

Pittsburgh Curling Club | Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Meeting Type: Regular Board Meeting

Date: December 14, 2025

Time: 6:08 PM

Location: Pittsburgh Curling Club, 491 McCoy Road, McKees Rocks, PA 15136

Attendance and Quorum Verification

Members Present:

- Dustin Devine (President)
- Rich Palagallo (Vice President)
- Dave McCormish
- Tyler Machovina
- Don Cober
- Quintin Lovicks
- Winnie Leung
- Trevor Mathey
- Zach Romitz
- Steve Buffington (via Zoom)

Officers Present:

- Allie Devine (Treasurer)

Observers Present:

- Diane (via Zoom) – Marketing Committee

Members Absent:

- Sarah Fissella (resigned effective this meeting)
 - Jacki Temple
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1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 PM by President Dustin Devine.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Discussion

- Minor corrections noted: attendance count showed 11 but only 10 members were listed
- One date correction identified

Conclusions

Motion: To approve the November 2025 Board of Directors meeting minutes as corrected

Moved by: R. Palagallo

Seconded by: T. Machovina

Vote: Passed unanimously

3. Member Comments

Discussion

- A member expressed appreciation for the quality of meeting minutes but noted the October minutes had not been posted
- Member request for baseball caps to be added to the logo shop; suggestion to consult Doug on timing
- Member suggestion for a "couples curling night" event based on positive experiences at other clubs; to be considered by the Membership Committee

Conclusions

- Logo shop baseball cap request forwarded to appropriate parties
 - Couples curling night suggestion to be taken to Membership Committee
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4. Board Resignation

Discussion

- D. Devine read Sarah Fissella's resignation letter effective immediately
- S. Fissella cited inability to commit the necessary time during the Olympic season
- S. Fissella offered to continue managing the Ryan Fissella Party Spiel food and programming in January
- Per bylaws, board vacancies may be filled by simple majority vote
- Jamie was mentioned as a potential candidate pending review of his conflict of interest obligations due to his government position
- Discussion of potential additional vacancies anticipated

Conclusions

- Resignation accepted per bylaws (effective immediately)
 - No immediate vote on replacement; to be addressed at future meeting
 - Board acknowledged urgency of filling vacancies given current workload
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5. Financial Report

Presenter: A. Devine (Treasurer)

Discussion

- **Total Cash Position (end of November):** \$54,000 across all accounts
- **Internal Transfer:** \$9,900 moved from secondary account to primary
- **November Revenue:** \$16,100
 - Bonspiel: \$3,000
 - League fees: \$2,500
 - Learn to Curl: \$5,700
- **November Expenses:** \$18,600
 - Standard utilities
 - Logo shop merchandise received
 - BCO-10 state taxes: \$100
 - Allegheny County alcohol tax: \$110
 - Bonus Accounting (tax preparation): \$670
 - Board of Directors insurance: \$1,400
 - Westview Water refund received: (\$3,600) – refund from original building water line installation

- **Long-term Liabilities:** \$1.1 million
- **Planned December Expenses:** Approximately \$28,000
 - USCA dues: \$3,810
 - GNCC dues: \$1,815
 - Rock handle reimbursement to Lora Kyle: \$304.79
 - Bonspiel bar reimbursement: \$304.79
 - Bonspiel piper payment: \$150
 - School taxes
 - Standard operating expenses

Discussion on State Filing Requirements

- Annual state nonprofit registration update is overdue (originally due in June 2025)
- State granting grace period but will begin enforcement in 2026
- Filing primarily requires address and officer updates; no financial information needed
- D. Devine committed to completing within the week
- Bonus Accounting provided instructional video

Conclusions

- Financial report accepted as presented
- State filing to be completed before year-end
- USWCA dues invoice still pending (estimated \$200-\$300)
- GNCC insurance invoice expected in January

6. Mid-Season Scorecard

Presenter: D. Devine

Discussion

The board reviewed the club's mid-season financial performance against budget. The finance committee provided benchmarking data showing shortfalls across multiple revenue categories.

