

Meeting Minutes
for the
Halifax Aikikai Association (HAA)
Annual General Meeting – 2006-07
(2007 Fiscal Year)



The Halifax Aikikai Association is a member of the Canadian Aikido Federation (CAF)
and the Nova Scotia Aikido Federation (NSAF).

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This document contains the Minutes for the Halifax Aikikai Association (HAA) Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the 2007 fiscal year (01 Oct 2006 to 30 Sep 2007), held on 12 October 2007.

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1.0 OPEN MEETING

The current Chairman, Tom Hackmann, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:20 pm, 12 October 2007. He turned the meeting over to the Secretary, Patrick Sanford. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Halifax Aikikai Association (HAA) was held on the mats at the Halifax Aikikai dojo – the Abby Lane Gym.

Patrick supplied copies of the current membership list to the members present. Members were to review their contact information and supply corrections on the additional page provided, and/or to circle scratch their names to indicate their presence at the AGM

Patrick noted that as soon as the meeting had commenced, previous directors all retired from office, and new directors would take office following the close of the meeting.

1.1 Attendees

The following is a list of attendees for the 2007 AGM:

Celikkanat, Ali	Hackmann, Thomas	Sanford, Geoff
Fraser, Graham	MacMillan, Scott	Sanford, Patrick
Friis, Bruce	McAuley, Peter	Skanes, Kevin
Gesser, Margo	Nuschke, Michael	Vigerstad, Märta
Green, Alex	Orlando, Hernandez	

2.0 ORDINARY BUSINESS

Ordinary Business encompasses those activities described in the Society's By-laws. This statement was explained to the members present.

2.1 Summarise Previous Minutes

Using a copy of the previous AGM minutes, Patrick Sanford briefly glossed over the Ordinary Business elements of the previous minutes, then provided details concerning Special Business elements of the previous AGM. The following list identifies the items and information discussed:

3.1 Dues	No change to rates, Official dues policy created/posted
3.2 Waivers	Attempted to update
3.3 Records Upkeep	Continual actions to keep updated
3.4 NSAF	Paid once per year, regardless of when people join
3.5 CAF	Paid once per year by dojo, new members pay on 2 nd month's dues
3.6 Upcoming Events	Three events identified at last AGM
3.7 Mbr Retention	summarized survey, no actions

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|------|--|---|
| 3.8 | Mbr Developm't | Tom explained why requested changes were not necessary/possible |
| 3.9 | Mat Repair | 14 new mats in previous fiscal year, use Goop not silicone for repair |
| 3.10 | Weapons | none purchased by dojo, members should buy their own weapons, dojo weapons upkeep needed |
| 3.11 | Website | Domain name transferred to club secretary |
| 3.12 | HAA Alumni Club | nothing developed as of last year's AGM |
| 3.13 | Request ideas | regular get-togethers after class & another sushi party suggested |
| 3.14 | Senior Students as Regular Instructors | Tom noted why it is not good idea; too much talent gap and so much talent available for instruction.
Graham noted that senior students need to go to class more. |
| 4.0 | NEW BUSINESS | |
| 4.1 | Massage Therapy | Information provided about Northumberland college; follow-up actions requested (never happened) |
| 4.3 | Marketing | Phone & website sufficient marketing; no advertisement in magazines or papers |
| 4.4 | Authoris'd Purchases | \$400 for DVDs, \$50 - \$100 for internet subscriptions |

2.2 Summarise Annual Report

There was no previous annual report; all relevant information for the annual report can be summarised from the material submitted to the Registry of Joint Stock Companies (RJSC) and the previous minutes, which include a copy of the financial statement for the club. This fact was explained to the members present, as well as directing them to the binder in the Aikido locker which contains copies of the by-laws, minutes and other society-related material.

2.3 Summarise Finances

The financial statement for the 2006-2007 fiscal year was presented. It was noted that during the previous fiscal year, the club operated at a deficit, mostly due to monies provided to the NSAF that had not been repaid. The current fiscal year shows a profit that is mostly due to repayment of seminar monies paid on behalf of NSAF and repayment of summer camp deposit also paid on behalf of the NSAF. Without the repayments, the club's performance over the 2006-07 fiscal year would have been break-even.

