**BC/Yukon Section AGM May 5th and 6th, 2017**

The Section AGM weekend was my first, but it was readily acknowledged by those in attendance to be very informative and very well done. The weekend was composed of three separate workshops; STAR 1-5 Information Testing, Gaming, and the New Societies Act. In addition to these excellent workshops we were entertained by Taryn Mackie, a lawyer from the Norton Rose Fulbright Law Firm, who spoke thus about Social Media use. Friday evening afforded us the pleasure of a cruise around the harbour and Saturday evening’s awards gala was both yummy and a tear jerker. All in all it was excellent weekend and I came away much better informed and very appreciative that I had been allowed to attend.

STAR 1-5 Update to Evaluations

As of the 1st of September of this year coaches will now be conducting all tests for their skaters for STAR 1-5. Preliminary and Junior Bronze Skills, Freeskate and Dance no longer can be tested - however, the elements, skills and dances that used to fall under these titles are now configured within STAR 1-5. This program has been the most expensive endeavour that Skate Canada has ever undertaken and there are vast resources available for coaches, test chairs, clubs and skaters. Important points to note about the changes;

* Each club must work out a process that works best for them.
* $12 test fee is still payable to Skate Canada, Judges Bureau fee will no longer be applicable however. Clubs may themselves decide to have administration fees, but this is up to the individual clubs.
* Fees must be paid BEFORE the assessment takes place
* STAR 1 is done on an introductory format - relaxed, within normal lesson setting wearing practice skating attire.
* STAR 2-4 assessments carried out on practice ice, however only those being assessed with participate. Proper skating attire is required, clean skates, gloves etc.
* STAR 5 will follow the classic testing format. Willow Waltz and free skate must be done on clear ice
* Resources for the changes can be found on the Skate Canada website - there is a STAR 1-5 Resource Guide. Link here; <https://info.skatecanada.ca/hc/en-ca/categories/201557706-STAR-1-5-Resource-Toolkit>
* Skate Canada is working on amendments to STAR 6-10 and Gold - information about the proposed changes are also on the Skate Canada website. This is due to be rolled out in 2018-2019 season.

Gaming Workshop

Tanya Scaiano from the Gaming Policy & Enforcement branch spoke regarding common issues her department finds when performing audits. These include;

* Not using separate Gaming bank account for gaming funds
* Two signatures are required on Gaming bank accounts- one of these signatures MUST be a board member
* If in receipt of a Gaming Grant mention of financial assistance from the Province of BC must be on the organization’s website
* Not providing sufficient detailed information for transfers in and out of gaming accounts. Very important to keep all invoices and receipts for transfers in and out of the account. This information must be kept for five years for audit purposes, seven years for CRA.
* E-transfers must be accompanied by letter from board giving authority to use e-transfers. The letters must detail the specific amount that transfers are allowed for
* Grant funds received must be used up each year - do not hold onto funds
* All reports, end of year and also reports for each licensed event must be submitted within 90 days.
* Ensure that balances on gaming account at the beginning and end of the year can be reconciled with the bank accounts

The main message was if you receive a letter that an audit is to be carried out, not to panic, be prepared and communicate with your auditor. They are very understanding and will do what they can to help you. Ensure first and foremost ensure that careful accounts are kept and everything within the gaming account is accounted for.

New Societies Act Workshop

Michael Blatchford from Norton Rose Fulbright Canada LLP spoke regarding the changes that the Societies Act has brought for Incorporated Societies. The Societies Act was brought into force in November 2016 but there is a two year grace window to file the changes to the constitutions and bylaws that are required. Important points to note are;

* Societies Act will increase transparency for the public and membership rights have increased
* Two kinds of societies, member funded and non member funded. Member funded societies are not allowed any Gaming money - therefore skating clubs will be considered non member funded societies.
* There will be templates created by the law firm that they can use to help with the changes for constitution and bylaws that can be used by clubs, regions and the Section
* Members will need to approve using the template for the new bylaws with approval based on current thresholds outlined in current bylaws. If not stated then need at least 67% approval, though if current bylaws say you need more than 67% than you will need to stick with this threshold. This threshold is of the votes cast, not the membership number.
* All filings must be done online, paper filings are no longer available. A Registry Key (unique to the organization) and a BC Electronic ID (BCEID) [unique to the individual] required to log in online to make any filings
* Three sections to be completed online. 1. Constitution- upload current purposes 2. Bylaws - use the templates to help 3. Notice of Directors and Registered Address of Society. Finally button to submit application. Ensure that everything is correct as no one will be reviewing what’s been entered. Print copies of changes and put in minute book.
* Can’t make the transition if not filed previous reports so get those done before you transition.
* Don’t make too many changes to the template as you may make it null and void.
* If don’t transition by Nov 28th 2018 then societies may be considered defunct and they may receive a Notice of Dissolution. It’s very important therefore that the filings are made in a timely fashion once approved by the membership.

Submitted by Colleen Norton-Jones