

Pickleball Canada
Interprovincial/Territorial Advisory Council
May 26, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Present at Uber Meeting:

Richard Chambers (Chair)	YES	Michel Legault (NB)	Regrets
Walter Knecht (BC)	YES	Pat Morrison (NS)	YES
Kirk Jensen (AB)	YES	Brian Strongman (PEI)	Regrets
Janet Bradshaw (SK)	YES	Leonard Lye (NL)	YES
Rose Sawatzky(MB)	YES	Sue Staffen (YT)	YES
Jim Parrott (ON)	YES	Guest: Jeff Rooney - Partnerships	YES
Bill MacGregor	YES	Guest: John Highland - Youth	YES
Robert Hogue (QC)	YES		

1. Call to Order

- Richard Chambers, Interim President, (PCO) called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm PDT, welcomed the participants, declared a quorum and appointed himself as recording secretary.

2. Adoption of agenda

- Adopt the agenda as circulated. Janet Bradshaw/ Bill MacGregor CARRIED

3. Acceptance of Minutes

- March 24, 2020 Meeting
 - Adopt the minutes of March 24, 2020 with a correction of the date to 2020 in item 3. Janet Bradshaw/Bill MacGregor CARRIED

4. Update on Changes to Pickleball Canada Board

President Doug Thomson and Vice President, Development Garry Wolfe have both stepped down from the Board. Garry is going to focus on the implementation of the Integrated Technology Platform and Doug is going to assist and support the Board in requested areas. Richard Chambers has been elected interim President until the AGM. ITAC wishes to extend its thanks to both Doug and Garry for their contribution to the development of pickleball across Canada.

5. COVID-19 Updates - restart of play

A discussion of the status of pickleball play restarting across the country was held. Most provinces highlight their situation in their reports. A couple of resources were mentioned: Hamilton, on PCO Facebook and Edmonton Pickleball Club on their website. As well, most provinces have resources on their website.

6. Provincial/Territorial Reports

B.C. (Walter Knecht)

As of this date we have about 50% of the courts or communities open for limited pickleball play outdoors. The 'limited' varies considerably from place to place. While our Public Health Officer has been fairly consistent in her message and the restrictions she has placed, our Government has been changing (and not yet finalized) their plans and procedures with respect to both

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general back to play guidelines and location specific guidelines. While many communities were working as early as May 1 and in a few cases late April, to get their courts open, our responsible Ministry issued preliminary information just May 14th. The agency viaSport was tasked with creating a single back to work plan to cover all 70+ sports in the Province, a plan that has not yet been approved and with no timeline for approval. Parts of their proposal are unfavorable to the culture of pickleball, removing all 'organized' activity and encouraging singles play and only with members of our small family circle. We have a lot of single or single pickleball player families. People are ignoring these guidelines (they are not in the public domain yet) and have been 'dropping in' and acting very 2019. Some localities have had warnings.

I have been and continue to work with Clubs and communities to detail guidelines specific to their locality for presentation to the civic authorities. Some civic authorities are hanging close to the viaSport guidelines and limiting court opening and play opportunities. Even though we are not a member of viaSport I am in communication with them for a specific variance for pickleball for when we are not enabling the controls a Club can place on play, we are in many cases violating even common sense.

What else?

As a result of Pickleball BC's efforts to assist with local get back to play assistance, I expect as many as 5 additional Clubs to join Pickleball BC. General membership renewals are still slow but since May 1 have picked up, along with over 150 new members signing up. My count today is 6467 members.

We have been successfully using Zoom for meetings. I held 3 large meetings 2 weeks ago - hit the 100 maximum once, held another which attracted 65 - open to all members on what and how should we try to reopen life. Plus, another limited to the leaders from each community - 35 attendees exchanging ideas and woes. We will be using Zoom for many more similar and other topic discussions.

Virtually all the tournaments planned for 2020 are either cancelled or postponed. Last week we started, via a Zoom, discussing officiating with the leaders' _group. When the conditions allow, we hope to be out there educating, training, etc. I held one training session via Zoom about 6 weeks ago - with a little tweak it works quite well for 'classroom' activity.

