

## MINUTES

Fight Directors Canada Annual General Meeting  
Thursday August 8, 2019 at 7:33 pm Eastern Standard Time  
Rapier Wit Studios, Toronto Ontario/Skype

Attending: Christopher Mott, Brianna Johnston, David Leslie, Louisa Zhu, Erick Fournier, Todd Campbell, Daniel Levinson, Josh Hood, Richard Comeau, Matthew Lawrence, Michelle Lewis, Esther Stellar

By Skype: Patrick Howarth, Jason Mehmel, Aaron Casselman, Karl Sine, Jacques Lemay, Tammy Everett, Jean-Francois Gagnon

Laryssa Yanchak joined at 7:40 by Skype

Jason Mehmel left at 8:37

Proxy: Daniel Levinson will hold proxy for Paul Gelineau

1. Approval of Minutes:
  - a. C. Mott motions to approve; L. Zhu seconds; Motion passed
2. Treasurer's Report

From Associate Member Jason Mehmel:

Our financials for this year show a slight gain. This mostly consists of Nationals 2018 showing most of its expenses and income within this financial year of our reporting. Our full costs for Nationals 2019 have not been finalized.

This year's Nationals may come in with a slight loss. We should be able to sustain this without a major concern, though we will need to avoid it in the future. Patrick has some longer term strategic goals, so I will be working in August to provide some longer term cash flow analysis to see if we can make those goals happen.

We also have a committee that has formed and met online throughout the year to brainstorm Fund Development Options. I hope that their work can continue and find new revenues for FDC!

I want to thank Louisa Zhu and Christopher Mott, once again. They maintain the organization day by day and are responsible for keeping us going. Three cheers for them and their hard work!

**Specific numbers are included at the end of these minutes.**

- Question from D. Levinson – has everything needed been found regarding the Paypal issue?
  - Paypal is causing problems; although the needed material has been received, we will be migrating everything to Square; we have successfully moved all funds from Paypal; additionally, Square will allow us to take analog payments in the future
- Question from J. Gagnon – is the percentage required from square smaller than Paypal?
  - Similar amount, but only charges fees as transactions were happening; other options were considered, but were deemed to be too expensive for the organization to sustain

D. Levinson moves to accept the report; J. Hood seconds; Motion passed

### 3. President's Report

From FD Patrick Howarth:

This year has been a very positive one for the Board of Directors who, as you know, oversee the direction of the organization and plan for its future. Member engagement is at a high, and signs indicate it will get higher in the coming year. This had been my major goal since 2016, as we prepare FDC to respond to changes in the industry, as well as lead the way in new programming, ideas, and philosophy.

Many thanks to the Fundraising Committee: FI Rico Pfeiffer, AAC Graham Mothersill, and AC Cam White, as well as Treasurer Jason Mehmel. Lots of ground work was laid and ideas planned. This year will see those projects come to light.

A huge thanks to the Code of Conduct committee: Secretary and FI Brianna Johnston, FD Siobhan Richardson, DOT and FI Louisa Zhu, FI Rachel Flesher, and FM Advisor Todd Campbell. Incredibly hard work, spearheaded by Brianna, has led to a comprehensive Code of Conduct that replaces our old one. The new one is far more thorough in addressing harassment specifically, while addressing all other aspects of conduct as well. It is clearer in definitions and procedural steps, as well as member responsibility. Overall, it is a positive document in tone and content, which I feel captures the spirit of our organization in regards to professional matters. Please be advised it is a living document that is subject to change, as it has not as yet passed through a legal advisor.

Members throughout the country responded enthusiastically to our training poll, and that really helped bolster the executive and myself as we explored a new model for training in the Academy, a plan which we will lay out today. The poll came out at a time when our executive team was really thrown a curve ball in planning the Nationals, and it helped focus the efforts of Louisa, Chris and myself as we dealt with that. Thank you, members everywhere. A huge thank you to Louisa and Chris for being superheroes in tough times, and shouldering the load with class. Enormous thanks also to FI Adriano Gatto, who did a Herculean amount of work and kept positive and engaged. Finally, thanks again to FM Ian Rose and FM Jean-Francois Gagnon, who provided a home for Nationals and wore so many hats.

