



Irish Cultural Society of Calgary

Annual General Meeting Minutes

Time and Date: 1pm on Sunday, March 26, 2023

Location: Bunratty Hall

Doors open at 12:15pm with Tea/Coffee and refreshments

Present: Brian Bolger (President & Communications Director), Eoin O'Grady (Vice-President & Building Director), Geraldine O'Shea (Treasurer), Brian Seaman (Secretary), Colleen Devlin (Choir Liaison & Director-at-Large), Fintan Ryan (Director-at-Large)

ICS Staff in Attendance: Cathy Johnson (ICS Centre Administrator)

Absent: Ciera Mathieu (Creative Arts Director & Director-at-Large), Stu Connor (Bar Director)

1. **Meeting called to order by Brian Bolger at 1:12 pm**
2. **Establish Quorum**

Headcount of 27 members; minimum of 26 needed for quorum

3. **Approval of Agenda**

Motion to approve Agenda.

Moved: Neil Gunning

Seconded: Eoin O'Grady

Approved unanimously.

4. **Approval of Minutes of 2022 AGM**

Motion to approve Minutes of 2022 AGM

Moved: Eoin O'Grady

Seconded: Deirdre Halferty

Approved unanimously.

5. Reports

a) Brian Bolger – President and Communications Director

- Thanks to all board members and volunteers.
- Great to meet the Irish Consul-General from Vancouver and to learn more about the generous support from various grants available from the Irish government.
- Great to host last November Eamonn McKee, Ireland's Ambassador to Canada
- Thanks to Deirdre Halferty, Honourary Consul, and to Laureen Regan, the Honourary Vice-Consul
- Welcome extended to Maria Ryan, Chairperson of the Calgary Chieftains; important to stay linked to the Chieftains.
- Acknowledged and welcomed a new slate of board members.
- John Doyle's efforts as a volunteer were recognized at this year's *Green Tie Affair* where he received an award from the ICS.

b) Geraldine O'Shea – Treasurer (Report appended)

- Biannual Casino is set for August 25-26, 2023.
- ICS had an extremely good year financially.
- Another successful annual golf tournament facilitated by John Doyle
- Several successful events
- Her aim was to make things run more effectively.

c) Eoin O'Grady Vice-President & Building Director (Report Appended)

- Need to stress to all our funders how important their continued support is for the viability of the ICS.
- Acknowledged and thanked Michelle Dice's solid contribution as the ICS grant writer.
- Thanks to the various volunteers.

d) Eoin O'Grady – Spoke on behalf of the Centre Administrator (Report Appended)

- Having a paid part-time Administrator is a good investment; among other things, it is important for continuity.
- The Centre was a filming location for an episode of the American television series *Fargo*.
- Rental rates were increased by 5-10% in response to inflationary pressures; even with the increases, the Centre still represents good value in northwest Calgary.

e) Stu Connor – Bar Director (Report Appended)

- Stu was absent so Brian Bolger spoke.

- Thanked Stu for his great contribution over the past year, particularly regarding management of *Hickey's*.

f) Colleen Devlin – Choir Liaison & Director-at-Large (Report Appended)

- Choir is happy about being back to Hickey's as of April 2022 for in-person practices.
- Seven sing-outs upcoming, including the annual Water Valley Celtic Music Festival

g) Joe Massey – Irish language Lessons

- Lessons resumed at the Centre in October of 2022
- Personal contact is very important for instruction.
- Currently there are four students.
- Thanks to the ICS board for its support.

h) Ray Kavanagh – Care Committee

- They drafted a policy guideline to explain what the Care Committee does.
- About 10 ICS members passed away in the past year; condolences were sent to their families.
- Committee hopes to do some fund-raising.

i) John Doyle – Golf Tournament and Celtic Pub Nights

- Hosted six pub nights from September-April
- Thanks to Geri for changes to process to make it easier to pay the bands.
- Thanks to Stu and Cassie for their bartending at *Hickey's*!
- Golf Tournament in August at *Wintergreen*; another success

j) Sean Hayes – Concerts

- Successful concert year from March 12/22-March 12/23
- High points were the Lunasa and Teada concerts.
- Aready has booked three bands for next year.

k) Deirdre Halferty – Honourary Consul for Ireland

- Honourary Consul is not an official diplomatic position but is appointed by the Ambassador.
- Explained her role as Consul is to help promote Irish culture in Calgary.
- Visits people in hospital and has visited with Irish citizens in prison.
- Assists people with passport issues or obtaining emergency travel documents.

6. Election of Board Members

Deirdre Halferty chaired the Nomination and Election process.

Dissolution of Board of Directors for 2022-2023

Motion to dissolve the current Board of Directors and to elect a new Board for 2023-2024.

Moved: Neil Dunning

Seconded: Eoin O'Grady

Approved unanimously.

