

MINUTES

Fight Directors Canada Annual General Meeting
Sunday July 18, 2022 at 12:10pm Mountain Daylight Time

Digital Meeting on Zoom

Members in Attendance: Chris Mott, John Knight, Michelle Lewis, Brianna Johnston, Nathania Bernabe, Jackie Hanlin, Tammy Everett, Laryssa Yanchak, Jordie Richardson, John Nelles, Aaron Casselman, Sylvie La Riviere, Amy King, Mike Kovac, Daniel Levinson, Stephanie Kress, Matt Loop, David Leslie

J-P. Fournier arrived at 12:13pm MDT; Rachel Flesher and Zach Payne arrived at 12:14pm MDT

Laryssa Yanchak left at 1:01pm MDT

Land acknowledgement from Jackie T Hanlin.

1. Approval of Minutes

- a. C. Mott moves to approve the 2021 minutes; J. Knight seconds
- b. Motion passes

2. President's Report

From AAC Nathania Bernabe:

- Welcome and thank you for being here
- Was so great to get a nationals at UBC – thank you to Kovak and Tammy for their work as co-coordinators
- Floored that we are back into training again – amazing instructors, awesome journeys coming in
- Also have started to build consent in combat into the pedagogy through a collaboration with PIP – this is just the start, as we definitely want to stay connected with this new industry
- Working with the new DoT to keep collaborating and sharing knowledge
- Great to see other provinces working on their own trainings – thanks as always to the Wit, and to the certs that are going on in other provinces, including the double cert that happened this summer for FDC and SAFD
- Great to see the community coming together to give support – Aaron from NWT and Ian from Calgary just coming to see the work and being part of the community
- Grateful for all of the support we've been able to find in the community – with so much of our funding coming from training it has been hard to work on things, but grateful to Dan and Kirsten for the training grants they have opened up
- We are also looking for nominations for the Levinson Award as well as for the Gelineau Award and the Fournier Fellowship

- Things we are still working on – our Ethics Committee and working out our conflict and resolutions process
- Ethics committee is not possible without the support of our membership, so please reach out to us if you can or are interested in getting on board – Michelle is the membership rep and who you can reach out to if you are interested
- Excited to continue the work as we head into her third year

12:20:20 From Jackie Hanlin to Everyone:

<https://fdc.ca/2022/07/27/2022-awards-nominations-now-open/>

3. Treasurer's Report

From FI/FD John Knight:

Thank you. I'll keep things brief. Nationals continues to be our most significant source of income and therefore. This year the workshop expenses were well over our budgeted projections; however, this is because the overall registrations were higher than anticipated and therefore our revenues were also higher than projected. As a result, the total profit for Nationals was \$5,768.61. A caveat on that revenue: I expect there may still be a few outstanding expenses. I don't anticipate those would total more than \$1,000.

We started the year with \$10,750.66 in the bank and as of September 1st our account balance is \$15,697.85. To date profit and loss for the organization as a whole see us sitting at a profit position of \$4,947.19 as of September 1st. The largest profit has been Nationals and our largest expense is staffing honorariums for the Membership Administrator (going forward this will also include the Director of Training). We are starting to see more revenues coming in for new memberships and membership renewals as Covid restrictions are lifted and more training opportunities have been opening up.

Our tax filings are up to date and we have no outstanding payments due to the CRA. Overall, The Academy of Fight Directors Canada is in a healthy enough financial position to continue its operations and bring the next training workshops to fruition

4. Director of Admin Report

From FI Chris Mott:

Membership

After two years of very little activity (less than 30 total certifications and renewals in 2022 and 2021 combined), 2022 seems to be the beginning of the post-lockdowns upswing.

So far 2022 has seen a total of 51 new or renewed certifications, and while this is well below our pre-2020 pace of ~150 annually, it does give some hope that the trend will continue. A successful Nationals in Vancouver, a regional workshop in Montreal, and classes re-starting at Rapier Wit in Toronto all indicate that there are both existing and new members seeking training.

