



**COPA Annual General Meeting**  
**By Video Conference**  
**26 June 2021**  
**1 pm EDT**

#### **A. CALL TO ORDER**

The Annual General Meeting was called to order at 12:24 pm EDT by the Chairperson of the COPA Board of Directors, Bill Mahoney. Each director present introduced himself or herself to the assembled members.

#### **B. NOTICE OF MEETING**

The chairperson noted that the 'Notice of Meeting' to the COPA members had been in the COPA Flight magazine, included with the e-flight newsletter, and posted on the website on 6 May.

#### **C. CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM**

Secretary Jim Bell confirmed that there was a quorum in attendance. Directors Jonathan Beauchesne, Jim Bell, Kevin Elwood, Bill Mahoney, Stephen McCarthy, Clark Morawitz, Candace Pardo, Doug Ronan, Henry Vos, Ken Zachkewich, and 117 regular members were in attendance.

#### **D. REGISTRATION OF PROXIES**

No proxies were received.

#### **E. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

Motion to accept the agenda..

MOVED: Phil Englishman

SECONDED: Ken Zachkewich

RESOLVED: Carried

#### **F. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Motion to accept the minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting, held by video conference.

MOVED: Clark Morawetz

SECONDED: Doug Ronan

A typo in Kate Klassen's name was corrected.

RESOLVED: Carried

#### **G. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

There was no business from the 2020 AGM minutes.

#### **H. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD**

The Chair's report is attached at the end of the minutes.

## **I. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

The President's report is attached at the end of the minutes.

Moved that the reports be accepted.

MOVED: Clark Morawetz

SECONDED: Ken Zachkewich

RESOLVED: Carried

## **J. TREASURER'S AND AUDITOR'S REPORT**

Moved that the 2020 audited financial statements be accepted.

MOVED: Henry Vos

SECONDED: Candace Pardo

DISCUSSION: A member asked what reason there was for an increase in the insurance expense. Tanya Storing responded that COPA took out cybersecurity insurance, and also had a general increase in the cost of insurance. A member asked what the current membership status is. Christine responded that membership has increased slightly, in part due to the introduction of the drone programme. A member asked about membership cards. Christine replied that all members will soon receive a permanent plastic card, and also a digital card that indicates the membership expiry date.

RESOLVED: Carried

Moved that the 2020 audited financial statements of the COPA Special Action Fund be accepted.

MOVED: Henry Vos

SECONDED: Ken Zachkewich

RESOLVED: Carried

Moved that the 2020 audited financial statements of the COPA Flight Safety Foundation be accepted.

MOVED: Henry Vos

SECONDED: Clark Morawetz

RESOLVED: Carried

## **K. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR FOR 2020**

Moved that the Frouin Group be appointed as auditors for 2021.

MOVED: Henry Vos

SECONDED: Doug Ronan

RESOLVED: Carried

## **L. AGM GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **1. TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP FEES TO THE FREEDOM TO FLY FUND**

Under the current policy, a portion of the membership fee is contributed to the Freedom to Fly Fund. In 2020, that resulted in a contribution of just over \$50,000 to the fund. The FFF has dropped to about \$700,000 from the preferred level of \$1,000,000 due to heavy use over the last two years. The board has decided to use money from the investment account, to a maximum of 60% of the gain in each year, to maintain the fund. While the amount may be less stable, it allows membership funds to be used for programmes.

## 2. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

What is the COPA response to the Notice of Proposed Amendment regarding VFR night flying?  
COPA is preparing a response. There is a Technical Committee meeting soon that will specifically address the issues raised.

Airport land lease rates have increased substantially in the last couple of years. What is COPA doing in this area?

Many airports are pursuing this. COPA is contacting airports to educate airport operators that this is an ineffective way to raise revenue. COPA members are encouraged to contact the national office when they encounter this situation.

Could you provide an update on the luxury tax?

Over 3,000 people have signed the petition, which closes at the end of the month. The Conservative Party has indicated they will oppose the luxury tax.

Over 61,000 pilots are flying with a BasicMed medical in the US. Will Transport Canada recognise this?  
Transport Canada is reviewing BasicMed, and will provide an update soon. In addition, IAOPA is considering a Cat 4 medical which would allow Recreational Pilot Permit holders to cross borders.

## M. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED: Doug Ronan

RESOLVED: Meeting adjourned at 2:43 pm EDT

## CHAIR'S REPORT:

Greetings to all virtual attendees of COPA's 69<sup>th</sup> AGM and Convention. It is indeed regrettable that once again this year we are not at St. Jean du Richelieu to meet and enjoy the hospitality of the wonderful people there, but I am confident that this time next year, we will be. The scourge of COVID 19 has made life difficult for everyone around the globe and certainly it has been a challenge for the members of COPA throughout the past year.

