



## **Paws4Fun Board Meeting APPROVED as amended MINUTES**

September 26, 2024

4:30-7:30 pm

Heather's Home

1318 Agincourt Road, Ottawa, ON

### **Attending: Board Members**

Heather Esdon, President, IDAL Coordinator, Facilities Coordinator; Rheal Nadeau, Vice President; Carolyn Heide, Treasurer, Webmaster and Trials Secretary; Erin Moore, Training Director, Volunteer Coordinator;

**Coordinators:** Roxanne Harrington, Secretary

**Regrets:** Ian Cranstone, Facilities Director; Sandy Gummeson, Trials Director; Sandra Johnson, Training Coordinator; Kristy Nguyen, Communications Coordinator; Esther Vrieze, Membership Coordinator; Vania Boulet, CARO coordinator;

1. Call to Order at 4:44 pm.
2. Agenda
  - 2.1 Additions to Agenda – none were mentioned.
  - 2.2 Approval of Agenda

**MOTION** to approve the Agenda. Moved by Treasurer, Second Vice-President. Four in favour, two absent. CARRIED.

3. Previous Meeting Minutes:
  - 3.1 Errors or omissions of minutes of August 29, 2024, nothing further mentioned.
  - 3.2 Approval of minutes of August 29, 2024

**MOTION** to approve the Minutes of August 29, 2024 as amended. Moved by Treasurer, Second Training Director. Four in favour, two absent. CARRIED.

### 4. Catherine Memorial

Heather began with stating that for the K9Kup on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September, participants will wear purple in memory of Catherine. Carolyn has prepared a collection display and donations (cash

or e-transfer) will be to the Farley Foundation. Heather will confirm with Rose-Anne to let people know and confirm the Farley Foundation. The display and collection will also be present at the Fun Match on October 5<sup>th</sup>. Heather suggested painting one jump in each ring purple and will have one painted for the Fun Match. An announcement will be made at the AGM explaining the Catherine Commemoration and collection.

5. Review Email motions

5.1 None

6. Unfinished Business

6.1 Training Director Position – President

Heather stated that no one has expressed interest in the position and raised the question of approaching individuals. Discussion concerning lack of Training Director in reference to field booking, classes and workshops. Heather will attend the next instructor meeting and the overall message is ‘no training director = no training/classes’.

6.2 Fun Match October 5 - Trial Secretary

Carolyn provided the volunteer schedule and running order to date. (Appendix 1 and 2). Erin will reach out to Lauren for Hoopers course. The Fun Match will be advertised again.

6.3 Road Update - Training Director

Erin said the road work is scheduled for the first half of October. Discussion about the dip being filled and porta-potty removal. Erin will ask Darryl if he could come after the 20<sup>th</sup>.

6.4 R&R Opening Paragraph wording - Vice-President

Boilerplate text for Roles and Responsibilities was displayed on screen, reviewed and modified during the meeting. Carolyn will update all of the Roles and Responsibilities documents that we reviewed, on the website.

6.5 Roles & Responsibilities Board Positions to update & review - Vice-President

Each Board position, as follows, was displayed, reviewed and updated as the members present worked together to update the Roles and Responsibilities.

6.5.1 Training Director

6.5.2 Vice-President

6.5.3 Treasurer

6.5.4 Trials Director

6.5.5 President

6.5.6 Facilities Director

6.6. Roles & Responsibilities Coordinator Positions to update and review – Vice-President

Two Coordinator positions were displayed, reviewed and updated due to the tie and collaboration with the Director positions. Completed were:

Trials Secretary and Training Coordinator. All other positions were deferred to October Meeting.

