

# MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BKS IYENGAR YOGA ASSOCIATION

November 26, 2017

Creekside Community Centre

Vancouver, BC

## Board Members Present:

Corinne Skrobot, President

Rose Marie Rodden, Vice President and Membership Secretary

Michelle Hagenson, Treasurer

Bridget Donald, Recording Secretary

Terri Damiani, Member at Large

Roberta Vommaro, Member at Large

Mary Anne Chu, Member at Large

Regrets: Sara Kuleza, Member at Large

(Introductions)

**1. Call to Order:** A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 9:40 am. Corinne Skrobot acted as Chair, and Bridget Donald acted as Recording Secretary.

**2. Approval of 2016 minutes:** Moved by Rose Rodden; seconded by Michelle Hagenson.

## **3. President's Report:**

Welcome everyone to the 2017 Annual General meeting of the BKS Iyengar Yoga association.

I am unsure how long I have sat on the board but recall a few years as member at large, with a few years' hiatus before returning as recording secretary in 2015. I am equally unsure of how I am now president of the board at this time. But these things do happen for some strange and unexplained reasons.

As you all know this is entirely a volunteer driven association and no doubt almost everyone present at this AGM 2017 has served in one capacity or another. At his time we have seven members on the board.

Michelle Hagenson has served as our treasurer on the board for the past 3 years and will be stepping down this year. Many thanks to Michelle for her careful management of our financial records as well as overseeing, ordering and selling of our acclaimed Association T-shirts.

Our new board members include Terri Damiani, Roberta Vommaro, Sara Kuleza and Mary Anne Chu. We are fortunate to have their valuable contributions, all are serving on a few sub-committees. Rose-Marie Rodden is vice-president and membership secretary. She is the constant contact person putting together those notices appearing in your in-box informing you of upcoming events such as this AGM. Rose's efficiency in responding to emails and answering questions of all things related to the board and her dedication helping out in all events is

outstanding. Bridget Donald having also served as past president is now our recording secretary and another go-to person. Her experience in all matters is appreciated and integral to the successful operation of our board. At this time I encourage anyone interested in joining the board, please contact us at any time. Or, we will notice you as a potential member and approach you. We generally meet 4 times per year at my house to discuss and implement the many requirements of the board as well as organizing our AGM.

You will also see reports from the workshop committee whose tireless organization and planning results in the successful workshops we host each year. Please thank Cheryl Joseph, Louie Ettling and Sharmeen Jacobs for their roles on the workshop committee. Sharmeen is temporarily residing in LA where we hope she is enjoying her time as a grandmother. Terri Damiani will be sitting in her position on the workshop committee until her return to Vancouver. The workshop committee is responsible for organizing 2-3 workshops/year. Last year, and as every year she shines brighter, Gabriella Giubilario from Italy and for the first time, John Schumacher from Maryland USA. We can always look forward to their efforts bringing in both internationally and nationally recognized senior teachers for our Vancouver workshops. In 2018, we can look forward to Jawahar Bangera returning for the second time from Mumbai on March 2 – 4 and Gulnaaz Dashti from Pune, India on May 4-6.

There are several benefits included in your association membership. One benefit of your \$30 annual membership fee is advanced, priority registration and discounted fees for our association workshops. Our workshops are well attended and often sellout in advance of workshops dates. The upcoming 2018 workshop dates are available on our website [iyengaryogavancouver.com](http://iyengaryogavancouver.com)

As part of our ongoing dedication to Iyengar yoga, the association offers financial support to members to further their interest and studies in Iyengar yoga. Professional development funds for teachers and teachers-in training include \$1000 for trips to the RIMYI institute in Pune India and up to \$600.00 towards national and international workshops and conferences. Financial bursaries are also available for our locally sponsored workshops. Another reason to support your association with your yearly \$30 membership fee. Once again, we encourage all students and teachers to become members of our association in order to take advantage of this financial support. Applications for bursaries and professional development funds can be found on our website.