First Half Revenue Shortfalls (Rounded):

Category	Shortfall Amount
Membership Fees/Leagues	\$1,000
Open/Public Learn to Curl	\$11,000

Category	Shortfall Amount
Group/Private Learn to Curl	\$4,500
Bonspiel Registrations	\$13,500
Bonspiel Other Revenue	\$3,000
Sponsorship	\$2,000
Cash Donations	\$14,000
Logo Shop	\$1,000
Total Estimated First Half Shortfall	\$52,000

Analysis by Category:

Membership: May have recovered due to recent upgrades; five out-of-band membership upgrades occurred after numbers were run. Shortfall primarily in growth rather than retention.

Learn to Curl (Open/Public): Significant underperformance. Events are not filling; most sessions have fewer than 10 participants versus expected capacity. Issue appears to be leads entering the funnel, not capacity or volunteers.

Bonspiels: Market saturation is a significant factor; multiple competing events every weekend. Revenue shortfalls by event:

- Green Ice Spiel: (\$2,400)
- Penn State Spiel: (\$750) – expected 16 teams, received 8
- GNCC Open: (\$10,900)
- In-House Spiel: +\$550

The Party Spiel currently has 8 teams registered against a budget of 24 teams at \$450 each, representing potential \$6,000-\$7,000 exposure.

Donations: Projected \$16,500 for first half; actual receipts approximately \$2,000. Full-year budget is \$18,000 (down from last year's actual of \$31,000). Timing expectation was for larger donations before year-end for tax purposes.

Context: Olympics begin in approximately 50 days, presenting significant opportunity for recovery.

Conclusions

- Board acknowledged need for aggressive second-half strategy
 - Multiple initiatives approved to address shortfalls (see subsequent agenda items)
 - Monthly office hours check-ins to continue
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7. Second-Half Adjustments

7a. Marketing Strategy

Presenter: Diane (Marketing Committee)

Discussion

The Marketing Committee presented a comprehensive marketing strategy document focusing on Olympic period opportunities.

Key Recommendations:

- Update website to include lead capture forms on all pages
- Implement \$5 coupon incentive for sign-ups to build email list
- Target marketing efforts before and during Olympics (mid-January through February)
- Invest in social media advertising with geographic targeting
- Develop content calendar with increased posting frequency (goal: 4 posts/week)
- Create media kit for members speaking with press
- Pursue partnership with Pittsburgh Sports League (PSL)
- Explore radio/podcast opportunities through member contacts

Resource Needs Discussion:

- \$3,600 budgeted for advertising; discussion of whether to engage external marketing help
- Evan (committee member) has relevant experience but limited availability
- Diane offered to obtain pricing from marketing contacts for external support
- Marketing committee to meet before Christmas to finalize resource plan

Action Items:

- Marketing committee to meet this week to size resource needs
- Diane to obtain pricing for potential external marketing support
- Content creation support needed; Jamie's content development to continue

- Board members to be added to shared Google Calendar for coordination

Conclusions

- Winnie Leung confirmed as board-level owner of marketing execution
- Diane confirmed as owner of marketing plan
- Website newsletter plugin requires work with vendor for SendGrid integration and unsubscribe functionality
- Current email consent rate is only 10%; defaults have been updated for new registrations

7b. Olympic Experience Program

Presenter: R. Palagallo (Education Committee)

Discussion

Development of a new "Olympic Experience" product designed for bucket-list participants during the Olympic period.

Program Details:

- Condensed format: practice throwing stones followed by abbreviated game play
- Target audience: casual participants seeking Olympic-themed experience
- Expected lower conversion rate to membership than traditional Learn to Curl
- January trial dates added to calendar using college students as test participants
- Outreach to 10-12 college student engagement offices completed
- Trial sessions will inform marketing content and operational procedures

Competition Consideration:

- Direct competition from Millvale facility noted
- Every moment of delay results in lost bookings to competitor
- Need for aggressive marketing positioning

Operational Needs:

- QR codes and signup materials at events
- Follow-up marketing materials for conversion to membership
- Volunteer portal updates for Learn to Curl 2 instruction