Normally as part of my report I talk about absolute membership numbers, but that is a complex situation without a simple answer this year. Two policies in particular have affected membership numbers generally in the last two years-

1. The blanket one-year extension passed by the Board in 2020 for all members active as of April of that year.
2. Allowing members with conditional passes and members who have lapsed despite the extension to complete or renew their certifications through Feb. 2023.

Given that FDC training numbers dropped over 90% for the last two years, a significant portion of our membership, especially at the Basic and Intermediate levels, have lapsed or will lapse in the next year, without new members being added. And while they have the ability to recertify as above, how many will remain to be seen.

If every single such member renews, then FDC is set to grow by approximately 50 members to a total of 544. If none do, then it will shrink by approximately 150 to 343. Historically, the recertification rate is low (~10%, for Intermediate and Advanced, but lower at Basic), so something closer to the latter case is likely. (For reference, FDC has been hovering around 500 active members since 2018 at least).

I should note that this is a reference number only, and not necessarily a cause for concern. A significant portion of FDC's income has always been memberships, but that is driven more by new members than by renewals, so financially at least the worst is hopefully behind us.

Newsletter

In the past, the newsletter was intended as a quarterly-or-so mailing. Even prior to the pandemic it had largely lost steam, partially because of a lack of content and partially because more promotional activity was moving to social media. It has now become for delivery of official announcements only, and will likely remain so.

Awards

2022 has also seen the resumption of FDC's annual awards, and the addition of a new Leadership-level Training Grant. There was a general call for award nominations on July 27 (See post: <https://fdc.ca/2022/07/27/2022-awards-nominations-now-open/>). While this is not official AGM business I thought I should take the opportunity to remind everyone to get those nominations in.

5. Fi Rep Report

From FI Tammy Everett:

This year was a busy year, as we worked together to restart our first nationals in years, and got to usher in a new group of FDC basic and advanced students.

After the pandemic a lot of the landscape of our educational systems had changed, as well as the needs, and expectations of our students. With this in mind the work that I had been doing on the on-boarding package for instructors was in need of major updating. I also realized that our

prominence in the post-secondary landscape had diminished during a time when people could not come into physical contact, so I began working on materials to help promote AFDC to post-secondary institutions across Canada.

The hope is that when our instructors approach institutions, rather than a cold approach, the schools will have a base knowledge of who we are, and what we do. I recently discovered that this is one of the roles of the Director of Training, and I look forward to helping facilitate positive relations between our post-secondary institutions, and the Academy of Fight Directors Canada. I also look forward to working with the incoming representative to help complete the on-boarding package.

Also, and in part because of the responses from apprentices to my 2020-2021 survey (so I wish to thank all apprentices who responded, as this helped us greatly), the board has worked hard over the year to clarify many of the processes in the apprenticeship program. These clarifications, and updated processes are found in our policies and procedures on the FDC website. You will find that they are now more streamlined, and hopefully easier to navigate. As the new Director of Training, I will be working with the incoming FI/Apprentice representative, and with FM Jean-Francois, to better help guide our apprentices through the process.

I will be contacting all apprentices within the next month individually via email to go over where they are in their apprenticeship, what they need to move onto the next step, and how better we can support them. If you have not received an email from me by mid-October, please contact me at director@fdc.ca as we may need to update your file. After I have connected with all apprentices, I will be connecting with their mentors again to ensure that everyone is on the same page, so that we can move out of the pandemic with confidence.

On that note, I'm very excited about being entrusted with the position of Director of Training, and I'd like to extend an offer our membership; if you have questions, concerns, or ideas about your own process currently, or about AFDC, please feel free to contact me at director@fdc.ca.

To anyone who is willing to take on the position of FI/Apprentice representative, I will of course be here to help onboard you, and give you everything I can to set you up to succeed.

6. Old Business

a. CRA Reporting

As mentioned in the report, we are up to date with our reporting. There had been some concerns regarding us being behind on our taxes and needing to pay back-taxes. We have worked with an accountant to get everything filed, including 2021. The CRA is happy and we are in compliance.

b. Covid

Surprisingly and wonderfully not a whole lot to say for this year. We are operating withing local/institutional PHOs, including UBC's at Nationals.