As is often the case, websites do become outdated. To that end, the transformation of our association website is one of our goals for the upcoming year. The board has contracted a member of our yoga community, Christine Rondeau of Bluelime Media to use her skills revamping our current website. She will be working closely with our website sub-committee: Terri Damiani, Bridget Donald and Sara Kuleza. Cheryl Joseph of the workshop sub-committee will also be contributing her ideas related to our workshops, registering on-line etc. Your yearly membership fee will soon be linked to the website as well as finding certified teachers and classes within your area. I encourage all to visit our website soon, [iyengaryogavancouver.com](http://iyengaryogavancouver.com)

As a member, your views and ideas regarding the website or the operation of the association are important to us so please do not hesitate to make contact with a member of the board.

As certified teachers, your class and registration information is maintained by our member, Nancy Zrymiak. I wish to thank Nancy for a role vital to the successful implementation of our ongoing Iyengar yoga classes. Having also done this role in the past, it is extremely useful to get your class information to Nancy in a timely manner so that you and others can find out about classes through our soon to be revamped website.

Social media in the form of facebook, instagram and twitter has become a large part of how we can communicate within our community and to the general public. As an association we are discussing how best to use this valuable communication tool. While not as popular within our older yoga members, it is used extensively by our younger population. We have received suggestions and ideas from various members of the community and thank Roberta Vommaro for contributing her ideas in this regard. More will follow as we explore how best to proceed in this direction.

This past June we were invited to attend and promote Iyengar Yoga at the International Yoga Festival in Vancouver. Many thanks to Terri Damiani, Mary Anne Chu, Sara Kuleza and Roberta Vommaro for their successful efforts connecting Iyengar yoga with the broader yoga community in Vancouver. This was the 3rd International Yoga festival, sponsored by the Indo-Canadian Socio-Economic Association and private donors. Logistically, the festival did not attract the numbers they had planned conflicting with other festivals and events around UBC. The association will discuss our involvement with this festival in 2018 planned for the Roundhouse community centre as we continue increasing the Iyengar presence within, as our member, Terri Damiani describes "the sea of yogic offerings".

This past September we were also involved in submitting a proposal to the UBC Sauder School of Business. It was our hope that our proposal would be selected to work with a marketing student to increase the overall exposure and interest of Iyengar yoga within a very competitive yoga market. Although our proposal was strong, we were not selected this year. The board kindly thanks Terri Damiani, Sara Kuluza, Bridget Donald and Cheryl Joseph for their contributions to this proposal. This process has given us useful information for considering and implementing a similar proposal for next year.

Although this will undoubtedly become an ongoing project, the board has started the process of requesting archival material from our members and teachers. It is our hope that we can make these materials available to teachers, teachers in training and to the general membership as a resource along their yoga journey. Many older and dated videos, CD's and other items will be transposed into digital format for future use. Iyengar yoga has deep roots and no doubt there is material out there that can be shared within our yoga community.

Finally, we were advised last year of the required changes to the Societies Act, under which our association falls. The board is working on making these required changes to the structure and reporting of our association's activities which will be due by 2018 years end. Our thanks to Alice Sundberg for notifying us of these changes and to Gerie Primerano, our past president and our current board member Bridget Donald for following through with this requirement.

As an association we are required to hold an Annual General Meeting yearly.

A large part of our activities on the board since September have revolved around organizing this event. Last year was our 40th anniversary as an established yoga association following the expectations implemented by our late, BKS Iyengar and the RIMYI institute in Pune India. It takes an immense amount of planning to get our membership together for this meeting. At this time I would again like to thank the members of our board for their efforts in making this meeting a memorable occasion in which to gather and enjoy the wealth, knowledge and skills of our community. I would especially like to thank Corrie Vorlaufer who teaches extensively at her studio on the North Shore as well as her class at The Yoga Space. Teaching the asana component of our AGM, she is a seasoned practitioner with a wealth of knowledge and skill and a long-time member of our association. Our Pranayama component of this year's AGM is being taught by Linda Shevloff. As a certified senior

Iyengar teacher, Linda teaches at Yoga on 7th, The Yoga Space and Trout lake community centre. Along with Louie Ettling, she is also involved in our on-going teacher training program. Linda returned to Vancouver in 2011 after opening the first Iyengar studio in Hong Kong in 1999. We are fortunate to have her back to Vancouver and especially welcome her extensive knowledge and teaching expertise.