Of the many exciting things that happened this winter, the most exciting for me was welcoming Casey Hudecki to the College of Fight Masters. Casey is an outstanding leader and an exceptional human being. Our wisdom, memory, and inspiration lie with our Fight Masters. Casey is one of our very best, and we are lucky to have her occupy a spot at our highest level.

Our two-year plan is shaping up nicely; we will be able to hit the next phase of our development this fall, with more programs and more chances for members to contribute. We will be announcing some of that during old and new business today, as well as rolling out more initiatives in the fall, when our website is up and running. Today we will also be taking steps to fill our Board back to capacity, to ensure all hands are on deck.

It was a challenging year with a lot of stress, but it ended up setting us up for a renewal within our association. Onwards!

- Question from J. Gagnon – do we need to vote on a budget, which would allow funds for a legal advisor to look over the Code of Conduct?
  - We are not there yet; the document is in a good place and can be ratified as a living document, but will require another draft before it is ready to be reviewed by legal council

J. Hood moves to accept the report; T. Everett seconds; Motion passed.

#### 4. Director of Training's Report

From FI Louisa Zhu:

It's been a generally good year for the Academy. The AFDC presence has been thriving across the country and beyond, with Certification Workshops being run in Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver and Buffalo, in addition to numerous independent member-run workshops and drop-in classes. I am very excited about the growth happening in our community and must give thanks to not only our Fight Masters and long-time Instructors who continue to be the strong foundation of our Academy, upholding our integrity and values while sharing our work with others, but also to our newer Instructors and Apprentices, who have shown incredible initiative in creating new opportunities and expanding our reach.

We did come across some difficulties this year, primarily with the organization of the annual National Certification Conference. However, thanks in large part to FM Jean-Francois Gagnon, we were able to organize a smaller, single-level Nationals this year in Montreal. I was able to visit them this past weekend, and though small in numbers, they are a delightful, hard-working group and I hope you will join me in wishing them all the best in their upcoming exams.

While the setbacks we experienced with the Nationals this year were disappointing, they did incite us to re-examine how the organization has evolved over the past seven years. How have member needs changed and how could we update our priorities and practises to fit those needs? As Patrick mentioned, the member poll was an essential part of this re-examination so a huge thank you again to our members.

Looking forward, we will be working on setting a new workshop in motion (more on that later this evening); clarifying and updating the Instructor Apprentice process; and partnering with our Intimacy Design colleagues to bring more active consent practices into our daily curriculum and a better understanding of how our members can support each other. There is still a lot of to be done, but I am very excited about the direction we are heading in.

R. Comeau move to accept the report; J. Hood seconds; Motion passed

#### 5. Director of Administration's Report

From FM Chris Mott:

Good evening to all members of FDC and The Academy.

As most of you know, as the Director of Administration I'm responsible for the day-to-day bureaucratic functioning of FDC- maintaining membership and certification records, official member communications, as well as maintaining the website. As these duties involve significant discussion and consultation with the President, Treasurer and Director of Training, I'll mostly confine my report to the membership records specifically, and trust those other individuals to speak on the initiatives that they are leading.

The year since our 2018 AGM has been a relatively quiet one compared to previous, though not exceptionally so. We saw 102 certifications so far this year (both new and re-certifications). This is within historical variation, and projecting forward through the end of the year we should see a total of 120-130 certifications for 2019. We have seen a small shrinking of total membership since our last AGM

however. As of this morning, we have 498 active members, a loss of 20 since August of 2018. However, this loss is almost entirely within our Associate membership- our numbers at all certification levels have grown or shrunk by only two or three. We currently have 50 Associate members, 15 Youth, 246 Basic, 72 Intermediate, 67 Advanced, 23 F.I.s, 15 F.D.s and 10 Fight Masters.