Alberta (Kirk Jensen)

- Membership dues are coming steadily in, about 10 renewals and 10 new members per day. In the last 60 days we have gone from 30% of our membership renewing to 50%.
- Two new centers, Peace River and Grande Prairie, are looking at forming clubs and affiliating with PA and PCO.
- All clubs are now playing with club guidance ranging from: players must wear masks, to the ability to play cohort doubles. Most clubs are allowing singles with sanitization stations and no gatherings before or after matches.
- A Zoom conference call was held for club executive on updating of club playing status and sharing ideas for opening play. Twenty clubs participated in the call.

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- We had a membership contest on our Pickleball Alberta Facebook page. The contest was to guess what percentage of our membership were female (53.6%). We had 60 entries with the winner receiving a Pickleball Alberta jacket. It was a successful initiative that got people talking pickleball again.
- The Red Deer Pickleball Club has sent in their letter of intent to host the 2021 National Championships. They are in the final phases of submitting their bid package.
- The referee-in-chief of PA has formed a referee committee with representatives in the north, central and south. They are looking at certifying 100 referees in anticipation of being successful for Red Deer receiving the 2021 National Championships.
- All tournaments in Alberta through June have been cancelled or postponed. There is a possibility of one tournament scheduled for mid-August will go ahead.
- Pickleball Alberta supports the Westerns being held in Regina for 2021.
- We have brought on a sport consultant to assist us with developing a future looking strategic plan. A one-day board face-to-face meeting is required to start the process. When meeting is allowed as guided by AHS, we will be doing so. We anticipate the end of June.
- Have submitted fourth and fifth editions of the monthly Presidential PA Update that includes:
 - PCO updates along with AGM notice.
 - New rule book along with the PCO link for the process to certify as an official.
 - Upcoming clinics and tournaments update.
 - “Faces Around the Court” - The March issue highlighted extensive care nurse Abed Durham. The April issue highlighted Bev Walker the first president of Pickleball Alberta.
- Request that any assistance or training that we can do in advance of the national system roll out that PA be advised as we want to ensure a smooth transition for our association and members.

Saskatchewan (Janet Bradshaw)

Life continues on without pickleball in our province. We have been lobbying our government but as I write this we are still not scheduled to open until Phase 4. We are currently in Phase 2 with Phase 3 due to open June 8th.

The Western Regionals slated for Regina as the host city this July have now been rescheduled for July of 2021.

Finally, this last month has seen our Board working diligently with a consultant from Sask Sport to fulfill the requirements for our emerging sport status. Dispute Resolution Policies have been a major focus. Our funding application will be submitted for the August deadline.

Manitoba (Rose Sawatzky)

- May 4 - opened courts; singles play. Board meeting by Skype. IPTA coaching clinic in the future. Also referee clinic and youth initiatives for summer.

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Ontario (Jim Parrott)

Developed Return to Play Recommendations with associated risk levels, complementing PCO COVID Tips and Recommendations, and shared with all members, including ambassadors and clubs (<https://pickleballontario.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Return-to-Play-Recommendations-Pickleball-Ontario-v1.0.pdf>).

Developed a Sales Pitch Resource, for selling the need for more pickleball facilities to government officials (<https://pickleballontario.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Pickleball-Sales-Pitch-Resource-r0.pdf>).

Developing policy and supporting action plans for ensuring that the pickleball community in Ontario is equitable, diverse and inclusive. It's a whole lot more than gender representation. PCO is supporting the initiative and will review for adoption at the national level. See other file for more detail.

Working on Succession Planning for Board turnover in Sept 2020, with 5 of 12 directors' terms expiring. Recruited 126 new members in March and April. Overall loss of 77 over the 2 COVID months. End of April membership at 2476. We'll see what May and June bring. Huge opportunity for recruitment as there are 164,000 pickleball players (of some sort) in Ontario per Dec 2019 IPSOS poll, +/- 3%.

Quebec (Robert Hogue)

- Membership is going down a bit - hopefully it will rebound. Singles play resumed in Quebec in early May.

