 13 negative test result letters to athletes between 7th June 2022 and the 3rd of April 2023. All tests were marked as being ‘out of competition’.

Education

Canoeing Ireland hosted an online Anti-Doping webinar for all athletes, coaches and support staff on the 4th of February 2023. Sport Ireland facilitated this webinar. 92 members registered online for the course and 63 actually attended. The Canoeing Ireland ADO had to follow up with a number of athletes who failed to attend the course.

2023 was the first year that Canoeing Ireland built attendance at the anti-doping educational webinar into athlete eligibility clause in all Board approved team selection policies. Online educational webinars will remain part of the eligibility criteria for future policies.

There were no questions re the CEO Report or Anti-Doping Report.

10. Presentation and Adoption of the Draft Audited Accounts for 2022

The Honorary Treasurer, Marcus McInerney presented the 2022 Draft Audited Accounts which had previously been circulated to members. No financial questions were raised in advance by the members.

Firstly, let me open by thanking our accountant, Brendan O'Toole for the excellent work and support throughout the year, you make the role of Treasurer significantly easier.

I would also like to thank our Auditors KSI Faulkner Orr for their assistance.

Finally, I would Especially like to thank my team on FARC, (Finance, audit and Risk Committee) Aisling Hoey and Brendan Quinn for the ongoing work to ensure Governance requirements are reviewed, refreshed and fit for purpose in the ever-changing finance world.

Our full accounts are available online, and as an accountant I would enjoy nothing more than a 3-hour discussion on same, but sadly I only have a few minutes, so I have selected some key figures to give an oversight of the CI year from a financial standpoint.

As you all know, Canoeing Ireland is the NGB for promoting Paddle sports, and we operate as a Not for Profit with the goal of breaking even, all of the revenues we earn are put back in to paddling at all levels.

The first slide shows a return to activities post lock down, towards the back end of 2022.

But this hides the significant growth in activity,

From 2018 Revenues have more than doubled to now stand at 1.34m. 25% compound growth per annum. The productivity of the head office team in managing all of the activities is outstanding.

This growth and these revenue levels demand increased oversight and maintaining high governance standards. Sports industry Ireland recognise the efforts made by CI in this regard, with a recent nomination for a Governance award. However, as all stakeholders would expect, any drop in standards will negatively impact outcomes.

As last year, I have focussed on Liquidity metrics, as the key focus for a rapidly growing organisation.

Our standardised Balance sheet terms Debtors and Creditors are not Trade related, but refer to Prepayments and Accruals.

As our Revenue is significantly Grant based, and the nature of grants is that they are for a specific purpose in a specific timeframe, accounting treatment for Government Grants requires any unused



portion of a Grant by year end to be accrued and treated as either a prepayment or deferred in to the following accounting year depending on drawdown rate.

While some might reflect on the excess of Creditors over debtors as a cause of concern, the cash position of +475k at year end balances the liquidity profile to give reassurance that the company is liquid, solvent and functioning as a going concern.

Finally, I wanted to give a flavour of the revenue sources, as can be seen, we rely significantly on Grant aid.

It is a risk that we are tracking and any slippage in best practices would threaten that income stream. The CEO, staff and the board are also seeking other avenues to increase own source funding and generate revenues from activities.

I hope I have given a suitable overview within my allotted time.

There were no questions submitted in advance, if anything requires further discussion, please email me at Treasurer@canoe.ie.

Thank you.

The adoption of the accounts was approved and adopted by majority vote.

11. Motions & Rule Changes

There were no Motions or Rule Changes received for presentation to the AGM.

12. Nominations and Election of Members to the Board of Directors

There were no Nominations or Elections of Members to the Board of Directors.

13. Appointment of Auditor

The Board asked the approval of the AGM to appoint an auditor.

Approved by majority vote.

14. President's Closing Address

Thanks for attending this evening, and I look forward to seeing you in person over the summer.

The meeting concluded at 7.45pm