As with the previous year, we continue to see growth in our international membership, including a certification class run by FI Adriano Gatto at Niagara University in Buffalo, as well as U.S. students continuing to travel to Toronto and Montreal for FDC training.

There are also two non-membership initiatives that I want to be sure to mention. As I'm sure Jason will have mentioned, we are currently transitioning to Square as an online payment provider, after significant problems with PayPal. A rough iteration of the

Square payments page is up right now, and a link to it is being sent to those who need to purchase or renew memberships. Once I have a few more transactions go through and I confirm our processes, I'll be rolling it out on the FDC website (likely in the next two weeks).

As part of the roll-out for the new website in the coming months, I will be looking for beta testers prior to it going live. If you would be willing to volunteer a few minutes to play around with our new site when the time comes (especially if you have any experience in UI/UX or general web design), please contact me and let me know.

- Question from J. Gagnon – do associates receive a reminder to renew?
  - Yes, one month from expiration. Certified members receive renewal reminders at 6, 9, and 12 months.
- Question from D. Levinson – how many associate members have transitioned to certified members?
  - This is not something we track; historically there are a range of things that tend to happen; some people:
    - Register with the intention of certifying, but don't
    - Register in AC classes, but don't pass
    - Renew associate memberships for a long time, without pursuing training
  - 38 is a lot to lose, and we are not sure why; perhaps we were more successful in our Basic Certification this year?

E. Fournier motions to accept; D. Levinson seconds; Motion passes.

#### 6. Old Business:

##### a. Website moving forward

- i. After pursuing information with a personal contact of Patrick's, it has become clear that some of the big dreams will not be possible. We have now separated the plan into phases; after reviewing several options, the Board has decided to hire Chris to redesign the website. This is a reinvestment in Chris, and will also allow him to gain mentorship in different areas of web design so he will be able to continue running the site effectively after its redesign.
- ii. The overall goal is to give the site a casting workbook style function; these personal profile portals will be the first phase to be funded.
  1. The Board has approved a one-time opt-in fee of \$30; FMs will be included for free

2. Members that do not want to pay the opt in fee will still be included with name and rank only, but will not have personalized pages with other stats and reels
  3. If not enough members are interested in opting in, we will need to look at other ways to fund this development without going into debt
- iii. Most of the problems with the current website are in its functionality; the navigation is challenging and the back end is over complicated; the goal of the new site is to be a streamlining of the current one – to have all the functions we want, without the confusion
- Question from T. Everett – will there be a budget allotted to promoting the website to industry stakeholders to help them see it?
    - This will be part of Patrick’s job; there is not currently a budget for it, but the idea of the restructuring of the site is to allow us to connect with the industry and advocate for membership; in the interest of this, the new site will be split between a professional space that will be public and a member space that will be private
    - The goal is also to connect this site to other media – social media platforms, and especially YouTube – which will allow us to highlight our membership to the industry
      - We have no marketing team, so this will require a vetting process to ensure the most professional content ends up posted
  - Question from R. Comeau – will the new site house resource materials, such as FI research papers?
    - Yes, this is one plan for the members only area.
  - Question from R. Comeau – Will the money from the fundraising committee be only allocated to the website?
    - Yes, we don’t want to be double dipping. That’s what the fundraising is for. If extra money becomes available as a result, we would need an additional conversation about what we would use it for.
- b. Code of Conduct
    - i. We have been developing the policy over the past year, and are ready to have it enshrined as a living document. We have worked to incorporate elements from other industry policies and to adapt them to the unique challenges of our organization.
    - ii. The goal is to have a new draft of the entire Policies and Procedures in the coming months, and it is great to be able to include this comprehensive Code of Conduct.
7. New Business:
- a. New Workshop
    - i. A lot of things came together this year, even with many stresses and challenges as have been mentioned. In brainstorming with Louisa, Adriano, Chris, and Brianna, Patrick is putting forward the idea of a new workshop called FDCNext. This is a response to all the positive changes we have seen in the ways our organization has grown.