This year brought us the sad news that Dr. Bruce Carruthers had passed away on July 21 2017. He, along with Maureen Carruthers, began studying with BKS Iyengar in the early 1970's and in 1976, along with a few others like Donald Moyer, created our current BKS Iyengar Yoga Association. From those early days he worked with Maureen to develop, nurture, guide, and sustain the Iyengar Yoga community and teachers. He helped mentor our understanding of the unique and brilliant work of BKS Iyengar, as Guruji's trusted student, representative and friend.

Hilda Pezzaro another founding member of our association also passed away on Oct 31st, having her children and grandchildren present at the time of her peaceful passing. She was also a pivotal anchor teaching and bringing to Vancouver the teachings and philosophy of our late BKS Iyengar.

Finally, at the risk of repeating, this is a voluntarily run association. We all know and experience the benefits of this type of yoga within our bodies and our lives. It is up to us, as a community to share this with others. Through our involvement we hope to affect the lives of those around us and equally so for society at large. Please take the time to recognize your association, become involved as a member, as a member of the board or simply to share the Iyengar yoga community with others.

With your continued support, I look forward to working with and for you as president of our board for the upcoming year.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report: Michelle Hagenson**

(See separate file for full copy of signed Financial Statements.)

It was pointed out that we saved some money on insurance. The Treasurer confirmed this and said it was because changed providers and have better coverage.

Motion to approve financial statements: 1<sup>st</sup> by Alice Sundberg; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Deb Peake.

#### **5. Membership Report: Rose Marie Rodden**

2016 – 2017 membership year – **133 members. That is 9 more than 2016.**

2017 – 2018 membership year. As of November 19<sup>th</sup> we have **83 members which is 31 less than for the same period last year.**

	2016	2017
The membership consists of: <b>Teachers</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>General membership</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>43%</b>

**Teacher trainees**                      **11%**                      **11%**

**Eight board members**

Two years ago the board initiated more formal guidelines regarding teachers paying their memberships on time in order to keep their bios and class information on the website. There were 5 late renewals that year and 8 lack of renewals this year.

The membership renewal campaign started on September 1, 2017. This was done through Constant Contact which still can only be used for membership renewals and not for new memberships since it is sent out as an email newsletter. We hope to use the new website for all online memberships in the future

91.6 % renewed using the Constant Contact link.

7 people mailed in their renewal which is 8.4%

Membership renewals are down by 50 members, 8 of which are teachers, 13 of which are teacher trainees and 29 are general members. The difference can be explained by a couple of factors: We did not have a fall workshop, when many people renew their membership (23 last year). Teacher training starts in January when many trainees will renew or join the association. Some people have moved. And others may renew when the workshop registration opens.

I wish to thank Corinne and the board for their ongoing support.

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There was a discussion of why membership is down this year as well as an explanation of the fiscal year being different from the calendar year. It was noted that being able to sign up for membership via web site in the future will help maintain numbers. The ability to advance register for workshops before non-members should be an advantage advertised in the membership drive email. Someone expressed the thought that teachers could require their students to pay a membership fee (e.g. \$20) – another suggested instead giving them a free membership for the year. It was also suggested that we need to make clearer what the benefits of membership are. Finally, it was suggested that the names of honorary members be counted on the membership list.

Motion to approve Membership report: moved by Julie Gilbert; Seconded by Corinne.

