Victoria Regional Pickleball Association

Minutes

Monday, March 17, 2025

At Tessa Graham’s House

In Attendance

Roger Graves, President

Tessa Graham, Vice-President

Cathy Wong, Treasurer

Damaris Brix, Secretary

Rhea Athey, Director

Trish Fougner, Director (regrets)

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 p.m.

The minutes of the January 13th and February 26th meetings were approved for postings on the website. It was clarified that Rhea Athey will now be responsible for Facilities, rather than Cathy Wong. This change will be incorporated into the minutes.

**President’s Report**

* Roger advised that he has done interviews with CBC, CFAX, and Vancouver Island Pickleball primarily about the announcement of the new courts at Topaz.
* He has spoken with Brad Watson at Saanich Peninsula Pickleball about the feasibility of covering the Wain Road courts. However as there is no political will to do this, it won’t be pursued.
* Roger questioned what VRPA’s position is with private clubs such as Peninsula Community Pickleball Club, Shawnigan Lake PC, and Victoria Pickleball Centre. It was agreed that this would be discussed at next month’s meeting.
* Saanich is willing to allocate time to VRPA at the Fowler Park courts. This will have to be considered and whether we would like a similar arrangement with the new Topaz courts.

**Vice-President’s Report**

Tessa proposed that the honorariums paid to our tournament directors be increased. She noted that 2 years ago we paid a Pickleball Brackets expert $1,500 for the tournament weekend. After some discussion the following Motion was put forward by Tessa.

**That the honorariums paid to the Tournament Directors be increased as follows for 2025, with provision to review next year.**

**Berwick (1 day) Tournament $500**

**Christmas (2 day) Tournament $750**

**Macdonald Realty Classic (3 day) $1000**

**All in Favour**

The photographer will be given $250 in gift card or cash, and the event coordinator will receive $250 for both the Berwick & Christmas events, and $500 for the Macdonald Realty tournament. Everyone felt there was value in having a photographer.

**Equipment Manager**

Tessa proposed that VRPA needs one or two equipment managers. This position would do such things as track our equipment, create an inventory, develop a sign out system for the storage locker, and ensure that necessary equipment is available for the start of each program. While it is acceptable to give our 10 active coaches a supply of balls for their classes, it is not suggested that we do this for our Facilitators. The equipment manager would need to develop a process. Cathy has done an inventory of the storage locker. Tessa will draft a notice to members seeking volunteers for this position.

**Treasurer**

Cathy had previously sent out the Financial Report to the Board and there were no further questions.

Cathy would like to see the implementation of document templates for such things as tournament budgets, purchasing equipment, etc.

**Event Coordinator Duties Clarification**

Tessa explained that she is the Board Tournament liaison. She liaises with the tournament directors re pickleball brackets, prizes, balls, etc.

Cathy is the Board member responsible for liaising with the Event Coordinator. Until the event coordinator role is filled Cathy will do what is needed with Tessa’s assistance.

**Membership Report**

739 Active Members (475 Female, 260 Male)

504 Expired Members (29 of which are taking programs)

Roger will send out one last email to the expired members reminding them of the benefits of renewing. Those that do not renew will be removed from our database.

It was confirmed that former SPPA members need to join VRPA.

**Board Emails**

It was agreed that all board members should have VRPA emails. Roger advised that there is a way through Google to develop an organizational set of gmails. This is not a priority, but definitely worth pursuing.

**Google Docs**

The Board is moving towards storing documents on Google Drive. Roger gave a quick tutorial on how this works.

**Programming**

Rhea reported that she has analyzed the cost of our courses and found there is no consistency between what is being charged. She will report back at next month’s meeting with a proposal for course fees at each location. It was agreed that the price should be commensurate with the coaching level of the instructor.

There was a discussion on the fact that instructors at 1st Met are only comfortable coaching on 2 of the courts even though we are paying for all three of them. Roger and Rhea agreed with the coaches viewpoint, noting that for safety reasons at this level of play (balls rolling across courts) that only two courts are practical.

Starting with the next program registration people will need to supply their membership number in order to sign up. One of the benefits of belonging to VRPA is accessibility to our programming. Many non-members signed up this past year. Roger will send out a message regarding this and a link on how to locate one’s membership number.

**Issue of Levels**

Tessa reviewed the Pilot Program which was previously approved by the past board. Starting in September players at the 3.5+ level will be given the opportunity to register an “expression of interest” for instructional classes. The instructor will review the list, and identify the first 8 players that have the skill level required for the course, in the order they registered. Those individuals that are not successful will be given a recommendation on another class. There will be some difficult conversations, and Tessa will manage those. Hopefully this pilot program will address the problem of people signing up for courses beyond their skill level.

**New Facility Options**

Tessa and Rhea are meeting with Cayce at Victoria Pickleball Centre to discuss opportunities for VRPA to do programming there. Tessa will bring this back to the board.

Rhea is looking into options on the peninsula such as Panorama Rec, Centennial Park and the Air Cadet Gym. Any programs we could offer at these locations would be targeted for our SPPA members.

**Programmer Contract**

Rhea is the Board liaison for the Programmer position. She provided some feedback she has received on the position. The Board clarified the duties of the Programmer. It was agreed that the programmer should not be doing the invoices for coach pay. The coaches can submit their hours directly to Cathy for payment. Rhea will be creating the schedule for the fall programs, and the Programmer will input it into SignUp Genius and manage the registration. Rhea will be meeting with the Programmer to discuss expectations and to clarify roles.

**Communications**

Trish will be asked to come up with a brief on the benefits of joining VRPA for the next meeting.

Cathy clarified that the PCO insurance is only valid in club sanctioned events.

It was agreed that VRPA should have an Instagram account..

**Sponsorship Level**

Tessa has drafted some ideas on the differing levels of Sponsorship. The view is to be consistent with our various sponsors and what they can expect to receive for their sponsorship. Differing levels could include Event Sponsor, Title Sponsor, Court Sponsor, Medal Sponsor.

**Activating Youth Pickleball (AYP)**

Connie is managing the AYP program. The board agreed that ‘coaches’ for this program should not be paid. Only volunteers are needed, unless possibly for the role of coordinator.

The Board discussed having a presence at events such as the PISE Family Day, and the BC Public Service Day. Roger’s opinion was that outreach was important 5 years ago but is not so necessary now. We may want to put our energies into something else. The organization is maturing to a different level.

**Next Meeting**

April 14th at Rhea’s house.

Meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.