Tom Hackmann explained that seminars normally cost more than the fees that they generate, and that Halifax Aikikai, as the largest club in the province, usually makes up any shortfall. Tom also made it clear that even though the club might operate in a deficit for a fiscal year, the bank balance is still positive.

A copy of the financial statement presented at the AGM is attached to these minutes as Annex A.

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2.4 Elect Directors

Patrick Sanford provided a brief overview of directors from the point of view of the Societies act and our By-laws, noting that Directors can be held financially liable for the club's finances (i.e.: going bankrupt and still owing money or being sued) and that the HAA does not carry Director's Liability insurance. He also noted that the HAA directors are somewhat protected against lawsuits by our waiver and the CAF insurance, and that while there is a legal possibility that a Director can be sued, it has never happened in NS and it is a **very** remote possibility.

Members were reminded that after the AGM commences, all directors have retired from office, and that our by-laws require a minimum of three and maximum of 15 directors.

Volunteers were requested for Directors. Those volunteering were: Margo Gesser, Alex Green, Tom Hackmann, Peter McAuley, Geoff Sanford and Patrick Sanford. The members were asked if they wished to vote the volunteers to become directors of the HAA; all members responded affirmatively.

The members present voted unanimously for the following persons as directors of the HAA:

- Margo Gesser
- Alex Green
- Tom Hackmann
- Peter McAuley
- Geoff Sanford
- Patrick Sanford

2.5 Elect Officers

Patrick Sanford explained that there are four possible positions that must be filled: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and that the Secretary and Treasurer positions are usually combined because they are so inter-related. It was also explained that Officers did not need to be Directors; it was just more usual for Officers to be elected from the ranks of Directors.

Patrick Sanford nominated Tom Hackmann for the position of Chairman and Graham Fraser seconded the nomination. The members were asked for other nominations or volunteers for this office; there were none. The members were asked to vote if they wished Tom Hackmann to be elected to the Office of Chairman. The vote was unanimous in favour.

Tom Hackmann nominated Peter McAuley for the position of Vice Chairman, and Patrick Sanford seconded the nomination. The members were asked for other nominations or volunteers for this office; there were none. The members were asked to vote if they wished Peter McAuley to be elected to the office of Vice-Chairman. The vote was unanimous in favour.

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Geoff Sanford nominated Patrick Sanford for the office of Secretary/Treasurer, and Margo Gesser seconded the nomination. The members were asked for other nominations or volunteers for this office; there were none. The members were asked to vote if they wished Patrick Sanford to be elected to the office of Secretary/Treasurer. The vote was unanimous in favour.

The members present voted unanimously for the following officers:

Tom Hackmann – Chairman
Peter McAuley – Vice-Chairman
Patrick Sanford – Secretary/Treasurer

2.6 Appoint Auditor

Patrick Sanford noted that the HAA did not have, nor has ever had, an auditor nor a need for one. He mentioned that should one be necessary (an audit requested by the RJSC), Robin Sanford could probably find a Chartered Accountant (CA) from among her contacts who would be willing to do the task for free or minimal charge.

3.0 SPECIAL BUSINESS

Special Business includes anything not included in Ordinary Business, and any/all issues discussed at an Extraordinary Meeting (not the AGM). This statement was explained to the members present.

3.1 Dues

Patrick Sanford noted his attempts to bring the dues up to date by chasing those who have outstanding balances. He noted that most people were fairly up-to-date with their dues, there were still some people who had dues outstanding as far back as last fall. Patrick took most of the responsibility for unpaid dues, as a result of frequent absences from the club.

Patrick noted that the club dues had not risen in at least five years, and neither had the rent, and that the club is operating at a break-even point. If the rent were to ever increase, it would put the club at a loss. Patrick also noted that attendance has been down over the past two years, especially in the first two terms of the year. It was noted that the eventual goal of the club was to have a dojo that was 'permanent' (no setting-up or replacing mats), and this would take money.

Patrick suggested an increase of \$5/month to the regular member fees and no change to the student fees. Tom Hackmann suggested doing away with the separate student fee and making all fees \$30/month. Geoff Sanford suggested raising both the student and regular fees by \$5/month. Graham Fraser spoke in favour of the third suggestion. Tom Hackmann also suggested a lower rate for 16-18 year olds, and impose a requirement of attending twice per week for the first four months. Patrick noted that this was a separate issue and requested that it be addressed after any changes to the dues structure was decided.