6.6.1 Secretary - deferred

- 6.6.2 Training Coordinator - completed
- 6.6.3 Facilities Coordinator - deferred
- 6.6.4 Communications - deferred
- 6.7 Jotform data (wording for TOR) – Webmaster – deferred to October
- 6.8 Perks- Instructor input – Training Director (Appendix 3)  
Erin summarized the Instructor points system from 2020 to date and provided Instructor comments following the Board review and decision regarding the points. Erin asked for the Board to consider a response to the Instructors answering questions, correcting misunderstandings and explaining Instructor training. Carolyn drafted a Board Response while discussion was occurring and it was reviewed by Board members. Erin will send the response to Instructors and include the response in the Instructor Handbook.

Response to Instructors from the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors believes that all Paws4Fun volunteers must be treated equally. All volunteer work is valued, and essential to the welfare of the club. Volunteer tasks are not valued differently. The compensation for one hour of volunteer work must be the same regardless of the volunteer role performed. For each hour of work performed by a volunteer, they will report one hour worked.

Because a Paws4fun member is not qualified to work in any specific volunteer role, their volunteer work must not be valued less. If a Paws4Fun member is not capable of performing a role due to disability, to compensate them less for their volunteer work would be discriminatory.

The Board of Directors reviewed volunteer compensation across the volunteer roles within Paws4Fun. As a result of that review, policy has been set that all volunteer hours performed will be compensated as one volunteer hour worked. Volunteers are not compensated for travel time.

Information for Instructors (will be added to the Instructor Handbook)

Instructors should report all hours worked– preparation, planning, setup/teardown, teaching, meetings, extra work with students, etc. They should also report hours spent in forced downtime at Paws4Fun such as in between classes. It is an honour system, instructors should report all hours they feel were spent on Paws4Fun activities.

Instructors will be provided with instructor specific training as they have been in the past.

- 6.9 Puppy Equipment - Training Director– deferred to October
- 6.10 Jump Build - Facilities– deferred to October
- 6.11 Clothing Update - Training Director– deferred to October
- 6.12 Business Cards - Treasurer– deferred to October
- 7. Financial Update  
Deferred to October
- 8. Scheduled Business

- 8.1 K9Kup Review Committee - President (Appendix 4)  
Heather stated that we will be basically starting from scratch and that the event needs a refresh. She will ask Rose-Anne as acting K9Kup Coordinator to join the committee and will confirm with Ian, his participation as Facilities. Rheel's position will be as Judge / Mentor.
  - 8.2 Move to SilverDawn - President– deferred to October
  - 8.3 IDAL club submission - IDAL Coordinator – deferred to October
  - 8.4 BIS Guidelines - Training Director– deferred to October
  - 8.5 Trees outside field – President– deferred to October
  - 8.6 CARO equipment & Ribbons - President– deferred to October
9. New business
    - 9.1 None mentioned
10. Adjournment at 8:10

Appendices to follow

- 1) Fun Match Volunteer Schedule
- 2) Fun Match Running Order
- 3) Perks- Instructor Input
- 4) K9Kup Review Committee

APPENDIX 1

	Ring 1 - Standard	Ring 2 - Jumpers	Ring 3 - Hoopers
<b>Build - 9:30am to 11am</b>			
Chief Course Builder	Erin	Rheal	?????
Build Crew #1	Carolyn	Sandy	n/a
Build Crew #2	Heather	Esther ?	n/a
Build Crew #3	Roxanne ?		n/a
<b>Pass 1 - 11am to 12:30pm</b>			
Gate Keeper / Timer / Ring Crew #1 *	Heather	Sandy	n/a
Ring Crew #2 *	Carolyn	Esther ?	n/a
Ring Crew #3 *	Erin	Rheal	n/a
<b>Pass 2 - 12:30pm (or when Pass 1 finished) to 2:00pm</b>			
Gate Keeper / Timer / Ring Crew #1 *	Heather	Sandy	n/a
Ring Crew #2 *	Carolyn	Esther ?	n/a
Ring Crew #3 *	Roxanne ?	Rheal	n/a

\* hang around outside of ring, run in as needed

Cannot attend:	Might attend:	Has not responded:
Ian	Esther	Sandra
Vania	Roxanne	Kristy

