

2019-2020 AGM Report of the Board

Our 2018-2019 season was extremely successful, and we started in Sept 2019 with a strong focus on our Development groups. In keeping with our strategic plan, one of the major components was to rebuild the swimmer base in the development program while continuing to achieve success in the Performance program. The Bear Cubs race nights allowed our newest swimmers to begin learning to race in a more familiar and friendly environment. It was very successful, lots of fun for all involved and allowed the older swimmers to participate by timing and celebrating the younger ones. We hosted a successful 8th annual Candy Cane Classic, the long standing Blue Bears Meet and the inaugural Edmonton Open Meet. As we moved into the Spring season of 2020, our Performance groups were concentrating on preparing for major spring provincial and national level competitions - just at the point where Covid-19 put us all in lockdown and halted swimming.

These last 7 months have definitely been something that we could never have predicted. A complete shutdown of all facilities, prevention of our swimmers being able to swim together, and cessation of all our normal activities both in and out of the pool was a learning experience for all. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank each of our coaches for rising to the challenge, working on the fly and providing such amazing dryland programs via Zoom to ensure the swimmers could continue “swimming” despite the chaos. Thank you as well to all the swimmers and parents for the patience and understanding with the volume of information and changes during that uncertain time and continuing to show your continued commitment to our Club and sport.

On the Board of Directors side of things, with our focus on good governance, we began the year with a couple of key projects. The first was to ensure a strong emphasis on Safe Sport and our objective was to have in place 5 safe sport policies by August 2020. Swim Alberta had been driving this by requiring all Clubs in the province to have these in place by the time Clubs register for this current 2020 season. These policies have been created, reviewed and approved by the Board throughout the year. They are completed and available on the EKSC website and have been submitted to and accepted by Swim Alberta. You should have also seen these when you completed your registration process for this season. I would encourage you to review them if you haven't already as their purpose is to ensure that everyone in the sport has the right to enjoy swimming at whatever level or position they participate, in a safe and inclusive environment.

The second project has been to establish a Bylaw Review Committee, to review, develop and present changes to the current Bylaws which were last amended in 2013. This is an area which has been discussed for many years and has been in need of updating and revision. This last year has seen significant strides forward, as the committee worked for several months reviewing every item of the bylaws and suggesting additions, changes and modernization to clarify many portions of the current set. The Bylaw committee worked diligently and was poised to host a Town Hall meeting to begin consultation with members, seeking their input and views, with the goal of having the bylaws able to be approved at our AGM. The pandemic put those plans on hold as well. You will hear more on this early in the new year as the committee and board provide the information to members through electronic and virtual means, to finish this process and hopefully have the changes ready for approval

for the next AGM in June 2021. Thank you to the Bylaw committee members for their ongoing work in this area.

Another project that was borne of necessity was the Safety Assessment Working group that was created to help develop, review and assist with anything related to back-to-training and back-to-swimming. Thank you especially to Cian O'Kelly and Cathy Shepherd-Finlin for their medical expertise to help guide us through the "new normal".

Throughout the many months of the pandemic, the board of directors has continued to meet regularly and make the required decisions. The monthly meetings have continued virtually to discuss the financial impact on the Club, along with the usual business, such as policy review, financial reports and general information. We have also met on several other occasions to discuss more immediate changes, such as the reopening phase of in-person training and the outdoor dryland programs and the return to the pool. Thank you to all of the board members for their ongoing time commitments and last minute meetings to ensure that Paul and Chris had the support needed for all these new changes.

Financial stability has been paramount during this challenging time and the club is extremely fortunate to have financial reserves that were allocated, even prior to Covid-19, to offset deficits. With the assistance of additional government support, we remain in a strong financial position throughout the lockdown and online training programs, the return-to-training and the return-to-swimming phases. We continue to review the situation and respond to any changes to ensure the financial viability and stability of the club.

As we begin a new season, we really do have to embrace the phrase of "new normal" using the skills that competitive swimming has taught us all; swimmers, coaches and parents alike. Versatility, adaptability, patience and support will help us through the challenges the pandemic has brought to our lives and our sport. As you've heard from my report, it's not just one or two individuals that we rely on to deliver a successful competitive swim club, but a full complement of swimmers, coaches, staff, parents, and volunteers. It's down to everyone working together for the shared passion of making us the best swim club we can be. I am extremely proud to be part of the Edmonton Keyano Swim Club and I know that we will all come through the unknown eventually and be better for it on the other side. Thank you again for joining us tonight.

Jill Edwards, President
Edmonton Keyano Swim Club