The only other affected thing has been individuals who have been unable to

train/re-certify, but we have opened a policy to allow lapsed membership to re-certify until February 2023.

c. Director of Training Position

We are so happy to welcome Tammy Everett to the position of Director of Training!

We had held off a bit on seeking submissions for the role in order to ensure we could approach it in a sustainable way. We have been seeing a mass exodus of people in our industry and craft because it hasn't been sustainable.

With the dip in our finances, we tried as a board to get the Nationals out this year without at DoT, so as not to ask someone to be working for free. We are starting this position with a small honorarium that we are hoping will grow, as we push to not be working for free in the industry as a whole.

Thank you so much to Tammy for coming out and applying for this position – it is not an easy one. She will be liaising with universities, with FMs, with the diversified curriculum and the push to bring in new FIs. Nathania is also excited to work with Tammy on how to bring in new membership and how to retain the organization. And how we can promote ongoing training and encourage the spirit of wanting to learn.

T. Everett – thank you so much for entrusting me with this role!

J. Nelles – in terms of encouraging training, we used to encourage people to come to Nationals through relationships with universities – it was often students who did their AC Certification in their actor training programs. For those of us who are teaching at colleges and universities, that is a prime place to encourage those students to continue their training and ensure they are aware of FDC and places where they can train. There isn't always enough time at a school to cover a breadth of weapons, so it can be so great to encourage students to pursue more during a time when they are already focused on training.

d. Curriculum

As we mentioned last year, in this, the third year of a president's term, we will be creating a committee to review the curriculum – we want to ensure an active eye to the curriculum and will be doing this work in concert with the DoT.

12:45:21 From Rachel Flesher INC to Everyone:
Curriculum review committee- is that a committee that is formed?

12:45:40 From Tammy (she/they) to Everyone:
Yes. There will be a call out!

12:45:46 From John Knight (he/him) to Everyone:

It hasn't been formed yet. A call will go out.

12:45:54 From Rachel Flesher INC to Everyone:

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e. Welcome packets and student onboarding

Last year when we talked about this, Michelle was in the planning stages of the Membership booklet, trying to figure out what the package needed to be. As it moved from that into the development process, they have realized that the plan isn't what will best support members. They will be simplifying the process to try and make it less dense and more accessible to membership – will be using graphics, flow charts, etc. Eventually, they will need support in someone to help clean it up and make it look good.

Tammy's FI package was briefly talked about earlier – though she is moving out of this position, so will no longer be in charge of implementing this document, she has worked this year to ensure that the apprenticeship process was clarified in the P&P, but also will be supporting the development now as the new DoT with whoever steps into the role as FI/Apprenticeship Rep. The Instructor booklet has also needed to shift with the update to the curriculum, so will be working with the new FI/App Rep & FMs to ensure clarity of expectations for instructors.

f. YouTube content

YouTube was an initiative that we tried to roll out, and had some modest success/engagement, but it has died a slow death of non-engagement. We struggled to get content to put up and didn't have a lot of people coming forward to create content. If you are interested in creating content for YouTube, please get in touch with John.

12:51:28 From John Nelles (He-Him) to Everyone:

If you post something on YouTube, or other online path, if you are an ACTRA member you can note it on the "digital registry" so that if someone tries to use that content, or wants to take it, you can claim that it has been registered and then if they use or want to use it, you can be compensated at appropriate Actra rates.

Don't let it be used for free.