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The members were asked to vote on the three proposed changes to the dues structure. The first two changes were defeated, and the third change (to increase all rates by \$5/month) was approved. The change will take effect in the new year/new term.

The members present voted in favour of increasing both the student and regular member dues by \$5/month, beginning in January 2008.

3.1.1 Dues, 16-18 Year Old Students

Discussion then turned to the topic of including 16-18 year old students in the club. Patrick Sanford noted that students below 18 years old were permitted in the club, assessed on an individual basis. Tom Hackmann noted that he received about one call per week on the Aikido phone number concerning students in the 16-18 year range.

Graham Fraser questioned why the club should impose restrictions on younger students. Peter McAuley suggested that teenagers are not willing to stick out what they are not sure of. Tom questioned the students present whether an increase in student rates would affect student enrolment; Marta Vigerstad felt strongly that such an increase would not drive students away.. Marta noted that providing lower rates for this age group might have the opposite effect on commitment, as teenagers would place less value on something inexpensive.

Patrick noted that the club's society documentation did not need to be altered to include 16-18 year old students, as they could be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Tom and Graham felt that if this age group were going to be targeted for enrolment, then they should be included in the society's by-laws. The question of whether to lower the age of membership in the society's by-laws to 16 years old was put to a vote. The motion passed.

The members present voted in favour of modifying the society by-laws to lower the age of membership to 16 years old.

3.2 Waivers

Patrick Sanford noted that he had suggested at the last AGM to get new waivers from everyone, but that he had not been successful, due to lack of effort on his part. Patrick stated that he would try, over the next year, to get new/recent waivers for everyone in the club.

3.3 Records Upkeep

Patrick Sanford discussed the continuous efforts to keep members' records up-to-date. He asked if everyone had had the opportunity to modify the attendance sheets with current members' information. He also stressed the importance of letting the club's directors/officers know of any changes in your personal information.

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3.4 NSAF – Dojo Membership

Patrick Sanford stated that the NSAF were \$10 per club member per year, and were paid by the club in the fall of each year. NSAF fees are not paid at any other time in the year, regardless of the enrolment of new students. The NSAF dues have no link to any insurance issues, as do the CAF dues, so there is no need to update/pay them more than once per year. This information is all captured on the Dues Policy, available on the website.

3.5 CAF – Dojo Membership

Patrick Sanford quoted the CAF fees and \$25 for the dojo and \$15 per member of the dojo, annually. Patrick noted that CAF member fees needed to be updated monthly now, because the CAF insurance only applied to members of the CAF and only people who have paid their CAF dues have membership in the CAF. This information is all captured on the Dues Policy, available on the website.

3.6 Upcoming Events

Patrick Sanford indicated the following upcoming events:

Seminar with Sensei Collin Smith, Lunenburg, NS, 20/21 October 2007.

Patrick Sanford indicated that those who wished to attend should send an email to himself to identify that they will be attending, as James Constable had requested an idea of the numbers who would be attending from Halifax.

Seminar with Patrick Cassidy Sensei, Truro, 04-06 April 2008.

Patrick Sanford indicated that there would be more discussion on this topic following presentation of the other upcoming events.

3.7 Mat Repair

Patrick Sanford noted that mat repair had not been conducted as frequently over the previous year as in years past, and that many mats could use repair at this time. Patrick also noted that with his current workload, he couldn't commit the time/attention to the task of identifying dates for mat repair and organizing same. Patrick suggested that a mat committee be formed to oversee and arrange these activities. Tom Hackmann volunteered himself and Peter McAuley to oversee mat status and repair activities, instead of a committee; Peter agreed to this idea.

3.8 Weapons

Patrick Sanford noted that there were no new weapons purchased this year for the club, and that members should be encouraged to purchase their own weapons. Patrick also noted that weapons upkeep should also be resumed, which consists mostly of oiling jos and bokkens, usually on a Friday.

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3.9 Website

Patrick Sanford noted that he and Court Milley were the club’s webmasters, and firmly encouraged people to visit the website on a regular basis for current information and interesting links.

Tom Hackmann noted that he had reviewed the website recently and requested some changes. Tom requested that the club instructors be identified by name only, instead of by the title “Dr.”. This idea was put to an informal feedback (as opposed to formal vote) and no members indicated opposition to this idea.