APPENDIX 2

Standard Pass 1	Jumpers Pass 1	Standard Pass 2	Jumpers Pass 2	Hoopers Only
24"	24"	24"	24"	Julie Prusita & Graham
				Julie Prusita & Sisu
20"	20"	20"	20"	
Dana Cranstone & Mabou			Dana Cranstone & Mabou	
Logan Patterson & Benny			Logan Patterson & Benny	
Janet Clarke & Jazz			Janet Clarke & Jazz	
Courtney Killion & Murphy			Courtney Killion & Murphy	
16"	16"	16"	16"	
Dana Cranstone & Calypso	Janet Parks & Vesta		Dana Cranstone & Calypso	
Dana Cranstone & Yahtzee			Dana Cranstone & Yahtzee	
			Janet Parks & Vesta	
12"	12"	12"	12"	
Heather Esdon & Lola			Heather Esdon & Lola	
Roxanne Harrington & Mary			Roxanne Harrington & Mary	
8"	8"	8"	8"	
Janet Clarke & Joey	Carolyn Heide & Radar		Carolyn Heide & Radar	
Roxanne Harrington & Will	Lisa Tittley & Jacksie		Janet Clarke & Joey	
	Ashlynn Bennett & Moira		Ashlynn Bennett & Moira	
			Lisa Tittley & Jacksie	
			Roxanne Harrington & Will	
4"	4"	4"	4"	
	Carolyn Heide & Rocky		Carolyn Heide & Rocky	

## APPENDIX 3

### Volunteer perks, comments from instructors (presented in alphabetical order)

September 24, 2024

Janet Clark & Sheila Smail

**Point 1 - Reduction of administrative burden to manage volunteer hours given to instructors:**

Janet: I support the concept that instructors can assist in this area and report their hours logged for teaching classes in the same way we would do for any other volunteer hours.

I have a further suggestion that the time allocated per class delivered be standardized so that neither instructors, or administrators have to deal with minor variations of time and record keeping. I.e

Regular 4 student class : 2 hrs for each class hour taught (i.e. 0.5 hr prep + 0.5 hr field set up+1hr teaching class).

Private classes : 1.5hrs (I.e. same prep and field set up 0.5hr class).

Notes - If the club wants to run classes with 2 or 3 students instead of the full complement of 4 (which I support) - would still allocate 2hrs as I often run for 1 hour anyways with small classes, and also the difference in time an effort is minimal in a practical sense.

- if the club wants to encourage written summaries at the end of sessions, could also continue giving 1 hr for instructors to prepare those summaries

- I am not sure if hours to attend meetings is being offered or rescinded. I personally am mostly indifferent to getting hours to attend our instructor meetings, however I have appreciated it, felt valued, did not expect it.

Sheila: I'm not particularly concerned about the number of hours I'm credited for, and a standardized, self-reporting system would work for me if it helps reduce the administrative burden.

**Point 2- Instructor Assistance to help Reduce the Administrative Burden for Class Registrations**

Janet: As an instructor, I would have been willing to be surveying student and advising club administrators which students are wanting to continue onto the next session.

Sheila: I'd be willing to go further in reducing the administrative load and take on additional responsibilities, such as organizing classes. However, I understand that not everyone may feel this is the

best approach.

### Point 3 - Credits to attend Paws4Fun training (workshops/classes) / Paws4Fun trial runs

[Janet](#): I have been very impressed that we have been given credits to attend other Paws4Fun training. A rational for this is to keep the Paws4Fun instructors up to date to improve the training they offer to others. This rational is different from many of the other volunteer activities - hence the difference for training credits. If it is felt that this is too generous, consideration could be given to auditing only - which would then likely preclude taking the weekly classes and apply to workshops only. I would support this.

Dropping using credits for trial runs is something that I am personally indifferent to as well. I suspect it is something that is appreciated and helps with instructor retention though.