Conclusions

- Trial sessions scheduled for January (dates on Google Calendar)
- Marketing content to be developed following trial sessions

- Rich to provide blurb for newsletter
- Coordination with PSL for potential bucket-list events

7c. Pittsburgh Sports League Partnership

Presenter: Q. Lovicks

Discussion

- Meeting held with Megan from Pittsburgh Sports League (PSL)
- PSL interested in curling programming for their members
- Price point of approximately \$80 per person aligns with their typical sports activities
- Discussion of offering Curl 1-2-3 progression package
- PSL also interested in bucket-list style Olympic experience events
- Megan to consult with colleague Kai and respond early next week

Conclusions

- Quintin to coordinate with Rich, Gerry, and others on dates and programming
- PSL partnership represents strong marketing channel with built-in selection bias for athletic participants

7d. Group Learn to Curl Promotional Pricing

Presenter: D. McCormish

Discussion

Extensive discussion regarding pricing strategy for group/private Learn to Curl activities.

Current Situation:

- Pricing at \$100/person experiencing high rejection rate
- Informal pricing has ranged from \$45-\$100 depending on circumstances
- Competitor analysis: Topgolf offers 2 hours with food/drinks for \$52; bowling approximately \$60
- Price identified as primary barrier in follow-up with lost leads
- Thursday evening availability reduced due to Olympic League

Proposed Promotional Pricing:

- \$500 per sheet (up to 8 people)
- Additional participants: \$60/head or second full sheet
- Promotional period: January 1 – February 28, 2025
- Events must occur by March 31, 2025

Lost Lead Strategy:

- Reach out to previous prospects who declined due to price
- Frame as "Olympic promotional pricing"
- Tyler to assist with lead follow-up and booking

Conclusions

Motion: To establish a promotional pricing period for group Learn to Curl activities. The promotion will begin January 1, 2025 and run through February 28, 2025. Invoices must be booked and paid during that promotional period to receive promotional pricing. Event dates must occur by March 31, 2025. Pricing is \$500 per sheet for a single sheet. For groups exceeding 8 participants, additional pricing is \$60 per head or an additional full sheet, at the discretion of the program coordinator.

Moved by: D. McCormish

Seconded by: R. Palagallo

Vote: Passed unanimously (voice vote; S. Buffington confirmed aye via Zoom)

8. Committee Reports

8a. Grants & Sponsorships Committee

Presenter: T. Machovina

Discussion

- Sponsorship prospecting plan developed for Pittsburgh region companies
- First active sponsorship outreach campaign in club history (previously passive/member-driven)
- Jamie engaging S&T Bank and U.S. Steel (early-stage conversations)
- U.S. Steel may have gone quiet; suggestion to leverage U.S. Curling relationship
- Revenue targets for fundraising bucket: Grants \$1,000, Sponsorships \$5,000, Donations \$18,000 (total \$24,000)
- Discussion of combining sponsorships, grants, and donations under unified "fundraising" committee structure for future

UPMC Update: Current UPMC Sportsmedicine sheet sponsorship will not be renewed. Health Plan division will not dual-market, so conversations with Health Plan can begin after current sponsorship expires (March/April timeframe).

Stream Advertising: Opportunity to include sponsor logos in video streams; implementation to be developed when sponsors are secured.

Conclusions

- Tyler to provide monthly red/yellow/green status update on sponsorship prospects
- Tyler to create Excel tracker for sponsorship pipeline
- Donations added to committee scope

8b. Ice Committee

Presenter: T. Mathey

Discussion

Chiller Issues:

- Two emergency service calls over holiday weekend
- As of meeting, chiller appears to be functioning normally
- Invoices not yet received; expected to be significant (potentially several thousand dollars)
- Off-hours service call from non-local technician will increase cost
- Discussion of negotiating better pricing when invoices arrive
- Lesson learned: budget should include larger chiller maintenance reserve (~\$5,000/year recommended based on other clubs' experience)
- Preventative maintenance contracts not recommended as cost-effective by Trane technician

Equipment:

- Ice blade weights being machined by Don to fit new Canada Curling Stone blade
- One Thompson blade confirmed functional; one confirmed unusable
- May need to budget for third CCS blade if finances allow
- Pebblehead quality review underway; some heads not measuring to stated size
- 3D printed pebbleheads receiving positive reviews from professional ice technicians; approximately \$800 for complete set

Conclusions

- S. Buffington to negotiate chiller service invoices
- Future budgets should include larger chiller maintenance reserve
- Pebblehead upgrade to be considered in future budget

8c. Facilities Committee

Presenter: S. Buffington

Discussion

- Snow removal completed same morning using snowblower (heavy snow required multiple passes)
- Volunteer help for snow removal would be appreciated; timing is critical (before tire compaction)
- Upcoming expenses:
 - Fire extinguisher inspection: ~\$100
 - Backflow preventer test (January): ~\$100

Conclusions

- Q. Lovicks to coordinate volunteer snow removal assistance
- Fire extinguisher and backflow inspections to be scheduled

8d. Finance Committee

Presenter: D. McCormish

Discussion

- Accounting/bookkeeping re-engineering project update
- Kenny Bonus (Bonus Accounting) unable to take on project (outside scope of services)
- Meeting scheduled Tuesday with alternative firm in South Hills
- If third-party solution not found, may use Carol and Dave McCormish donation funds for engineering resources
- Challenge: need operational process integration, not just standard bank-to-QuickBooks workflow

Conclusions

- D. McCormish to report back on Tuesday meeting outcome
- May discuss alternative approaches with Z. Romitz if needed

8e. Membership Committee

Presenter: Z. Romitz

Discussion

Membership Statistics:

- Total current members: 124 (versus 107 at same time last year)
- New members this year: 27
- Unlimited members: 27

Winter League Registration (Second Half):

League	Signed Up
Mondays	29
Tuesdays	22
Wednesdays	17
Stones and Scones	13
Thursday Night Late	8
Sundays	7
Olympic League	4

- Members must actively re-register for second half; reminder notification to be sent

Member Concern – League Feedback Procedures:

- A member concern was received regarding feedback provided to a league draw master
- Board discussed appropriate procedures for member feedback to volunteer coordinators

Conclusions

- Board affirmed that draw master decisions regarding league operations are final
- Members encouraged to provide constructive feedback in writing
- Volunteer contributions to league operations acknowledged and appreciated
- Z. Romitz to communicate board discussion to the member
- League registration procedures to be reviewed for next season

Saturday Evening Draw:

- Survey results insufficient to support every-other-week format
- Alternative: Pizza League sessions displaced by Friday Learn to Curls will move to following Saturday
- Continues through end of season
- One additional Saturday Pizza League in May when no Friday Learn to Curls scheduled

8f. Education Committee

Presenter: R. Palagallo

Discussion

- Third Steve's Curling badge order placed; A. Devine copied on invoice
- "Learn to Learn to Curl" instructor training session to be scheduled (likely after Stones)
- Learn to Curl 2 volunteer sign-up portal needed
- Lora and Gerry Kyle willing to help with Learn to Curl 2 instruction; request for sign-up system
- Separate volunteer tags needed for Learn to Curl 2 instructors (qualified instructors only)

Conclusions

- R. Palagallo to finalize Learn to Learn to Curl dates for newsletter
- Technology Committee to add Learn to Curl 2 volunteer sign-up with qualified instructor restriction

8g. Technology Committee

Presenter: D. Cober

Discussion

- Systems stable and functioning well
- Chiller alert emails working correctly during recent issues
- House cameras recording most draws; minor debugging needed
- **Planned Projects:**
 - "Good shot" button – timestamp capture for highlight clips
 - Monitor installation on board for individual sheet timers and overhead camera views
 - All equipment donated; only mounts need to be purchased
 - Timer control via phone app being developed
- Stream quality praised; favorable comparison to professional events

Technical Issue:

- Stream naming error occurred during Tuesday playoff games
- Stream key management issue when running multiple sheets; being addressed
- Volunteer hours tracking issue identified: members unable to see logged hours after submission
- Q. Lovicks to work with Burt to resolve