New Brunswick (Michel Legault)

(Provided following the meeting)

- Courts are slowly re-opening. We have just received permission from the City of Moncton to play on some outdoor courts. The same is applicable in some courts up in the Northern part of the Province. It would seem that we are waking up from a rather long winter/sleep.
- We'll be having our AGM Friday, May 29 and will in all probabilities have a new Executive. Once this is known, we'll let PCO know.
- We've had some discussions with Atlantic Representative, Pat Morrison to discuss some very important items concerning Atlantic Canada.

Nova Scotia (Pat Morrison)

Rather than starting with COVID-19 news, the lead story here in our province is a VERY positive one. Pickleball Nova Scotia received confirmation from Sport Nova Scotia on May 22 that our application for membership has been approved and we are now officially recognized as the governing body for our sport here in our province. Our first meeting with Sport Nova Scotia is going to be setup fairly soon at which time we will be assigned our dedicated sports consultant and our planning and strategic work can begin. Now back to reality.

Outdoor Tennis and Pickleball were officially allowed as of May 16th so long as it was limited to singles play only. At that time, Pickleball Nova Scotia asked that players adhere to these policies being put in place by our provincial and municipal governments. PNS members were also

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reminded that pickleball play in contravention of local, provincial or federal laws or regulations is not an Authorized Activity and consequently is not covered by your Pickleball Nova Scotia/Pickleball Canada insurance.

After a call on May 20 with a local city councilor who is in direct contact with the provincial government, Pickleball Nova Scotia confirmed that despite a few minor changes to some of our restrictions, the current COVID-19 restrictions have remained unchanged as it relates to Pickleball play and that it should be limited to singles only. The only exception is that you can now play doubles with partners from the same household or from your second family bubble.

There was some confusion from these last changes indicating that Nova Scotians can now have social gatherings of up to 5 people including people who are outside their two bubble families so long as they maintain social distancing. Despite the many ways that some people were interpreting this change, Pickleball Nova Scotia's recommending remained unchanged and that players continue with singles play only and that the doubles partners be limited to players from the same household or their second family bubble.

In addition, when players are not actually playing, Pickleball Nova Scotia recommended that when not actually playing on a court, all players should remain outside of the fenced in playing surfaces while still practicing social distancing while they are waiting – much like local businesses do while limiting the number of customers in their stores. A good idea might be to bring along some personal lawn chairs and arrange your chairs in some kind of orderly fashion.

As expected, regardless of the recommendations posted by Pickleball Nova Scotia on our own website and Facebook page, there have been lots of other varying stories, interpretations and opinions being shared on other pickleball Facebook pages making it a bit confusing for the front-line players. Although the majority of players agree that this is frustrating and seem to be siding with the commonsense approach that Pickleball Nova Scotia is taking, some sound like they are from south of the border and that their second amendment rights are being taken away.

It came as no surprise during this time that our membership growth would be minimal and we are currently sitting at 731 players. We have also seen a higher than normal number of existing members not renewing their membership (probably due to Covid-19). To help promote our membership growth, our sponsorship committee has developed a Membership Benefits campaign and have begun recruiting local businesses who are willing to provide a variety of different promotions and offers exclusively to our members. The first one was Ultramar who offered a \$0.05 / litre discount on furnace oil and/or propane. And as a bonus for new customers, they will receive a 300 litre credit on their first delivery PLUS a free furnace cleaning. We currently have two additional businesses in the wings who are going to be joining and we'll be seeking more.

Prince Edward Island (Brian Strongman)

- Some outdoor play is starting. Most outdoor courts will be fully functional on June 1st.
- Working on a committee to get Pickleball registered as a Sport PEI. Currently have 6 in the committee, hoping for 2 to 3 more. Plan on meeting next week via zoom. Everything was

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shut down here since Mid-March. More communities are adding pickleball lines to their tennis courts which is great.

Newfoundland (Leonard Lye)

- Outdoor tennis is now allowed, and the city says that their outdoor tennis courts some of which have pickleball lines will be ready for use on May 29th. Players must be from the same bubble! So, if you want to play doubles, all 4 players must be from the same bubble, basically the same household. There is no indoor play allowed yet. Since we have very few outdoor pickleball courts, we will have to see how this will play out.
- I had a constructive conversation with Pat Morrison about moving forward with forming an association in NL and he has forwarded documents that were used in NS.