A slate of candidates for 2023-24 was nominated and is appended.

- President – vacant
- Vice-President & Building Director – Eoin O'Grady
- Secretary – Shannon Brash
- Treasurer – vacant
- Bar Director – Stuart Connor
- Events Director – Fintan Ryan
- Communications Director – Andrea O'Malley
- Director-at-Large/Casino – Brian Seaman
- Director-at-Large/Choir Liaison – Mike Hartney
- Director-at-Large – Alix Halpen

Deirdre identified each position, the name of the nominee, the movers, and seconders for each one, verified if the nominee wished to stand, and asked if there were any other nominations from the membership.

- Eoin O'Grady said that Sarah-Jane Sharkey has come forward to say she would stand for Treasurer. Eoin said she would be wonderful asset for the ICS as she is a Chartered Professional Accountant.

Motion: That Sarah-Jane Sharkey be nominated to stand for Treasurer.

Moved: Eoin O'Grady

Seconded: Maria Ryan

Deirdre called for a vote to accept the slate of directors as nominated with the addition of Sarah-Jane Sharkey as Treasurer. The new Board of Directors for 2023-2024 was unanimously approved.

Motion: That all reports be accepted and adopted into the official record of proceedings.

Moved: Deirdre Halferty

Seconded: Brian Bolger
Approved unanimously.

7. Questions and Discussion

- Adam Dahmer introduced himself as the Liaison from the *St. Andrew-Caledonian Society of Calgary*. He expressed interest in building links with the ICS.
- Neil Dunning said that Louise O'Reilly (*Sinn Fein*) TD for Dublin Fingal in Ireland's Dail was doing a series of talks in Canada about the Good Friday Agreement, and she would be speaking at an event in Okotoks on April 13th and invited people to attend.
- Deirdre Halferty asked if the Irish jam sessions that took place on Sundays at the former *Oak Tree Tavern* could resume at *Hickey's* in the ICS Centre; Brian Bolger confirmed that Stu Connor was working on getting these sessions going again.
- Deirdre Halferty asked for an update on the sound quality issues in *Hickey's* and that it had been noted eight months ago. Eoin O'Grady noted that the speakers and microphones in use today are part of the proposed solution.
- Geraldine O'Shea pointed out that the board had voted to spend \$1500 toward upgrades at *Hickey's*.
- Ray Kavanagh asked whether bar sales was considered a source of income; Geraldine O'Shea explained they would be factored into financial statements but the focus on bar sales was as a community development initiative not as a profit-maker per se.
- Joe Massey asked about the effect of not having a President was. Eoin O'Grady explained that under the ICS By-laws the board of directors could appoint a member but in the interim, the Vice-President would assume responsibility.

8. Adjourn the Meeting

Brian Bolger called for a Motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:20 pm.

Motion to adjourn the Annual General Meeting.

Moved: Eoin O'Grady

Seconded: Ray Kavanagh

Unanimously approved.

These minutes were prepared by Brian Seaman (Secretary of the ICS) from notes he made contemporaneously at the AGM on March 26, 2023.



Irish Cultural Society of Calgary

Board of Director Positions 2023

Candidate Name: Vacant

Position Desired: President

Nominated by: **Seconded by:**

Candidate Name: Eoin O'Grady

Position Desired: Vice-President and Building Director

I have critical thinking, people leadership and project management skills and work experience in a large post-secondary organization with responsibility for people leadership and budgets. I am able to bring people together, identify priorities and secure grant funding for the long-term benefit of ICS. I have enjoyed being VP/Building Director at ICS since 2020 and am excited to see the Centre continue as a welcoming, safe and accessible space.

Nominated by: Sean Hayes, **Seconded by:** Brian Bolger



Candidate Name: Shannon Brash

Position Desired: Secretary

I have experience in similar roles as a former member of the Casey O'Loughlin parent group society and as President of the Youth Singers of Calgary parent council. I bring with me current office admin skills in my role as a medical office nurse. I am an excellent listener and am able to summarize information concisely for distribution to the group. On a personal note, I am a team player and enjoy giving back to a community of people that have given me so much.

Nominated by: Eoin O'Grady, **Seconded by:** Brian Bolger





Irish Cultural Society of Calgary

Candidate Name: Sarah Jane Sharkey

Position Desired: Treasurer

I moved to Calgary over 9 years ago and just recently became a member of the ICS, as I wanted to become more involved with the Irish community. I have over 15 years experience in accounting and finance and I also sit on another board as treasurer. I look forward to bringing my experience and skill to the ICS.



Nominated by Eoin O'Grady, Seconded by: Maria Ryan

Candidate Name: Stuart Connor

Position Desired: Bar Director

Working as a bartender in some of Calgary's favorite places and owning and operating the Oak Tree Tavern in Kensington, I have vast knowledge in the hospitality business. I am still in the hospitality industry at Winsport. With over 32 years of Hospitality experience, I will share my skills and talents to the ICS as the Bar Director.