12:51:52 From Chris Mott to Everyone:

Oooo, thanks John!

g. Ethics committee

This was an initiative that began at the start of Nathania's presidency and it was put in place to support the suggested changes from the Town Hall. Unfortunately, this committee has also been put on the backburner because we need membership engagement to make it happen. We are hoping to discuss with membership what they want to see in the Code of Conduct and how we can serve them better, as well as creating clear community expectations for both students and teachers. We

are still hoping to build this committee, including to have them look at our structures, such as how our complaint structure works – mandatory vs non-mandatory reporting. It would mean potential large changes for the organization, but we need membership engagement to make it happen. It doesn't have to be called an ethics committee, but we need people to come together to look at how we will keep our spaces safe

R. Flesher – as someone who was helping to support the previous ethics committee initiative, something that was an issue as the previous committee was lack of engagement from the board – we reached out several times and didn't feel we got response on our questions. This is a really complex position that the board has asked for – they are multiple tiers of action; it was unclear on whether we needed subcommittees, if we were trying to achieve policy change, etc. We had a lot of questions and not a lot of response from the board on what they needed from us. It tapered off because we have been in a major time of shift, and there were major questions to be answered about how the organization wanted to address things. Folks who were on the previous committee and happy to continue helping, but need more support from the board. If anyone has questions about the former committee and what they were working on, Rachel is happy to continue to keep the ball rolling

12:58:23 From Nathania Bernabe to Everyone:

Thank you Rachel for this. I would like to accumulate all the findings and share with the organization to help keep moving this forward.

h. FDC Training Grants

This year we ended up building these new grants with Daniel and Kirsten to help bring people in and build the community. We recognize that not everyone has the funding or ability to take our training.

This grant is intended to encourage Advanced Actor-Combatants from marginalised groups in their pursuit of certification at the AFDC leadership levels of FI and FD, and to help mitigate the opportunity cost of giving up paid work to pursue FI or FD training hours. This grant consists of 2 payments of \$2500 CAD each, awarded over a 2-year period. Beyond a short list of restrictions, it's up to the recipient to decide how this grant would best facilitate their training.

These grants being made available to our AFDC members are part of a series sponsored by the principals of Rapier Wit, a stage combat studio in Toronto, Ontario founded by FDC Fight Master Daniel Levinson. AFDC has partnered with Daniel and his wife Kirsten Gundlack Levinson on this grant program as part of our shared desire to promote a healthy, vibrant, diverse, and truly inclusive stage combat community. The planned grant series will run for a minimum of 3 years, with minor adjustments being made to the grant allocations according to the changing needs of our membership.

Both AFDC and Rapier Wit are committed to an ongoing, dynamic effort to reduce barriers to this essential training and foster the progression of all our members. As we tentatively but joyfully move back towards in-person training, we recognize the wide-ranging effects the pandemic has had on our professional sector, and the subsequent financial impact on so many of our members. We also would like to offer particular encouragement at this time to members of groups which historically have been underrepresented in our organization and our discipline, especially at the leadership levels of fight instruction and direction. It's our shared hope that our combined continuing efforts and initiatives such as this grant program will nourish an artist ecosystem that helps members from all backgrounds to grow and flourish at all levels of our organizations.

Huge thank you to Dan and Kirsten for their work on the application and figuring out how to make it as accessible as possible. If you need any support at all in getting the application together, please email Michelle.

7. New Business

a. FI/Apprentice Rep Position

We need a new FI/Apprenticeship rep – because Tammy is taking on the DoT role, she is stepping down before the end of her elected term. She is happy to help onboard someone and be there as a resource throughout their term. Deadline for nominations is October 9th – if you are interested in representing the community, please put yourself in the running!

8. Questions from the Floor

R. Flesher – can we nominate at the AGM?

C. Mott – No, people need to be nominated in writing.

13:01:43 From Mike Kovac to Everyone:

Yes, can we make nominations at the AGM?

13:07:54 From Chris Mott to Everyone:

Nomination process for all Board positions: The AFDC/FDC member nominating the candidate will offer a letter of support explaining why their nominee should be considered for the position. The nominee will submit a letter of intent which must include their platform for the position that covers their goals and ideas for their term. Materials for nominations should be sent to secretary@fdc.ca or membershipadmin@fdc.ca. FI/A Rep nominations are open until Sept 24th.

13:10:45 From Rachel Flesher INC to Everyone:

Thank you Chris!