Yukon (Sue Staffen)

- Finalizing approach to Chief Medical Officer re sport specific request to begin play. Negotiating with Tennis Yukon to access their courts for outdoor play. Also looking for an opportunity to create dedicated outdoors courts in Whitehorse.

7. Pickleball Canada Reports

7.1 Pickleball Canada Update

Membership Numbers

Pickleball Canada ACTIVE Membership by Province	
May 1, 2020	
British Columbia	6292
Yukon	88
Alberta	4697
Northwest Territories	1
Nunavut	0
Saskatchewan	1311
Manitoba	611
Ontario	2527
Quebec	4904
New Brunswick	1125
Nova Scotia	709
Prince Edward Island	124
Newfoundland & Labrador	32
Non-Canadian Residents	110
TOTAL	22,531

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2021 National Championship and Regional Championship Update

All 2020 National and Regional Championships have been cancelled because of COVID-19.

The 2021 Regional Championships are scheduled to be hosted as follows:

- Atlantic Nova Scotia
- Eastern Quebec
- Western Saskatchewan (Regina)

Pickleball Canada has a vision to deliver two premiere national tournaments commencing in 2021:

- The Pickleball Canada National tournament will keep the name, but it will move from an 'open to all competitors' tournament to a 'closed tournament - open only to Canadian residents'
- The Pickleball Canadian Open tournament - will, as the name implies, be open to all competitors and try and attract the best players available.

PCO had begun the process to select the 2021 host for the National Championship which is to be in Western Canada. Kingston Pickleball Club hosted the 2019 championship and was scheduled to host the 2020 tournament. PCO intended to continue with its plan to alternate the National Championship between East and West and to continue with the Western bid for 2021. The Kingston Club appealed this decision to the PCO Board. The Board did not uphold the appeal.

Pickleball Canada has been working on a major partnership to set up the Pickleball Canadian Open tournament for 2021, however, because of COVID-19 slowing things down we are now aiming for 2022 with this partnership.

Pickleball Canada has offered the Kingston Pickleball Club the right of first refusal to host the 2021 Pickleball Canada Open Championship. They have turned down the offer. PCO will consider putting the Canadian Open out for bids in Eastern Canada.

The standards and expectations outlined in the 2021 National Bid Book, which is on the PCO website will be modified as required to apply to all five of the above tournaments: The National, The Open and the three regional tournaments. The modifications will be available in June and will be posted.

Integrated Technology Platform

Stage 1 has been completed

- First draft of the site map finalized and provided to Trackie with hyperlinks for content
- Business rules draft completed, and access provided to Trackie
- All MemberLeap pdf files and graphics have been download and stored on a secure drive
- New web site design including desktop, and mobile have been received
- Data files have been sent to Trackie for an initial load and testing
- Completed the two processes for messaging.
 - Benefits to members and
 - Benefits to Clubs/Organizations. As of May 5, we have received 10 expressions of interest from clubs wishing to be part of the pilot.

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Stage 2 - in progress

- Review all scenarios by PTPO on adoption of new system for individuals, clubs and PTPO
 - Define “affiliated” club and implement business rules
 - Build all “help files”
 - Populate the new site with updated content. Freeze content on the current site.
 - Expect an interactive design by early June to start working with as we move towards the pilot
- Stage 3

Stage 3 - July - Pilot Testing

- Depending on the test and the changes that are always inevitable, we hope to be in a position to launch the actual release in late August
- **The good news is that this launch is expected to include Competition software including ladder/league - tournament and both a performance and recreational ratings engine** NOTE: The pilot will determine the implementation of stage 4, the actual release date.

Policy

Concussion Protocol and Abuse Prevention Policies

Both these policies were provided at the March ITAC meeting. They are now approved for publication or posting on your websites

Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Pickleball Association of Ontario is taking the lead on this and will provide a framework to Pickleball Canada.