Conclusions

- Technology committee to implement projects over winter break
- Volunteer hours display issue to be resolved
- Members interested in technology projects welcome to participate

8h. Events Committee

Presenter: S. Buffington

Discussion

- GNCC and in-house spiel executed well given circumstances
- In-house rotation format successful; proved split draw concept can work
- Party Spiel currently at 8 teams; targeting 12-16 teams
 - Two additional in-house teams likely
 - One known out-of-town registration expected
- Tropicurl expected to fill (95% confidence)
- In-house spiel to remain on calendar for next year
- Trophy to be engraved with 2022 and 2025 winners
- Tropicurl graphic needed from Michael for registration opening

Conclusions

- Continue party spiel recruitment efforts
- S. Buffington to obtain Tropicurl graphic

8i. Volunteerism Committee

Presenter: Q. Lovicks

Discussion

- Focus on building communication lists and understanding member communication preferences
- Members use varied channels: Slack, text, email
- Creating separate lists for non-Slack members
- Volunteer hours logging issue: members (including Jamie) unable to see their logged hours
- Hours are being recorded correctly on backend

Conclusions

- Q. Lovicks to work with Burt on volunteer hours visibility issue

8j. Marketing/Communications Committee

Presenter: W. Leung

Discussion

- See extensive marketing discussion in Section 7a

- Newsletter plugin requires vendor assistance for:
 - SendGrid integration for proper email domain formatting (avoid spam folders)
 - Unsubscribe/subscription management functionality
- Current email consent rate is 10%
- Defaults changed for new registrations to improve opt-in rates
- Existing email groups have unsubscribe if sent from group email, but not if sent from personal email

Conclusions

- Vendor engagement needed for newsletter infrastructure
- Consent defaults updated

9. New Business

No additional new business items raised.

10. Action Items

Action Item	Person Responsible	Deadline	Status
Complete state nonprofit registration filing	D. Devine	December 21, 2025	Pending
Communicate with member regarding board discussion on member concern	Z. Romitz	December 21, 2025	Pending
Meet with marketing committee to size resource needs	W. Leung, Diane	Before Christmas	Pending
Obtain external marketing support pricing	Diane	Before Christmas	Pending
Implement promotional pricing	Z. Romitz	January 1, 2025	Pending

Action Item	Person Responsible	Deadline	Status
for group Learn to Curl			
Conduct lost lead outreach campaign	T. Machovina	January 2025	Pending
Finalize Learn to Learn to Curl dates	R. Palagallo	January 2025	Pending
Add Learn to Curl 2 volunteer sign-up to portal	Technology Committee	January 2025	Pending
Resolve volunteer hours visibility issue	Q. Lovicks, Burt	January 2025	Pending
Meet with alternative accounting firm	D. McCormish	December 17, 2025	Pending
Create sponsorship pipeline tracker	T. Machovina	January 2025	Pending
Provide monthly sponsorship status updates	T. Machovina	Ongoing	Pending
Schedule fire extinguisher inspection	S. Buffington	January 2025	Pending
Schedule backflow preventer test	S. Buffington	January 2025	Pending
Negotiate chiller service invoices	S. Buffington	When received	Pending
Obtain Tropicurl graphic from Michael	D. Devine	Before next meeting	Pending
Add board members to Google Calendar access	Technology Committee	December 2025	Pending

Action Item	Person Responsible	Deadline	Status
Place badge order (third order)	R. Palagallo	Completed	Complete
Newsletter blurb for Olympic Experience	R. Palagallo	Before newsletter	Pending
Coordinate with PSL on dates/programming	Q. Lovicks	January 2025	Pending

11. Next Meeting

Date: January 11, 2025

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: Pittsburgh Curling Club, 491 McCoy Road, McKees Rocks, PA 15136

Note: R. Palagallo (Vice President) to preside; D. Devine will be at Club National Playdowns in Las Vegas. A. Devine to provide financial materials in advance.

Standing Meeting Time: 6:00 PM confirmed as new permanent meeting time.

12. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

Moved by: R. Palagallo

Seconded by: T. Machovina

Vote: Passed unanimously

Pittsburgh Curling Club is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.