Tom further requested that there be no “Congratulations” marquee messages on the front page. This idea was put to an informal feedback. Graham Fraser spoke in favour of Tom’s idea. Margo Gesser spoke in favour of the messages. Peter McAuley suggested that the messages should be buried farther in the website. The consensus was to not use marquee messages on the main page; the suggestion of using a page deeper in the website was not addressed/resolved.

Margo requested that more photos from the summer camp be posted, especially from the CD that Margo had provided to Patrick. Patrick noted that some had been posted, but the issue was finding time to do the work. Patrick noted that he would attempt to get to photos and videos from the summer camp prior to the end of the calendar year.

The members present provided consensus for the following actions concerning the website:

1. Instructors would be denoted by name and not title.
2. “Congratulations” marquees would not be placed on the main website page.

3.10 Halifax Aikikai Alumni Club

Patrick Sanford noted that he had created an alumni page that is accessed from the Admin page. He further noted that the current content was only Sarah’s emails from Japan, and that expected emails from others in Thailand and Taiwan had not materialized from those members travelling in those areas.

Patrick also noted that he still keeps in contact with many alumni by email and that he still plans on implementing something for the website to show/facilitate communication between alumni and the club, but it will not happen in the near future.

3.11 Marketing

Patrick Sanford noted that from last year’s AGM that is had been agreed to continue the phone number and website as the primary points of contact and to NOT purchase advertising in any local paper. At this point, Patrick requested any new ideas, and noted that if there were none, this item should not become an annual part of the AGM and should be stricken from next year’s agenda.

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Geoff Sanford suggested that if the club wanted to target the 16-18 year-old age bracket, that a demo at a local high school would be a good idea. He further elaborated that beginners rarely get to see the high-level Aikido from their beginner classes, and that a demo of advanced Aikido might produce interest. Tom Hackmann noted that all past outcomes from demos have been dismal.

Märta Vigerstad suggested that it would not be useful, as people will only go if their friends go.

Bruce Friis suggested that the club participate in the Japanese New Year festival that is held annually at Saint Mary's University (SMU), in January. He noted that Karate usually has about a 10-minute demo each year. Patrick questioned whether there would be mats available as Karate doesn't use mats, and moving mats for a demo is a large effort. Scott MacMillan and Bruce agreed to investigate the possibility and logistics of having a demo during the Japanese New Year festival.

Scott also suggested that the Dalhousie and SMU websites should be asked to post a link on their recreation and/or athletics page(s) to the Halifax Aikikai web page. Patrick agreed to investigate this with the Dalhousie recreation department.

Action Items:

1. Bruce Friis and Scott MacMillan to investigate possibility of Aikido demo during Japanese New Year festival at SMU in January.
2. Patrick Sanford to investigate placing Halifax Aikikai website link on Dalhousie recreation website.

3.12 Authorised Purchases

Patrick Sanford noted that the club had authorised purchases at the last AGM, with the amounts to be reviewed annually. The current authorised amounts were up to \$400 towards building a DVD library and \$50 to \$100 for internet subscriptions. Patrick further noted that David Jarrett had been tasked to find any useful internet subscriptions but had not completed that research.

Patrick noted that \$55 had been spent on a DVD featuring Rocky Izumi Sensei on Kamae (stance and movement).

Tom Hackmann and Peter McAuley noted three possible DVD purchases by instructors such as Tisier Sensei, Yamada Sensei and Saito Sensei. Patrick requested that the annual amount of \$400 for DVD purchases be renewed for the next fiscal year. Mike Nuschke seconded the motion. All members present agreed.

The members voted to authorize purchases up to \$400 for DVDs for the club.

Patrick requested that the internet subscription amount be stricken, as no one was pursuing that avenue. All members present agreed to NOT renew the internet subscription amount.

The members voted NOT to authorize any amount for internet subscription(s).

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3.13 Member Retention & Development

Patrick Sanford noted that these two topics had previously been discussed separately at great length, but that nothing has changed. Patrick also noted that at last year's AGM Tom Hackmann has noted reasons why some of the retention/development suggestions would not work within an Aikido framework. Patrick also noted that the largest proponent of discussions on this topic, Scott MacMillan, was not present at last year's AGM to discuss/dispute Tom's reasons.