There is no doubt that the training workshops that have been organized for the instructors to improve our skills are something that I did not expect but that I have REALLY appreciated and has made me a better instructor. I would encourage some type of continued instructor learning, though it does not have to be exactly as we have had before. This is not part of the changes that I am aware of occurring but mention as something that I believe is very important to keep the training program vibrant and be considered by the next Training Director.

[Sheila](#): I find the elimination of perks for instructors to be somewhat severe, as it sends the message that our contributions are not valued. Will this impact our ability to attract future instructors? I'm not sure, but for me, the removal of these perks makes the role of Training Director just that much more challenging and could jeopardize the training program

### Point 4 Managing Instructor Hours with no difference to other volunteer hours

[Janet](#): I have no intention to try to measure and value 1 training volunteer hour vs say as 1 hr as ring crew. What I do want to say is that taking on the responsibility to instruct a group through a full session is a responsibility I take seriously and requires much more commitment than me signing up to do course building for the day at a trial. If Paws4Fun wants to have a vibrant training program then consideration needs to be given for how to attract and retain instructors. These changes from the board with no engagement, dialogue or reasons given for the changes is not as positive as it could have been should we have been given the opportunity to to help find solutions to issues seem to present. My suggestions given above are my initial attempt to guess at the problems and to offer suggestions.

[Sheila](#): As Janet pointed out, not all volunteer hours are the same. The commitment required for instruction, which for me lasts nearly the entire outdoor season, is significant. I take my role very seriously and support my students in various ways beyond lessons. For example, one student used my dog (Kep) for lessons when hers was injured. I've also had students run Kep through short sequences to experience working with a trained dog, with one describing it as "exhilarating." I've had my junior student run Kep in a trial as a junior handler (and Q!), and I support students in person at trials and at K9Kup.

[Janet](#): In closing, I very much appreciate Erin that you have brought the changes for the 2025 session to our attention. My name can be given should this input be considered helpful to be given to the board - or dropped as an individual and included as part of a group response should be decide to do that.

[Sheila](#): I invest significantly in my own personal training, I take weekly lessons throughout the year, attend seminars, watch podcasts, and read—both for my own improvement and to provide the best guidance possible for my students. Instructors not only generate considerable income for the club but also enhance its legitimacy. While the current credit system could be seen as generous, I believe it's effective. For me, the credits serve as a small offset for what is otherwise a costly commitment.

[Sheila question](#): Will trial volunteers still get lunch?

### **Dana Cranstone**

I like volunteer teaching, I taught before there were perks, and I would teach without them. I also feel good about teaching for a club that keeps the costs more accessible for students. I never would have started agility if I'd had to pay \$30 an hour for classes.

That said, I've heard a number of concerns expressed over the years about 'modernizing teaching techniques' and 'being more consistent with our approach'. I think it makes sense for instructors to get classes or seminars at a reduced rate, since it builds in more modern skills they can pass on to their students. I will note that free classes at varying rates of exchange have been a perk as long as I have been with the club. The group instructor training is a great idea, since it builds teamwork and common ground. Arguably, trial runs make sense too, since trialing is also adding to an instructor's experience, exposure and resume.

I understand the concern about fairness in remuneration for volunteer hours. It does feel a bit odd to me that instructors get perks while other key roles don't, but I think rather than completely abandoning the perks program, we should consider being more fair with the distribution of perks for all major club volunteers. Maybe teaching gets somewhat fewer perks, but anyone with more than 50 hours gets 'perk points' for each additional 10 hours, which may be used towards classes, seminars or trial runs. Executive members put in a lot of hours, and it's their innovative ideas that make P4FA what it is, that also deserves some extra recognition. Our club will not survive without maintained grounds, equipment and trials, as well as classes.

Over the trial weekend, Candy noticed that we don't give volunteer prizes at trials anymore, and told me we should take better care of our volunteers. I agree. We don't need big expensive prizes; dog treats, free trial runs, or coupons towards classes/seminars or even \$10 gift cards would make good random draw prizes for trials that are not much effort to obtain. In fact I feel that it would be a good approach to automatically give some sort of perk to anyone volunteering at a trial for more than 1/2 a day. The trials can't happen without dedicated volunteers. Showing gratitude in small ways can mean a lot.



