

Swiss Club Toronto

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting for 2022

Location: The Chelsea Hotel, Toronto - Rosetti Room

Date/Time: April 14th, 2023 at 8:00pm

Attendees: 52 Members including Board Members

Present:	President	Nadia Berger
	VP, Social Media and Swiss Social	Charlotte Mariller
	Treasurer	Auggie Werner
	Membership Chairperson	Benjamin Wuethrich
	Tell Tale	Heidy Lawrance
	Secretary / 5-Pin Bowling	Simone Hohn
	Men's Section	Arno Sigrist
	Theatre Group	Maggie Hess
	Amicale Romande	open position
	Social Jass Section	Erika Tieche
	Canadysli	Philippe Moser

Absent: Women's Section Paula Rico

Minutes taken by Simone Hohn

Special Guests:
Honorary Consul Alexandra Soriano

1. Welcome and Introduction of Special Guest

The President Nadia Berger opened the meeting at 7:50 pm with a warm welcome to all the new and longtime Members and volunteers who have helped with our events in the past. She also thanked the team at the Chelsea hotel for their warm welcome and the excellent dinner. Nadia also welcomed our special Guest Alexandra Soriano, the Honorary Consul.

2. Introduction of the Board Members

The Board members were introduced:

President	Nadia Berger
Vice President	Charlotte Mariller
Treasurer	Augustin or Auggie Werner
Tell Tale editor	Heidy Lawrance
Secretary	Simone Hohn
Membership Chairperson and Website editor	Benjamin Wuethrich

The Swiss Club would be nothing without his sections. We have several Section Heads here tonight.

5 Pin Bowling	Simone Hohn
Social Jass Section	Erika Tieche
Men's Section	Arno Sigrist
Theatre Group	Maggie Hess
Swiss Social	Charlotte Mariller
and our new Section	
Canadysli	Philippe Moser
Section head that couldn't make it today	
Women's section	Paula Rico

3. Minutes of the 2022 AGM

The President informed members that printed minutes from the 2022 AGM were available on each table.

No changes needed towards the 2022 AGM minutes.

Motion: Arno Sigrist moved that the minutes of the 2022 AGM be accepted.

Michel Zanoncello seconded.

4. Swiss Citizen of the Year Award

As every year, Rene Waelti - a long time contributor, former president and Alphorn player, made sure that ballots for nominations for this year's Swiss Citizen of the Year Award were on the tables. The Votes are collected at the AGM, the award will be announced and given out at the Swiss National Day event.

5. President's Report

Nadia mentioned that there were several changes over the year, but all are good changes and will help the Club grow.

Before the Report, Nadia asked everyone to rise and observe a minute of silence to remember the members who passed away in the past year. May the rest in peace.

Nadia said that the last year has been a great year for the Swiss Club. There was a rise in Memberships and all events had good attendance. Although the Club and its members are growing older, we have some new and younger members, which means the club will continue as a support for the Swiss Canadian community in Toronto.

There were several changes on the board over the last year, so Nadia gave an update on the Section first.

Social Jass (former: Jass section)

After 33 years in the position, Albert Lanz retired and Erika Tieche, a longtime member and former President, took the Section on. A big thank you to Albert for his commitment, effort

and time he had put into the Jass Section. She wished him a happy retirement and hopes we will continue to see him at different Club events.

A warm welcome to Erika back on the board. and to move forward with the Section, now as Social Jass.

Amicale Romande

This year, the Amicale Romande held their annual Raclette event with over 40 attendees and a great turnout.

Jean-Marc, the Section Head of the Amicale Romande, also retired after over 40 years.

A big thank you to Jean-Marc for his commitment and time towards the Club. Nadia also thanked all the volunteers, including Molly English (treasurer and bookkeeper and loyal supporter, Freddy and Norma Wenger and their family, Francois Balet and his extended family, Didier Artus, Hugo Baumann, Marie Therese and family, Suzanne Bielman and countless other Swiss friends from different sections.

She thanked them all for feeding everyone so much cheese, bread and potatoes as well as drinks and desserts too.

Noemie Steiner took on the Amicale Romande briefly as the Section head and she did organize the Raclette, but now we are back to looking for someone that would love to fill the position so we can continue to have our Raclette and Fondue events.

Nadia announced that the **Gym section**, after talking to the section and Section head Suzi Hubler, had retired. The Gym section had their annual canoe trip, but hadn't had much going on otherwise. Sport related events will now be held through the club itself and/or as part of the Swiss Social section.

Nadia thanked Suzi Hubler for taking on the Gym section after Werner Flury retired from his role.

The Swiss Club welcomed the **Canadysli** as a new section. Conversations started in late 2022 and now they are officially part of our Club with Philippe Moser as Section head.

The Canadysli is a carnival marching band that plays music in the style of the swiss carnival bands of Luzern and Basel, known as Guggemusig. They started as a Club in 1978 and now Nadia is happy to welcome Philippe and all his members in the Swiss Club.