Infectious Disease Response Plan

Provided Separately

Finances

PCO has had to significantly adjust its budget as a result of the effects on revenue of COVID-19. It was in very good financial shape going into 2020 with an accumulated surplus of approximately \$155,000. To utilize some of this resource it embarked on a number of initiatives: Integrated Technology Platform; enhanced insurance coverage; marketing, sponsors and partners; youth program; recreation; officiating; ratings. Most of our revenue comes from membership fees and 40% of it goes to pay for insurance. We have reduced our membership revenue projections by 45% and cut expenses but still expect to utilize around \$90,000 of the accumulated surplus. In 2021 even if membership revenue returns to what it was anticipated to be (\$110,000) PCO is not in a sustainable position going forward. Workload and expectations are expanding for a volunteer board, board life span is decreasing as are those willing to do the heavy lifting. Consideration about what we want Pickleball Canada to do, what the structure is to do it, who will do it, and how we pay for it will become increasingly important in the near future.

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Annual General Meeting

June 16 3pm PDT Please encourage attendance on Uber Conference

<https://www.uberconference.com/room/pickleballcanada>

AGM and voting instruction are on the Pickleball Canada website.

7.2 Officiating Program Update Walter Knecht

- Everything is on PCO website in both Languages. It is ready to go. Conversations are occurring with Provinces to get things started. Program is available to all provinces. Walter is willing to do Zoom conferences. Head Refs will be getting together once things fire up. We are not trying to duplicate the American system. However, we are working with USAPA cooperatively in the development of our program. It is a provincial jurisdiction to deliver the program.

7.3 Recreational and Youth Pickleball Pat Morrison and John Hyland

Pickleball Canada (PCO) has a key role in working with its provincial/territorial affiliates in order to help build, strengthen and support community-based pickleball --- for newcomers to the sport and those playing at a recreational level. This sport development work is directly aligned with the Sport Development Goals of Pickleball Canada.

Best Practices Program

- Interviews and surveys were conducted with a set of leaders from community centers, schools, clubs and other settings who shared their experiences, insights and advice
- Best practices guidelines for community pickleball leaders and organizers – _July 30 target
- Creating a dynamic, online forum for leaders to share their successes and experiences
- This forum to be ready in fall 2020, through PCO's Integrated Technology Platform (ITP)

Hub Club Concept

- Community pickleball network & structure that connects people, programs, places-to-play
- Focal point and the voice for cross-community pickleball
- Flexible framework that can assist Provinces and Territories as well as communities at any stage of their development
- It is not meant as a duplication of an existing club but to enhance what's already in place
- Improves local capacity to lead, coordinate, share resources and secure funding support
- The Hub Club concept would be introduced through a collaboration of Pickleball Canada and the Provincial and Territorial pickleball organizations.

Recreational Pickleball Advisory Council (RPAC)

- Provide guidance, advice and support to Pickleball Canada so they can assist Canadian communities in developing pickleball at the introductory and recreational levels
- Identify approaches to help pickleball be welcoming, inclusive and accessible
- Examine levels of play and the transitioning of players in their games
- Representation from pickleball's local, provincial/territorial and national levels, and a variety of allied national associations.
- First meeting of RPAC in the fall of 2020.

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PCO Youth Program

- Create more opportunities and support for children and young Canadians to play pickleball
- Pickleball Canada to work with P/Ts to equip organizers, local teachers and youth sport programmers with a framework, strategies and resources
- Tools and resources to help build grassroots leadership and capacity
- There will be discussions surrounding Youth memberships, Pickleball School Affiliations
- Empirical data + the voice of youth
- Access to a National Resource Portal, through a community hub club.

7.4 Coaching Program

Jim Parrott

- Introduction to Competition course content complete.
- Community Initiation Coaching stream ready for submission to Coaching Association of Canada.
- Instructional videos supporting both streams in both languages are ready.
- Two pilot workshops in the Community Initiation component have been put on hold because of COVID-19. Trying to reschedule to late June or July.
- Preliminary discussions occurring with Coaching Association of Canada.
- Exploring partnerships with other National Sports Organizations to expedite our recognition from the Coaching Association of Canada.

8. Next ITAC Meeting

- Tuesday, September 29th 4pm PDT

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:48 pm PDT