

**Vancouver International Writers Festival Society**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**June 14, 2022, at 5:00pm**  
**In-Person (Festival House) and Virtual (Zoom)**

**Attending in person:**

**Board:** Alexia Jones, Kyla Epstein;

**Staff:** Leslie Hurtig, Kaile Shilling, Leena Desai, Chelsee Damen\*, Joyce Wan\*, Sarah Wang\*, Matthew Ros\*;

**Auditor:** Andrew Westman\*;

**Members:** Richard Hopkins, Denise Morettin, Paul Whitney, Louise Hager, Danielle Laidlaw, Thomas Woods, Sandra Garossino, Anne Giardini, Sally Harding, Lydia Lovison, Luan Li, Julia Iannacone, Lynn Copeland, Linda Hunt, Michelle Blackwell

**Attending virtually:**

**Board:** Robert McLean, Holman Wang, Natascha Kiernan, Tracy Rogers;

**Staff:** Lauren Dembicky-Polivka\*;

**Members:** Paulette Thompson, Jill Davidson, Elizabeth Bastedo, Maura Keenan, Elaine Peddie, Glenys MacIsaac, Ramona Chu, Karen Zeller, Christine Johnson, Aileen Lord, Yvette Gray

Total attendance: 35 voting members

\* not voting members: 5 people

Regrets: Hurriya Burney (board)

**1. Welcome from the Chair and adopt Agenda**

- a. A. Jones opens the meeting and thanks everyone for attending in person or online.
- b. A. Jones provides land acknowledgment.
- c. A. Jones notes that for this meeting, as per the bylaws, no seconding is needed.
- d. A. Jones invites a motion that the agenda of the June 14<sup>th</sup> 2022 meeting be approved.  
Moved: Denise Morettin. Opposed: none. Motion passed.

**2. Approval of the 2021 AGM Minutes**

- a. A. Jones invites a motion that the minutes of the April 20<sup>th</sup> 2021 AGM be approved.  
Moved: Linda Hunt, Opposed: none. Motion passed.

**3. Board of Directors' Report**

- a. Pandemic upended ways in which we live, play, and learn. Not yet post-Covid, even 27 months after the start. Accepted living during Covid as the new normal.
- b. We acknowledge the need to be agile by offering quality programming in-person and online. Building on current infrastructure to do so.
- c. A. Jones thanks the Artistic and Executive Directors of VWF, notes the hybrid model during the 2021 Festival week, thanks the staff and mentions onboarding of four new staff members during the pandemic.
- d. Strategic plan: 2022, a year of renewal and a new strategic plan in fall of 2022.  
Members feedback welcomed. VWF committed to building sustainable and diverse

audiences, retaining and diversifying financial resources, improving foundational business processes, technology systems, and equity, justice, and good governance.

- e. The Board says goodbye to two Board members: Nisha Sikka and Amanda Ross.

#### **4. Artistic Director's Report**

- a. Leslie Hurtig thanks the Board and staff for the past season, thanks the patrons and members for their support.
- b. 2022 events in-person, but also digital events important.
- c. L. Hurting invites members to the Member Preview where 2022 Fest authors will be revealed; also invites them to the Sarah Polley event.

#### **5. Executive Director's Report**

- a. Kaile Shilling thanks staff for a successful hybrid 2021 Festival.
- b. 2021 Festival's 50% capacity across venues impacted revenue. But VWF received government support that helped offset revenue from ticket sales and thus had a modest surplus, carried forward in 2022.
- c. Online programming increased accessibility, especially for youth events. Investment going forward will be on deepening commitment to improving accessibility.
- d. 2021 hybrid model – digital events Pay What You Can (PWYC). Community supported organization.
- e. Two new staff joined last year, Joyce Wan and Matthew Ros.

#### **6. Presentation of the 2021 Audited Financial Statements with Robert McLean, Treasurer, and Andrew Westman, Rolfe Benson LLP**

- a. Robert McLean summarises financial highlights of 2021:
  - i. Significant investment in PWYC, accessibility, and other strategic programs.
  - ii. Successful year, especially in context of the pandemic and continued economic concern.
- b. **Andrew Westman, Rolfe Benson LLP, presents audited materials and brief summary of the financial results:**
  - i. Financial statements are the responsibility of VWF; Rolfe Benson LLP as auditors are responsible for conducting the audit in accordance with professional standards and give opinion on financial statements.
  - ii. Audited financial statements are reviewed by management, finance committee, and approved by the Board.
  - iii. Covid had significant impact on 2020-21, some recovery in 2021.
  - iv. High-level overview of Income/Expense/Balance/Liability reports.
  - v. Results: Provided full-access to financial records from VWF with full cooperation, no disagreements, and no significant concerns were uncovered.
  - vi. Accolades for the work of Chelsea Damen, Operations Manager, in consolidating accounting materials.
  - vii. Unable to verify the qualification of donations (which was noted was common for charitable organizations that solicit donations).

- viii. A. Jones asks if there are any questions regarding the audited financial statements. No questions. A. Jones invites a motion to approve the appointment of Rolfe Benson LLP as auditors for VWF for 2022. Moved: Lynn Copeland, Opposition: none. Motion passed.

**7. Election of the new 2022 Board of Directors**

- a. New slate of Board of Directors noted.
- b. New Board of Directors in attendance: Luan Li, Michelle Blackwell, Julia Iannacone, Thomas Woods.
- c. A. Jones invites a motion to approve the 2022 Board Slate as presented for a three-year term. Moved: Louise Hager, Opposition: none. Motion passed.

**8. No other questions or new business.**

**9. Adjournment of AGM**

- a. A. Jones adjourned the meeting at 5:25pm PT.