- ii. The goal is to hold this workshop in opposite summers to Nationals – each would run every other summer. FDCNext would run in 5 cities simultaneously and would only be 5 days long.
    1. Each location would have 2 instructors to do the bulk of the teaching; in addition there would be video resources to run classes in all 5 locations simultaneously, potentially by video conference in 2 or more cities; as well, there would be the opportunity for master classes taught by instructors other than the main 2
    2. The curriculum would be chosen to suit the students in each location, and would be non-certifying; in part, the goal is to share ideas and practices outside the curriculum
    3. FDCNext will also be less expensive and more accessible; there has been a decentralization of membership over many years – this would allow more opportunities closer to home while also giving more jobs to a wider breadth of instructors and driving up associate memberships; profit is also built into the budget model
    4. Louisa is also hoping this model will allow us to engage potential members who have an interest in the art, but not necessarily the budget to begin pursuing a certification; we could allow people to become acquainted to our system and style without a large commitment
    5. This also creates opportunities for more advanced membership to continue their training and development, which can be difficult in our current system; there would be different levels of training available across the workshop and the final decisions about levels of difficulty would be left to each individual city
    6. The teaching model would ideally be structured to allow day rates, or partial day drop ins; this would allow students to find classes that were suited to both their interested and skill levels
- Question from R. Comeau – why only two instructors per city?
  - The idea is to have a single room structure; however, if one city had an overwhelming amount of interest, 2 of the 5 workshops could potentially happen in the same place; we want to create opportunities for teachers, and allow them to teach what they want, while also encouraging diversity in instruction and subject matter
- Question from D. Leslie – what impact will this have on the Journey policy, given the shift in Nationals schedule?
  - This is something Louisa is still working on; the goal is not to necessitate too vast of a time commitment; she is working on evaluating the reasons we want people to Journey and to adjust the requirements to address that.
- Question from J. Gagnon – is it possible to create more opportunities for a Journey-type experience, given how many people are pursuing it?
  - Yes and no; we want to make sure people have opportunities for diversity of mentorship, and to allow people to continue gaining a national perspective.
- iii. In regards to the implementation of the workshop, the procedure has been laid out and is ready for implementation.

1. Anyone interested in hosting would put together and submit a proposal and concept – where they plan to be, what will be taught, etc. Louisa or a workshop coordinator will review and approve or decline; materials will be made available to help in pitch preparation
  2. Instruction will need to come from those certified at the Instructor level and above, in order to maintain our standard of safety
- Question from D. Levinson – when will the dates be announced? It would be great to avoid programming conflicts with classes offered at the Wit.
    - Proposals submitted will include an intended timeline, and the goal will be to find a time that works for as many people as possible.
  - Question from E. Fournier – will this workshop have a consistent timeframe, like Nationals?
    - This one is more easily shifted, because of its smaller scale and shorter time frame; we would definitely be experimenting for at least the first year, though.
  - Question from D. Leslie – is the hope to prototype this workshop for 2020?
    - Because Nationals was smaller this year, the hope is to run a full-scale Nationals for 2020 and pilot FDCNext in 2021.
- b. Realignment of Nationals
    - i. Has been covered in the discussion of FDCNext
- Question from D. Levinson – how will this affect the teacher certification process? He and Todd would be happy to share what worked at the recent certification process at the Wit, and would love to encourage these workshops to be held in other places
    - We should also be encouraging more communication from Mentors to those who will be running the certifications, to allow for more coordination of expectations.
- c. Realignment of Awards
    - i. Because we only had a single-level Nationals this year, there was no Fournier Award given. The Levinson Awards will still be given out this year. We will need to decide moving forward if the Fournier award is still an annual award, given the shift in the Nationals schedule.
- Question from D. Levinson – will it be possible to use the new website as a nomination platform? Right now it can be hard to find.
    - Right now all of the Award Nomination information goes out in the newsletter to ensure everyone gets it, as long as they have opted in; if they are not receiving emails they will need to request an option to opt in from Chris.
    - But yes, it should be possible to use the site as a more active presence to allow people to check in more regularly; this type of thing could be part of a members only section, or could also be included in a potential forum for member communication
- d. Vacant Board Seats: FI Representative, Combatant Representative, Executive Advisor
    - i. Patrick would like to apologize for the lack of notice regarding vacant positions, but Chris will be sending an email out regarding the Board positions and how to run for them