Last year, restrictions associated with COVID brought particular challenges for COPA members as regulators and operators made adjustments to their operations attempting to mitigate the effects of the precipitous drop in flying activity. Regulators such as Nav Canada and Transport Canada reduced or eliminated service offerings, while airport operators introduced and

increased fees and charges in a misguided attempt to maintain revenues. COPA staff responded each and every time, armed with facts and well thought out arguments to minimize the negative impact of these changes on General Aviation in Canada. There is still much work to be done.

The one positive flowing from the restriction of activity for COPA is the reduction of expenditures related to travel and other discretionary spending. This resulted in a significant surplus for last fiscal year and helped us recover some of the losses from previous years. You will hear more from Henry, when he delivers the Financial Report.

In 2020 we saw major staff changeovers at COPA. One year ago this month Christine Gervais assumed the role of President and CEO of COPA. She immediately set out to fill vacant positions and replace those who were set to retire. As an aside, one of those retirements was that of Jean Claude Audet. I would now like to thank JC and acknowledge his excellent work and contribution to COPA.

The Board was very pleased with the quality of the people Christine was able to recruit and COPA is a better organization as a result.

In the background we have a group of talented, knowledgeable and dedicated Regional Directors and Board Members, who support our staff by providing valuable insight and the benefit of their experience to ensure growth and effectiveness of COPA. Unfortunately, last spring we lost Debbie Brekelmans from our Board due to work related commitments and also more recently Matthieu Delorme for similar reasons. I want to thank Debbie and Matthieu for their contribution to COPA during their terms. However, we were lucky to gain Stephen McCarthy, who is not only an avid aviator, but a CAME as well. Welcome Stephen and we look forward to working with you.

I would also like to acknowledge the fine work of our Committees and Working Groups. They deal with serious issues such as rising insurance rates and coverage for our most experienced members, changes of regulations that directly impact our freedom to fly and the intervention and interference by municipalities that restrict our flying activities. The work is not obvious to most of you, but it is happening all the time and we all benefit by it.

Finally, I want to thank Christine and her small, but mighty team for the great work they have done over the past year despite the difficulties presented by COVID and the many issues arising from the pandemic. Thank you, Christine, Tanya, Angela, Sharon, Peter and Laura for all you do each and every day on our behalf.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

Welcome dear members!

Last Tuesday marked my first-year anniversary as COPA's President and CEO. What a year this has been! Who could have thought I would have had to do it all virtually! Despite this challenge, we have managed to deliver a great year to our members.

I'd like to start off by saying thank you, to all our members, for sending your kind words and well wishes throughout the year. Your words mean so much to me as what I do, I do for you.

Change was definitely the theme for 2020, on many fronts. I recognize that change is not always easy, but in most cases, it is necessary either by choice or by circumstance. The first big change was the announcement, early in the year, by my predecessor to step down as COPA's CEO. The search for his replacement started and ended with me accepting the position! Needless to say, a big change for me as well and I was thrilled to take on this new role and responsibility.

For those you who haven't met me yet, here's a quick synopsis of my background: I started my aviation career as a commercial pilot, a license I still hold today, and worked in various places around the world. I then moved on to become an air traffic controller with NAV CANADA for a decade at the Ottawa Control Tower before moving into Operational Management. I am the very proud owner of a new to me 1966 Cessna 172 which I will use to visit, soon hopefully, many of you and to teach my 16 year old son how to be as good a pilot as his mom!

COPA's second big change of the year was of course brought on by COVID. All team members moved the operation to each of their respective homes. A task that was not as easy as it seemed. Going from seeing your coworkers every day to sitting in front of a screen alone all day required some adjusting, for everyone, including all of you. Who could have thought we could take our work stations for granted! The team is still working from home, almost a year and a half later! We do have a return to the office plan, starting in the fall. I appreciate the patience you have shown us throughout this difficult process, and year. It has certainly been a learning curve for us, and I'm sure for you. However, not all of it has been bad. In fact, some of the great changes coming in 2021 have stemmed from this.

COVID is also to blame for the cancellation of not only one, but three major COPA events: the COPA Convention, which was to be held in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Montebello winter Fly-In and the IAOPA World Assembly, to be held in Montreal. The COPA convention, now referred to as the National Fly-In and Aviation Expo, have been postponed to June and July 2022 respectively. Our AGM last year was also held virtually, and who knew we'd still be looking at each other in front of screens this year. At least technology has made some advancements and we are able to use better tools!