As noted, it makes sense to count 2+ hours for every teaching hour (setup, teardown, after class advice, emails, class prep, high percentage of drive time). Let's just negotiate an average number, and not do extra paperwork and accounting to track every 15 minutes. I have no issue with submitting the number of classes I taught at the end of the season for volunteer hour tracking. Realistically, life is busy for volunteer people, I will likely fail to do it on a monthly basis.

I'll agree with everyone and say that Erin is absolutely awesome and has added a lot to our teaching program. Please know that you are deeply appreciated! Also know that this is not a rant at the executive, who I really appreciate as well, just some thoughts on how we might navigate this issue.

#### **Liz Doran**

I enjoy teaching agility classes very much and I put significant time onto planning my classes, creating materials and communicating with my students.

It is always a hard issue to take away perks of a job that have already been given.

For me the reality is that even with using a few instructor credits for a trial over the summer, teaching at P4fun as a volunteer costs me much more than the \$100 I used for trial entries this summer. Gas there and back for classes \$\$, printer ink for handouts, not being available to supply teach on my class days \$\$\$, the time spent making up for cancelled classes. Before this board decision I was already questioning my plans for next summer. Instructors generate income and investment in the clubs future.

#### **Michele Guillet**

Paws4fun training team has never been working so well, there are about 10 different instructors teaching agility and hoopers. Most of the credit belongs to Erin who has been our training director for the last few years. She has done an amazing job in team building and building a good reputation with prospective students. Filling the hole left by Erin leaving the Training Director position, I imagine will be a challenge.

Changes are being made by Paws4Fun board members to the training program without explaining why or what problem was being addressed. When finding out, I felt that instructors were not appreciated for the skills, reliability, time and commitment they bring to their role. As an instructor, I cannot help but think that the board members not only do not share my opinion about the training team, given their decision to terminate unilaterally the terms for instructors without rationale, but want to either abandon training or think that the current instructors do not offer value for the club. Should it be the intention of Paws4Fun to continue a training program, I wonder if the board members have considered the impact of their decision on the training program and the morale of the instructors. How will that affect retention and recruitment of new instructors? How will this affect attracting a new candidate to fill the position of the Training Director?

Putting the instructors in front of a fait accompli decision without explanation, communication, or consultation is poor management practice. Any change needs to be managed. The way it was done would be poor practice for paid employees. For a volunteer organization, I am not sure what I would call this approach. When finding out, I felt that instructors were not appreciated for the skills, reliability, time and commitment they bring to their role. The board members either have low opinion of the work done by instructors, or no longer believe that training meets the club objectives. If that is the case. I recognize that the board has the responsibility to make decisions they believe are right for the club, however it should be done with compassion and kindness for volunteers.

Most instructors love teaching, and the perks are nice but could have been discussed if there are changes that needed to address issues or dissatisfaction from the board or harmonization with other volunteer positions. The training provided to the instructors has been key in building team spirit and harmonizing the teaching practices. Training is the one perk that needs to be kept to continue to improve skills, team building and offer consistency between instructors.

Janet and Sheila have already talked about the difference between teaching and volunteering at trial. I concur with their analysis regarding the engagement and commitment required of instructors and the value it adds. Another consideration is that while I have to drive to the club once to do 6-8 hours of volunteer work at trials or K-9 Kup, to get 6 hours of volunteer hours teaching, with the new regime, an instructor would need to drive 6 times to the club.

Question: will course builders only get credited for the time they build?

### **Dominique Theriault**

I think that Erin's interpretation of 'credit' for 'actual volunteer hours worked' is not necessarily what another person or group of persons would interpret, depending if they understood or not what instructors do. This is particularly true if a new Training Director materializes. That interpretation needs to be brought out.

Janet and Sheila raise good points about training at P4FA. The qualitative point about the instructor who works at improving her own knowledge and skills resonates with me. It should not be taken for granted or ignored. We should also consciously extend our considerations to other canine sport or specialty agility training, such as P4FA offers from time to time in harmony with general agility. The topics as raised and I understand them:

- training program administrative burden
- instructor volunteer time/work standardization, what counts and does not
- reporting mechanism
- perks
- value to the club of instructors who are members
- revenue generation
- member instructor compensation: no pay, volunteer hours for work (to be defined), no qualitative difference between instructor time and other type of club volunteer time, no recognition of investment in self-improvement, a diversity of perks (for self-improvement, for access to competition within the club) that the board has decided to remove

- instructor qualifications
- how to attract and retain instructors
- divergence of individual instructor views on compensation and on time spent

Let us note that non-members who provide instruction at P4FA through workshops are paid for the revenue they bring in and the workshop may or may not cover the costs. The club pays X for Y hours provided by a non-member., with revenue generated. The club pays a single member \$1.40/hour in 2024 towards 2025 membership (\$70 single 2024 membership / 50 hours to cover that fee 100%), be it for student training, ring crew or attending a course building workshop. Only student training in the previous generates revenue. As an aside, would any member who is qualified or reputed enough to be paid for a workshop be eligible for the same treatment as a non-member: no volunteer time but pay?

I agree with Janet and Sheila except that I much value quantitative credit for my time spent. That said, I have never to date been credited for all the time spent quantitatively, like many instructors. For me it has to somewhat recognize the personal investment and so far so good because we do enjoy what we do. It is interesting that some instructors spend significant time travelling to and from the Taylor Road site and have not in the past been credited for that. If that is part of the 'work' in the motion, then it has to be made explicit (see below on categories of work).

I strongly agree with Janet and Sheila that the club needs to value the qualitative difference between instructor time and ring crew, for example, not only because instructors bring in revenue directly. (my contribution is terribly modest and one only hopes it is not because my snooker and gambler course is bad) They bring in revenue indirectly. Out of good instruction (and facilities of course) comes memberships, pursued instruction, competition participation, reputation and new students.

On the subject of reporting time spent (worked?) and standardizing it, I am all in favour of self-help, self-reporting. The honour system seems appropriate given the personal investment. But let's recognize the gap in instructor time needed for different types of training if we assign standard durations. There is general agility level training (foundation, starter, whatever the vocabulary the club uses). There is specialty agility (international agility courses, snooker and gambler with planning methods, Michèle's *Managing a dog's line*) and there is complementary training (hoopers, rally-obedience if only it were given, etc). To cover it all, reporting using a list of work/time by category might better fit all types of instruction. Categories, for example: curriculum development, class content preparation, student communications, student homework review, class delivery (time with student teams in the field), equipment set-up and close-down/putting away, travel to-from delivery of training, administrative work (meetings, reporting, communications, travel to meetings). Maybe we can discuss the list and see to it that the word 'work' means specific things that are clear enough. Maybe the list can become a volunteering reporting tool, to ease the volunteer coordinator's burden.

Finally, I am sad that the perks system is to be discontinued but happy that one can use one's unused perks points into the future. In support of some sort of perk system subsisting, I would favour it going to continuing education for instructors, such as audit spots in any kind of workshop given at/through the club, with option to pay the extra for a working spot.

## APPENDIX 4

### **K9 Kup Review Committee**

#### Committee Remit

Document current K9 Kup mission statement, rules, and process. Solicit input from stakeholders and propose changes, if needed, to K9 Kup mission statement, process and rules to address stakeholders' issues.

#### Committee Members

Chair - President

Members - K9 Kup Coordinator, Vice-President, Treasurer, Facilities

This is a Paws4Fun event and I think what the above members bring to the table is enough experience to ensure a good review. Also, all club members will be stakeholders so they will all get an opportunity to provide input.