2018 AGM President’s Report

Year In Review

Historically high spring water levels tested the resilience of our team and infrastructure in 2017. That challenge was effectively overcome with ingenuity and resolve on the part of our management team, coaches, volunteers and athletes. With timely assistance from the City, cleanup was rapid. Coaches and athletes quickly adapted and went on to prove their competitive mettle at spring regattas.

The Ottawa River Regulatory Authority reports that 2018 is expected to be a normal year.

Our untimely loss of Brian Adams last year served to remind us that the ORC is at its best when we come together as a family. It was a difficult time made easier through the sharing of our grief with friends and family. Brian’s contributions have had a lasting impact on our sport.

The Club owes a particular debt of gratitude to Andy Binda in 2017. Once again, Andy quietly extended his commitment to the club by doing even more fleet repair as the club adjusted to Brian’s loss.

Sophie Desaulniers was deservedly recognized by both RowOntario and Rowing Canada as Umpire of the Year. Congratulations Sophie!

Our many successful sesquicentennial events attracted visitors, grants and welcome interest.

With our 150th now behind us, it’s time to look forward to future successes.

The skill and enduring dedication of our coaches, volunteers and the unwavering commitment of many long term members sustain our club. We’re fortunate to also be able to rely on excellent management support. The size and diversity of our programs give us insight, community connections and positive influence in our sport. Community outreach will continue to be important in 2018.

Declining membership remains a threat to all organized sports including our own. Mitigating that trend, 2018 will be the first full year of the ORC’s Let’s Row Ottawa program and our program coaches continue to make gains in their effort to engage high schools & universities in funding and promoting rowing as a sport of choice. Saturated membership capacity in 2017 evidenced the overwhelming success of our rec program in attracting new athletes to our sport.

2017 was an exceptional year for sponsorships and grants. Competition for available grants in 2018 is likely to be even stiffer. Sponsorships, donations and grants can have a significant impact on our ability to invest in capital renewal in particular. Vocal membership advocacy can be pivotal in our success.

2018 will present a new set of opportunities to engage with our community.

It’s a municipal and provincial election year. Elections don’t guarantee additional resources but they can present opportunities for positive dialogue with our elected officials.
Ottawa’s new transit system promises to make it easier to get downtown in 2018/19. Since 1990, 10,000 new families have located in the urban core of our city. Continuing urbanization, the 20 year redevelopment of LeBreton Flats, Plouffe Park and Dow’s Lake lands will add many more potential rowers within reach of the club in coming years. Our strategic planning energies in 2018 will keep those developments in mind.

In May of 2017, the NCC tabled its renewed Plan for the National Capital which includes redevelopment of NCC lands on the north shore of the river between the Alexandra bridge and the Gatineau river with an emphasis on paddle sport uses and outdoor public events. Consultations are ongoing. Members are encouraged to become engaged in this dialogue. At the same time that the NCC tabled their new plan, the operators of the marina directly opposite the Club, submitted a proposal to double the number of docks in that facility. The final plan will reflect the interests of those who are most effective in assembling support for their vision. The ORC will be a vocal contributor in this planning process.

We look forward to an enjoyable and successful 2018.