**5. Workshop Committee: Cheryl Joseph**

## Workshop Committee Members

Cheryl Joseph (Chair), Sharmeen Jacobs (Registrar and logistics), Louie Ettling (Advisor)

## 2017 Workshops

There were 2 workshops offered in 2017. Both were filled to capacity and one had a wait list.

Instructor	Date	# of unpaid registrants	# of paid registrants		Total
			Member	Non-Member	
Gabriella Giubilaro	March 3 – 6	1	2	39	42

John Schumacher	May 26 – 28	0	41	1	42
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Gabriella Giubilaro continues to draw both seasoned and new students to her workshops in Vancouver. The continuity of her presence allows a familiarity to build with the community. Each visit she brings her always loved energy and shares generously her knowledge.

After a long time with “(tentative)” beside the dates and his name on the website, we were very happy to have John Schumacher teach in Vancouver. Morgan Rea worked closely with the workshop committee to complete formal applications including documents and documentation justifying John’s entrance to Immigration Canada’s International Mobility Worker Unit (IMWU) for a Visa exemption. We thank Morgan very much for her guidance. John’s workshop was well received. In Louie’s thank you to John at the end of the workshop she summarized best what I believe many left with “he manifests the MAITRI/ kindness aspect of Iyengar yoga. He teaches in a way that brings our own intelligence on the mat to the forefront. He allows for enough spaciousness (non-interference) for us to be able to go inwards and make the learning our own.”

## Finances

Year	Workshop	Revenue	Expenses	Instructor Share (incl. withholding tax)	Association Share
2017	Gabriella Giubilaro	11,870*	1769.46**	6733.69	3366.85
	John Schumacher	10,214	2746.09	5062.28	1539.29
	<b>Total</b>	<b>22,084</b>	<b>4,515.55</b>	<b>11,795.97</b>	<b>4,906.14</b>
2016	Jawahar Bangera Gulnaaz Dashti Mahyar Raz	\$30,245.00	\$5,405.71	\$14,974.27	\$8,279.77
2015	Gabriella Giubilaro Father Joe	\$21,306.00	\$4,018.86	\$11,524.76	\$5,762.38
2014	Gabriella Giubilaro Jawahar Bangera Chris Saudek Rebecca Lerner	\$28,429.50	\$4,822.07	\$17,277.71	\$6,329.72

\*Includes Teacher Training

\*\*No hosting or Travel expenses

Note, these are calculations are based on the calendar year not the association's fiscal year, thus will not correspond with the association financials.

There were no bursaries at John's workshop and 2 teacher trainee bursaries at Gabriella's. We could do more to support the community with bursaries.

## Future Workshops

2018

Thanks to the organizers across Canada for working with IYAC in bringing the Indian teachers Jawahar and Gulnaaz to our community. Jawahar Bangera will be in Vancouver for the third time from March 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>. His previous workshops in 2014 and 2016 were well attended and received. Gulnaaz Dashti will hold her second workshop in Vancouver from May 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>. Her 2016 workshop was energetic, and we look forward to learning from her again.

## Thank You

- Keen students of Iyengar yoga for continuing to support workshops. If there were not the desire to learn, the workshops would not be well attended year after year.
- The teachers who continue to inspire students to learn and to attend association workshops.
- The workshop committee members who make the workshops happen. **Thank you so much to Sharmeen for her many years of contribution to the success of the workshops in Vancouver. Welcome to Terri who has joined the committee. We look forward to working together.**
- Those in our yoga community who contribute time and energy when workshops take place to sweep floors, organize gifts for visiting teachers or welcome students at the door.
- Thanks to Terri for helping find John a place to stay.
- The Board of Directors and its 2017, President Corrine Skrobot, for good collaboration.
- Michelle Hagenson, the board's treasurer who has worked closely with the workshop committee to finalize the workshop budget reports.
- Nancy Zrymiak, the 2017 website coordinator for her diligence in getting workshop information up on the site in a timely manner.
- Marla Britton, who is attentive and patient with the updates for hardcopy workshop flyers.