R. Flesher – we have previously talked about creating a board position specifically for apprentices – thinks this would be great to have a person specifically at the Apprentice level on the board and it could be a more inclusive way to ensure apprentices are heard.

C. Mott – we are unfortunately at our maximum number of board seats; in order to create a new position, we would have to get rid of something else

13:11:26 From John Knight (he/him) to Everyone:

For reference: our incorporation articles state the minimum # of board members is 3 and the maximum is 7. Current board structure includes: president, secretary, treasurer, FI rep, FM rep, membership rep, & executive advisor

M. Lewis – because we are at the maximum, what has been proposed is that the FI rep become more involved with the apprentices – in order to help bridge the knowledge gap, we are planning to set up regular and ongoing meetings with the current apprentices to help support their questions and also bring any concerns back to the board. If that doesn't work, we will revisit.

R. Flesher - Yes! That is a great proposal. Especially for folks in the States, since there are so many less people, it can be challenging for the teachers who are available down there to be available enough to support the apprentices who are coming up.

T. Everett – the DoT has also previously been responsible, along side JF Gagnon, to ensure the apprentices are appropriately supported and is excited to help current apprentices and future apprentices. She has started the process of that support by emailing all instructors to get a comprehensive list of their current apprentices. She will also be emailing all current apprentices, individually, by mid-October to help them and get a sense of where they are in their process. If you are an apprentice and haven't received an email from Tammy by mid-October, please reach out. Once all that has happened, she will be reaching out again to instructors so that things are clear for each individual's process. And anyone who is hoping to move forward into Journeying or FI testing will need to email Tammy/JF so we can get folks into those positions. The role of journeying has also been expanded so it can be more accessible, which Tammy will email instructors/Apprentices about as well.

J. Nelles – has been on the Directors and Choreographers Committee with Equity; they are meeting tomorrow – questions for FDs and members who are working as actors under the agreement:

Are you having any issues that you want equity to be aware of that is not working under the contract – please email John tonight so he can bring that forward, but also in the future if things come up.

How to join as an FD – under the agreements, a member of FDC and/or Society of Canadian Fight Directors and/or any other affiliated organization is considered an Equity FD. Other members can become Equity FDs, if you sign an Equity FD contract-you do not have to be an actor first.

Currently if you go to Equity's site to look up FDs, their technology only allows people to be listed as a single thing, so the committee are pushing them to allow people to be listed under both actor and FD categories.

Directors on the committee are dealing with the fact that they are there to get the show rehearsed and open – then what happens if something changes once the show is open? We are also aware of that as FDs - 61-08 CTA addresses changes that occur to fights after the show is open. If you have questions or comments about that, get in touch with John.

13:20:19 From John Nelles (He-Him) to Everyone:

My email is: contact@act4living.ca

you can find me under my name on FB, or on IG, but most direct is through email.

if you want to phone me, send an email and we'll arrange it. Thanks.

R. Flesher – Concerning the idea of having adjudication tier within the community, rather than only having FMs available for that – are there any plans to move forward with that? Would be great to diversify and help keep equitable our industry.

C. Mott – the college of FMs is currently reviewing the policies around adjudication, and the talks are ongoing.

T. Everett – has also made a commitment to work with the FMs to ensure we are moving forward on this yes, and we will be asking other FIs for their input as well.

R. Flesher - As we continue looking into our policies and procedures, want to ensure that we are getting a gender and sexuality educator to look at our material – has had people reach out with complaints to them and wants to ensure teachers are up to date and are choosing venues that are safe and accessible.

N- Bernabe – please connect with her and Tammy to get the request re: gender and sexuality moving.

J-P. Fournier – question re: apprentices – by and large, they are people going through an experience rather than people who have the experience – the suggestion to have the apprentices connected with FIs who have gone through the process seems to make sense in terms of keeping commination open and ensure they are supported.

M. Kovak – will be nominating Rachel Flesher for the open board position in writing soon.

R. Flesher – will also be nominating Kovak.

J-P. Fournier motions to adjourn; meeting adjourned at 1:26pm MDT