My strategic priorities, for my first six months as President, stemmed from the COPA 5-year Strategic Plan which was developed in 2019, in collaboration with the Board, Flight Captains and COPA members. Of the five strategic priorities that surfaced in the plan, I focussed my efforts on the first, third and fifth priorities. These guided my work over the remainder of the year. These priorities are:

1. Become the recognized, undisputed, unified voice of general aviation (advocacy)
2. Dramatically improve regional membership activities
3. Embrace the exploding drone market as it's leader in Canada
4. Market general aviation in Canada: make flight achievable, affordable and fun for everyone
5. Foster teamwork, a collaborative and cooperative relationship between the board and management.

As a former NAV CANADA management employee, I brought with me not only my credibility with the air navigation service provider, but the knowledge of its operation. With me also came the many important contacts I had made at Transport Canada. These connections have proven invaluable and will continue to serve COPA well in its advocacy efforts. My constant connection with them resulted in COPA being elected as the co-chair of the Canadian General Aviation Joint Steering committee for a two year term (2021-2023) through which our voices will be heard and concerns will be addressed.

COPA is also a member of the Transport Canada chaired Canadian Drone Advisory Committee representing Traditional Aviation. And finally, COPA sits on the NAV CANADA Advisory Committee and is part of its Safety Sub-Committee. I have also established a great working relationship with AOPA and IAOPA and participated as a speaker at a General Aviation Conference (virtually) in Russia! This clearly demonstrates that COPA is and will continue to be the recognized voice of GA in Canada.

The Drone industry is rapidly growing, there's no denying that. They are integrating Canadian airspace at a rapid pace. A plan was developed in 2020 that would see the RPAS (drone) world incorporated into COPA. This new membership has been implemented in May 2021. We will demonstrate our same efforts toward the drone community and advocate strongly for pilots of both piloted and remotely piloted aircraft.

Safety remains a top priority in aviation and has become vital for GA operations in a year where most were grounded for months on end. As a result of Transport Canada's Safety Campaign, COPA created its own Safety Program. Monthly safety seminars are offered, free of charge, to all members of the GA flying community and focus on issues facing our members. We all want the same thing, to enjoy our freedom to fly, safely! We encourage our members to send us their safety seminar wish list and will do our best to incorporate them in our planning. We will also be starting to task our COPA Flights with the dissemination of these national seminars, all part of our commitment to engage with our regions.

Many of you might have noticed a change among the COPA Team. These changes were implemented based on a Strategic Human Resource plan that would maximize the resources and skills of our small 6-person team. We may look like we do the work of 100, but we are just 6! We have one dedicated team member that coordinates membership issues such as renewals, mailings – she also manages the COPA Store, COPA Flights and COPA for Kids and Discover GA Programs and is the friendly voice behind every answered call. She also manages the COPA general inbox. We appreciate your patience and we strive to answer messages, either voice or email, within 4 days. We have one team member dedicated to COPA Finances and Member benefits such as agreements with hotels, car rentals, etc. One team member dedicated to the development, implementation and delivery of national programming (but she does much more than that!), one team member is responsible for all communications, in both English and French as well as marketing and one team member responsible for liaising with our external stakeholders, such as NAV CANADA, Transport Canada and sits on various working groups, representing the interests of GA. And myself, who works tirelessly to advocate on your behalf with various government officials, the insurance industry and air navigation service provider.

The new COPA team, in combination with the strong and dedicated support of your elected directors of the Board, we have managed to develop a strong, cooperative, collaborative and resilient relationship. This renewed relationship will serve COPA well to continue on its mission of Advancing, promoting and preserving the Canadian freedom to fly.

What's coming?

This year, COPA will continue its ongoing efforts of the past year as well as focus on the other priorities of the strategic plan:

- o Further digitalize our communications as our ongoing commitment to reduce waste while helping to make managing your membership more efficiently;
- o Develop new programs that will encourage and foster member engagement in new and renewed COPA activities;
- o Develop and implement a strategy to lobby with various levels of government (from municipal to federal) for GA ahead of divergence, when able;
- o Develop COPA Flight resource material and a leadership program;
- o Further develop and market the RPAS program through industry alliances;
- o Develop a Mentorship Program to connect our youth members with our experienced members for guidance and encouragement;
- o Participate (and enroll participation) in various airshows, career fairs, sister association events (cadets, 99s, EAA), etc. to help to market COPA as the unified voice of GA;
- o Develop and implement fun, interactive and creative Fundraising efforts for our Flight Safety Foundation and Freedom to Fly Fund. These two foundations help fund safety related initiatives and provide the next generation of pilots scholarship opportunities (RPAS scholarships included) as well as help our members defend their freedom to fly.

Yes, it's a long list! But with the Directors of the Board, this strong COPA team, and of course all of you, we are sure to be able to deliver!

I sincerely thank the board for the trust and encouragement they invest in me every day, the COPA team for their enthusiastic dedication and hard work, and of course, I thank you, once again, for your continued support.