1. There will be a one-week period for people to nominate either themselves or others, then a week long voting period; nominations are currently open
  2. It is important to get our Board back into compliance; this will make us more applicable for a variety of grants, as well as allowing the organization to function more fully as intended
- ii. The option positions are Actor Combatant Representative – whose primary job will be to learn the ropes of the system, as part of a generation that will one day take over, and will also be responsible for encouraging member engagement and helping membership connect with and navigate the system – and Fight Instructor Representative – who will work on creating handbooks for every level and position within the organization (i.e. Treasurer, Journey, Fight Master) and will coordinate with teams of people from various positions to make this happen
- Question from L. Zhu – does the Actor Combatant Representative need to remain at that level for the duration of the term?
    - No, they just need to be one when the term begins
  - Question from T. Everett – what is the goal of the handbooks? To be procedural documents?
    - Less of a how-to, and more of a “useful guidelines” – for example, how many moves should be included in a certification test fight? What kinds of systems of consent do we encourage? Etc.
    - Could also include advice for things some people at a level have accomplished that others have found challenging – suggestions for how to approach getting a position at a university, for example, rather than a step by step guide of how to teach, which is and should be different for everyone
  - T. Everett has self-nominated for the position of Fight Instructor Representative
8. Questions from the Floor:
- a. M. Lawrence – are there any plans or timelines in place for re-certification classes?
    - i. You can contact your local instructors, or FDC can be contacted and liaise between membership and local instructors; it can be helpful to search for a pool of interested students to help mitigate costs
  - b. E. Fournier – could this also be an option on the website in the future? Especially if there is a forum option.
    - i. This could be a sub-forum, for sure. We cannot tell people that specific other people have certifications that will expire soon, but could open a platform for people to talk when they begin looking to re-certify
    - ii. The current website does have a search function for other members, but it isn't very good and is something that is planned to be fixed.
9. Adjournment
- a. C. Mott moves to adjourn; D. Leslie seconds; Motion passes.
  - b. Meeting adjourned at 8:54 EST



Financial Specificities from the Treasurer's Report:

Month	Income	Expense
2018 <b>July</b>	<b>\$9, 430.00</b>	<b>-\$1, 103.00</b>
2018 <b>August</b>	<b>\$33, 558.56</b>	<b>-\$16, 915.00</b>
2018 <b>September</b>	<b>\$1, 350.76</b>	<b>-\$21, 325.63</b>
2018 <b>October</b>	<b>\$75.52</b>	<b>-\$1, 501.78</b>
2018 <b>November</b>	<b>\$773.78</b>	<b>-\$1, 103.00</b>
2018 <b>December</b>	<b>\$141.76</b>	<b>-\$1, 103.00</b>
2019 <b>January</b>	<b>\$851.89</b>	<b>-\$2, 104.50</b>
2019 <b>February</b>	<b>\$2, 641.92</b>	<b>-\$1, 103.00</b>
2019 <b>March</b>	<b>\$2, 022.92</b>	<b>-\$1, 103.00</b>
2019 <b>April</b>	<b>\$4, 195.05</b>	<b>-\$3, 456.50</b>
2019 <b>May</b>	<b>\$829.82</b>	<b>-\$1, 345.75</b>
2019 <b>June</b>	<b>\$1, 868.05</b>	<b>-\$1, 626.75</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$57, 740.03</b>	<b>-\$53, 790.91</b>
	<b>Profit/Loss:</b>	<b>\$3, 949.12</b>
Bank balance July 01 2018		\$10, 085.72
Bank balance June 30, 2019		\$10, 768.54
Current balance, August 7, 2019		\$14, 406.08