Scott requested discussion of three topics: scheduled gradings, changing class schedule and push development.

Margo Gesser agreed that a 90-minute class appealed to her, with the last 30 minutes to be extra/open. (This matter was discussed further under New Business, section 4.1.)

Ali Celikkanat stated aiming for tests was getting out of the aim/idea of Aikido.

Graham Fraser noted that the quality of Aikido in the club has never been higher. He further stated that development was happening/increasing. He also spoke in favour of setting dates and giving goals, such as for the 2nd kyu tests in October 2006.

Bruce Friis noted that learning the names of all the techniques was difficult and that knowing a test was upcoming would force a person to work even harder at learning the names.

Geoff Sanford suggested that people should not be specifically preparing for tests, but that people should be given advanced warning for tests.

Märta Vigerstad suggested that 20-30 minutes per class could be set aside for grading or preparation for grading. Kevin Skanes noted that he found working on 2nd kyu techniques overwhelming.

Graham stated that more people at classes equals more regular testing. He suggested currently identifying people who are ripe for testing and give them specific lead time. Both Graham and Tom stated their dislike of regularly scheduled tests. Scott stated his belief that in principle, working towards a clearly identified goal would cause the level at the club to rise.

Tom suggested that at the end of April he would do tests for 5th kyu, and between now and then would give targets for people to meet. Tom also suggested setting a seminar for some time in the second half of April.

Ali questioned who decides who gets to grade; was there any discussion? Tom stated that perhaps he (himself) should set goals annually, perhaps in the spring, for testing. He also noted that for other than 5th kyu, the tests would need to be decided more individually than a regular annual testing time. He also stated that a 3-month lead time for these other tests should be sufficient for preparation.

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3.14 Request ideas for training/social events members would like to hold/attend

Patrick Sanford noted that this was the part of the meeting in which people put forward ideas for training or social events they would like to see happen.

Patrick noted that the Friday evening beer routine was not as common as it once was and should be attempted more frequently.

Patrick also suggested that the Saturday mini-seminars had been successful in the past for getting people to practice for four hours, share less frequent experiences and were sometimes followed by social events.

The idea of a sushi party for Christmas was presented.

No decisions were made concerning the planning of any particular event.

3.15 New Shido-in System

Patrick Sanford briefly provided information on the new Shido-in system that the CAF will be implementing. He noted that someone of the rank of Yondan or higher will be appointed from each province (or two for provinces with large numbers of dojos) to the position of Shido-in. This person will travel from dojo to dojo, at least once per year, to teach and observe that the technical direction from the CAF was being maintained. The position is a two-year position.

The question was asked about when this system will be put in place, and Patrick noted that no specific date was given, but that Kawahara Shihan and the CAF wanted this system in place soon, and it was probably going to be placed into effect some time in the coming year.

3.16 New CAF Testing System

Patrick Sanford explained that a new testing system was being created in which dojo instructors could no longer test at their whim. Testing for 5th kyu to and including 2nd kyu would be done by a person of Yondan rank or higher, and that it was preferred for testing to take place at seminars. Tests for higher ranks would be required to be at seminars, and would be graded by a panel of three or four Yudansha, with Kawahara Shihan present in an advisory capacity. Passing required a unanimous vote, but that any dissenting vote would need to be supported in writing to Kawahara Shihan, who had the right to overturn any decisions of the panel.

The grading would be comprised of the same techniques, but aside from individual technique assessment, there would be a table of general qualities, such as low center or fluid movement, on which the applicant would be graded overall.

The question was asked about when this system will be put in place, and Patrick noted that no date had been set, but that the CAF was currently attempting to get feedback from Yudansha at the level of Yondan or higher, about the proposed system and a list of qualities for general assessment.

The Halifax Aikikai Association
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Annex A, Financial Statement, 2006-07

The following is a scanned copy of the financial statement for the Halifax Aikikai Association for 2006-2007 (the 2007 fiscal year, which runs from 01 October to 30 September each year). It has been signed by two directors, as well as the Treasurer who prepared it.

To view the financial
statement for the 2007
HAA fiscal year
(01 Oct 2006-30 Sep 2007),
contact the HAA
Secretary / Treasurer,
Mr. P. Sanford
(PatrickSanford01@eastlink.ca)