Nominated by: Brian Bolger, Seconded by: Eoin O'Grady

Candidate Name: Fintan Ryan

Position Desired: Events Director

MBA, CEC, ICF. People development and leadership skills. I have worked in senior leadership positions in financial institutions (Credit Unions) for over 30 years. I moved to Canada 5 years ago and have always been involved in community and sporting organizations. In credit unions I have dealt with and understand the work of voluntary board members. I have held positions of responsibility in many organizations. In May of 2021 I left the credit union world to establish my own Executive Coaching business. www.oriaincoaching.com I have a keen interest in Irish Culture and have been known to write a poem or two!!



Nominated by: Eoin O'Grady, Seconded by: Brian Bolger



Irish Cultural Society of Calgary

Candidate Name: Andrea O'Malley

Position Desired: Communications Director

Andrea has spent more than six years working in marketing and communications, primarily in the energy sector. Experience includes developing marketing and communication strategies that help advance an organization's brand. These strategies include publications, digital marketing, rebranding, website creation and management, events and conferences; experience she is excited to implement with the Irish Cultural Society.



While only a member since 2023, Andrea is eager to be part of the growth of the Irish Cultural Society. A mother of a toddler and the wife of a proud Limerick man.

Nominated by: Eoin O'Grady, Seconded by: Brian Bolger

Candidate Name: Brian Seaman

Position Desired: Director at Large - Casino

I am originally from Nova Scotia. I drove out to Calgary in late 2000 with whatever I could stash into my car, intending to stay three years, make some money, then head back to that most Celtic region of Canada. Things did not work out as planned, as I am still here. After several years of lecturing and writing reports for an independent civil liberties institute at the University of Calgary, I struck out on my own, providing legal and business advice to non-profits and charitable foundations. I am currently the Business Development Manager for a law firm called Precision Law and work part-time as a certified Personal Fitness Trainer specializing in exercise for older adults and adults in post-operative rehabilitation. I joined the ICS in late 2019 because of a need to reconnect with Celtic culture. I am a member of the ICS Choir and have been Secretary from 2021-2023



Nominated by: Brian Bolger, Seconded by: Eoin O'Grady



Irish Cultural Society of Calgary

Candidate Name: Mike Hartney

Position Desired: Director at Large - Choir

Mike is originally from Regina, has taught in high schools and practiced law as a sole practitioner for 35 years. He is involved in the community as a volunteer at the Hangar Air Museum and previously as a “White Hatter” at YYC Airport. His interests include travel and history. Mike was the Building Director in 2010 and 2011 and he has been a member of the Choir since 2017. Mike has been married to Valerie since 1972 and has two married daughters and four grandchildren.



Nominated by: Colleen Devlin, Seconded by: Eoin O’Grady

Candidate Name: Alix Halpen

Position Desired: Director at Large

I am a born and bred Calgarian. My parents are both of Irish descent and I have wanted to be more involved in the community. I graduated from Bishop Carroll and went on to the University of Calgary and have a degree in Psychology. For the majority of my adult working life, I worked in the land development industry and now am a residential estate agent. My current volunteer positions are, at Calgary Food Bank in the call centre, Calgary Reads annual book sale volunteer and my largest commitment is Project Linus Canada. I run a local chapter of Project Linus and am currently the President of Project Linus Canada. I have always been an avid volunteer and I enjoy each organization, the joy I receive is worth it.



Nominated by: Cathy Johnson, Seconded by: Eoin O’Grady



Irish Cultural Society of Calgary

Part-time Staff

Michelle Dice

Michelle is a born and raised Calgarian and has been working as the Executive Director of the Bragg Creek Trails and other non-profits for over twelve years. With a BA in Business, Michelle has a wealth of hands on experience and is passionate about social enterprise and building community. When not working or travelling Michelle can be found to the west; hiking, mountain biking and skiing in the mountains.



Michelle assisted with staff onboarding as well as grant writing and reporting in 2022. In 2023, Michelle is primarily involved in grant writing and reporting.

Cathy Johnson, Centre Administrator

Cathy accepted the role of Centre Administrator in February 2023. Cathy is a long-standing member and outstanding contributor to ICS. This includes former positions on the Board of Directors and many volunteer contributions over the years. Cathy has an extensive background in banking, management and consulting. We are so pleased to have her join in this part-time role and are sure you'll recognize her love and affiliation for all things Irish as you interact with her at the ICS.



**There are many committees that need additional support.
Please let us know if you are interested in becoming a Board or Committee Member
with the Irish Cultural Society and supporting Irish culture, social relationships and
recreational activities in the community.**