Highlights: both our last year's workshops were sold out. When we had more workshops – 3 or 4- we find that the attendance was too spread out. We decided that two better attended workshops each year

are better than more, less well attended workshops. Amend the report to thank Michelle for all her support as Treasurer. She took on a lot of the financial work of the committee and was great to work with.

Discussion: One member noted that if it is the case that members of the Workshop Committee receive a free workshop each year for their work, that this should be made well known in order to attract new members to the committee, and also that the committee might acknowledge the Board for this perk. [It has since been confirmed that this is *not* the case: committee members do not receive a free workshop for in exchange for their organizing work.]

## **6. Teacher Training: Louie Ettling (read by Cheryl Joseph)**

### **A. Introductory Teacher Training Programme**

The Yoga Space's Introductory teacher training programme is coordinated by Louie Ettling. This year she was assisted by co-trainers Deborah Peake, Eileen Millar, Gerie Primerano and Patricia Fernandes. Unfortunately Gerie Primerano had to step out of the program in the fall, due to other responsibilities.

This program follows the international and national guidelines for Iyengar Yoga Teacher Training programs and is sanctioned by the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada (IYAC). The training spans the required three years (minimum) to five years (maximum) of training before a candidate sits national exams in order to receive internationally recognized Iyengar Yoga certification.

During 2017 there were seventeen trainees actively participating in this programme. Eight of them were from Vancouver and the other nine were from White Rock, Abbotsford, the Sunshine Coast, Castlegar, Haida Gwaii, Prince George, Calgary and Whitehorse. Three of the seventeen have now completed their training and are registered to sit formal national assessments early in 2018. Three new trainees have been accepted to start their training in January of 2018.

### **B. Intermediate and Senior Teachers' Professional Development Studies**

All Iyengar yoga teachers are required to maintain professional development once certified. The Yoga Space's intermediate teachers professional development programme supports certified teachers in their ongoing professional development, partly by supporting certified teachers who want to upgrade their certification levels. Three weekends each year, totaling 36 hours, are dedicated "Intermediate and senior studies' weekends". The teachers work together on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays to practice asana and teaching skills. Linda Shevloff joins Louie on the Sundays in giving feedback to the intermediate teachers when they practice advancing teaching skills.



During 2017 twenty five teachers were on the Yoga Space's certified teachers' ongoing professional development studies list. Nine of these teachers were successful in passing their next levels of assessment, including Intermediate Junior 1, 2, 3 and Senior 2 assessments. Two of the teachers have applications in to sit their next level assessments in 2018.

The teachers who have participated in our certified teachers' studies weekend during 2017 have mostly been from Vancouver, but we have also been joined by teachers from Nanaimo, Bowen Island, Victoria and Dauphin (Manitoba).

## **7. Merchandise Report: Michelle Hagenson**

T-Shirts have been sold primarily at workshops. Some teachers have sold shirts in their classes to students.

Shirts are ordered on a as need basis depending upon stock. A new order will be placed at the start of the New Year. We are in a constant search for the "right" t-shirt and will continue to look for a shirt that is ethically made and sourced.

Added to the report that Michelle has found a replacement for t-shirt ordering (Renee, who recently joined the teacher training program).

## **8. Election:**

Call for nominations: new proposed members: Bibigul Amirova and Leora Ronaloka.

Election of the whole slate:

Corinne Skrobot

Rose Marie Rodden

Mary Anne Chu

Terri Damiani

Roberta Vommaro

Sara Kuleza

Bridget Donald

Bibigul Amirova

Leora Ronaloka

Moved by Julie Gilbert; Seconded by Alice Sundberg

### **Other Business**

Corinne encourages teachers to talk up the association in their classes. Alice mentioned the new Society Act and the updating of the bylaws. Members will be receiving a set up proposed bylaw updates with at least 7 days' notice of meeting to approve them.

**Meeting adjourned at 10:40 AM**