Maggie Hess is the Section head of the **Theatre Group** for over 30 years. After the forced Covid break, the Theatre Group is putting on a play this spring 2023. They found a suitable comedy for the group and they practiced weekly over several months. Their first performance is going to take place this weekend, on Sunday April 16 in Wellesley. The Toronto performance will be next Weekend, on April 22 at the Latvian Center. Hopefully many of you will be able to be there.

Next, Nadia mentioned the **Men's Section**. Led by the ever energetic Arno Sigrist for over 30 years, the section is going strong with weekly Kaffeeklatsches every Monday morning and regular virtual meetings, too. The men's section had quite a few events in 2022, including a lunch and their AGM, the June BBQ at the Egger Dairy Farm, a Swiss Movie Matinee in October and their Christmas Lunch at the St. George's Golf and Country Club in

November. Sadly, they have lost a few avid contributors and loyal members in 2022, including Trudi Egger, Werner Flury and Albert Huwiler - may the rest in peace.

The **Women's Section**, led by the indefatigable Paula Rico, who unfortunately could not be here today, continues to have their Kaffeeklatsches twice a week.

Last month, they were at the Village players to see a performance; they will make another visit on May 7th. Upcoming is their AGM on May 25th at Jollys Italian restaurant with a free lunch.

Nadia wanted to recognize Paula for all of the years she has been leading the women's section. for her leadership, energy and dedication to the Swiss community and the woman's section members.

Further the **5-pin Bowling**, led by Simone Hohn, was mentioned. They are a small but fun group of bowlers that meet once a month from September to April. Playing 3 games and normally having dinner close by afterwards. The next set date is April 23rd, everyone is welcome to join them. They play for fun, but do keep track of the scores to assign the trophies.

The final section mentioned by Nadia is led by the Vice President Charlotte Mariller for the last 1.5 years, the **Swiss Social**. The socials have continued to happen every last Thursday of the month, in person at the Duke of York pub and some new locations the section has been testing out. 2022 also brought a partnership with our fellow Swiss organization, the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce. They had a joint social event at a pub in October and had over 50 people attending - definitely a good reason to continue partnering where it makes sense, so that we can continue to bring the Swiss community together in different ways. The Swiss Social held a Christmas social at Jack Astors with an attendance of over 30 people. It was a great way to recognize our volunteers and members in a fun and festive way to end the year.

The President, Nadia, mentioned some other events that happened in the past year. On July 24th we celebrated the Swiss National Day with over 400 people in attendance. She hopes we will have the same great outcome this year.

Because of the timing of the games of Switzerland playing at the World Cup, there were no in-person events organized to cheer on the Swiss team. But we know that the members were cheering them on at home and the Club supported them in spirit.

For Christmas 2022, a Toronto restaurant was found that served Fondue so there was a Fondue night in December.

Nadia mentioned the presence on the web, as that is the main way to keep the members informed and how the Club attracts new members. Benjamin Wuthrich, our Membership Chairperson and Website Editor, created a new website. Newly, we have an "In Memoriam" page. When the Club is informed of a member's passing, people can request to have this added in that section. This is an option, but it will only be posted if requested to do so by a member.

The President thanked Benjamin for all his time and effort he put into the new Website. For capturing the history of the club, and for ensuring that all the photos and records of the events and activities the Club does have a home for many years to come.

She encouraged everyone that hasn't done so, to check it out at swissclubtoronto.ca

6. Financial Statement 2019 - 2021

Treasurer Auggie Werner explained the financial statement of the past years.

No auditor has been used this year. It is mainly to Insure the Treasurer.

Things mentioned were that most Sections do have their own finances, especially the smaller ones and that he, as a Treasurer does not have direct access to the money of the Swiss Club.

The main event in the past year was the Swiss National Day.

Sales are mainly the Donations, sale of the Nussgipfel, the Fondue event and the Membership contributions.

Under Purchases are the Membership Software, Storage, Zoom Membership, Section contributions, Insurance, Tell Tale National Day expenses, Meeting/AGM expenses and similar

Move to accept: Philippe Moser

Erika Tieche seconds. All approved.

7. Membership Report

Benjamin informed everyone of the Member numbers of the past year.

He also mentioned that, if you are comfortable using the webpage, you can update your profile there

The Membership program we use, reminds Members quite often to pay their fee, after 6 months of non-payment the Membership got canceled. Benjamin removed that future and is reaching out more often to Members that haven't paid their Membership on time.

The number of memberships as of end March 2023 are as follows:

Single	108
Family	165
Total Memberships	405

8. Council of the Swiss Abroad Report

Unfortunately our ASO delegates couldn't be here tonight, so Nadia was reading the report they had prepared for us.

On March 16 and 17 the spring meeting of the Council of the Swiss Abroad took place in Berne, preceded by an exchange between delegates and national councillors. This year the exchange was followed by a workshop.

Key takeaways from the general meeting and exchange with parliamentarians:

Banks: The OSA continues to establish new partnerships with Swiss Banks to serve our community. The Zuercher Kantonalbank, in addition to Post Finache, now serves Swiss citizen who live in Canada, but the fees are close to 500.- per year.

E-voting: Basel-Stadt, Thurgau and St.Gallen will be testing e-voting in the June vote.

Mode of election of delegates: Delegates are now chosen by Swiss clubs and associations. Associations in the UK, Mexico and Australia have tested a universal ballot to allow anyone registered to elect their representatives. What do you think? Send your input to Antoine and Suzanne.

Federal elections 2023: Political parties are getting ready for the 2023 elections. Let the parties know what matters to you and consider joining an international section and even put your name on a main list or sublist and run for office in Switzerland.

Driver's licence: A new issue popped up after the meeting. The old blue driver's licence is not going to be valid after January 31, 2024. As it stands, a Swiss driver's licence cannot be renewed if you do not live in Switzerland.

Key takeaways from the workshop on democratic participation:

The return of e-voting does not guarantee that the participation of the 5th Switzerland will immediately rise to the level of the inland Swiss.

For this reason, the OSA and delegates Carmen Trochsler from Australia and Antoine Belaieff from Canada collaborated with the NGO Campus for Democracy to organise a workshop to find the active democratic participation of the Swiss abroad. Many good ideas came out of the workshop, particularly on better information on the themes we vote on and why voting matters.

A second workshop is being organised to take place in June with an eye to identify concrete steps and responsibilities, and present the plan at the ASO congress in August.

What should be the priorities of the Council of the Swiss Abroad and the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad? What would you like to say to the parties in this election year? Tell Suzanne and Antoine.

Send Antoine and Suzanne your ideas, fill out the survey and let them know if you do not vote and would agree to be interviewed.

9. Elections

Our President had some big announcements regarding the elections for this year, effective as of this AGM.

Nadia Berger, the President is stepping down as a President, because she is moving to Switzerland. She will miss the Swiss Club Toronto, the board members and all the wonderful people she met in and through the Club.

Another Board member, the Secretary Simone Hohn, is also stepping down after 3 years. Nadia thanked her for her contribution.

With that being said, the newly arranged team could look as followed:

President - Charlotte Mariller is willing to step up and fill the position.

Vice President - Benjamin Wuethrich (current Membership Chairperson and Website editor)

Secretary - OPEN - is responsible for the Club's records, takes minutes

Nadia invited candidates for the positions of President, Vice President and Secretary to introduce themselves and to say a few words about themselves and why they would like to take on that role. She asked Arno to lead the voting and election.

Benjamin Wuethrich introduced himself and handed a gift and thank you card to Nadia. Nadia was very grateful and thanked the board and Members and said that it was a pleasure to work for the Club in all the different positions she had over the past few years. Afterwards Charlotte Mariller introduced herself. She would be excited for her new role as President and she hopes to be able to organize many social events to bring together all the generations.

Arno Sigrist did the election, Charlotte got voted in for President and Benjamin for Vice President. No objections were made.

10. Other Business

- This year there are some by-law revisions that the board would like to suggest. Nadia asked everyone present to have a look at the printouts on the tables.

1. Refers to **chapter 2 membership and general meeting, Art. 2**

The current by-law: To give someone and lifetime membership (based on 30 years in the club) or honorary membership (based on role) it requires a majority from the board and then acceptance by members at the AGM.

We would like to change this to require: a majority from the board, with members to be informed at the AGM

Proposals for honorary membership can be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval at any time. Such proposals require a simple majority of the Board of Directors. The foregoing procedure shall equally apply to proposals for life-time membership. Eligible for life-time membership shall be active members who have been members in good standing for a total of no less than thirty years. New life-time and honorary memberships must be shared at the next AGM. The Swiss Ambassador in Ottawa is to be invited to be an honorary member of the Club. The Swiss Chamber of Commerce President is to be invited to be an honorary member of the Club.

Approver: Auggie Werner

Secunder: Arno Sigrist

2. Refers to **chapter 3 Board of Directors, Art. 2**

The current by-law: Candidates for any office of the Board of Directors must have been a member of the Club for at least one full calendar year prior to their election, except for the President for whom a membership for at least two calendar years is required. The President of the Club must be of Swiss origin.

The Board would like to change this to: to be eligible to become a Board director you must be a member for at least 6 months and for a director at least 1 year. The President of the Club must be of Swiss origin.

Approver: Heidi Lawrence
Seconder: Charlotte Mariller

- New lifetime member we would like to propose/ present from 2022 are:
 - Bieri Gertrud, Doerig Family, Dulberg Annemarie, Evans Elisabeth, Fischer Josy, Gruenig Thomas, Hartmann Christine, Kern Fred, Lenz Family, Martin Anneliese, Thase-Widmer Family, Turnbull Family, Vollenweider Heinz, Wertli Family and Wollens Jeannine
- Swiss National Day Event was announced for July 23, 2023. It will be held at the Hansa House in Mississauga
- Rene will now collect Ballots.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm