



COUNCIL MEETING **MINUTES**

April 5, 2022
9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. (EST)
Zoom Video Conference

- Present:** Chris McDonell, R.P.F., President
Peter Nitschke, R.P.F., Vice-President
Denis Gagnon, R.P.F., Past-President
David Goldsmith, Public Councillor
Sally Krigstin, Public Councillor
Brandon Williamson, Associate R.P.F., Southwest Councillor
Scot Rubin, R.P.F., Northwest Councillor
Larry McDermott, Public Councillor--left after item 2b)
Douglas Reynolds, Public Councillor
- Fred Pinto, R.P.F., Executive Director and Registrar
Louise Simpson, Registration Manager
Priscilla Doyle, Office, and Registration Coordinator
- Guests:** Samuel Carriere, RBC Dominion Securities-item 2a) only
James Kinkaid, RBC Dominion Securities- item 2a) only
Sarah Bros, R.P.F., Chair of Awards and Recognition Working Group-item 2 e) only
- Regrets:** Wendy LeClair, R.P. F., Northeast Councillor
Waseem Ashiq, R.P.F., Southeast Councillor
Neil McLean, R.P.F., Central West Councillor
Daniela Corapi, Public Councillor
- Absent:** Sarah Todgham, R.P.F., Central East Councillor

1. **Call to Order-** C. McDonell-

- a) Opening Remarks-Chris McDonell called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and welcomed everyone.
- b) Record Attendance and Confirmation of Quorum- the attendance was recorded as above. As quorum is $\frac{1}{3}$ the membership of Council or 5 Council members, a quorum was confirmed. Council members are asked to use the Chat function to record when they leave or join the meeting.

- c) Conflict of Interest Declaration- The President asked that if anyone had a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda to please declare it. There was none.
- d) Determine if there are any other business items. The President asked if there was any other business. There was none.
- e) Finalize and approve the agenda (an attachment was provided)
Discussion: Larry McDermott requested that the Equity & Inclusion Task Team item be moved to the first hour of the meeting as he must leave.
Motion: Reynolds/Nitschke-That the agenda is accepted as amended.
All in favour. Carried.
- f) Approve the minutes of January 25, 2022 (an attachment was provided)-
Motion: Gagnon/Williamson- That the minutes of the January 25, 2022 meeting are accepted as circulated and will be made available to OPFA members on the website.
All in favour. Carried.

2. Discussion Items

a) Investment Reserve Fund-D. Goldsmith (attachments were provided)-

- This is the first of annual presentations by RBC Dominion Securities on the past performance and expected future performance of the investments. The investments are guided by the policies approved by Council;
- The presenters will speak regarding:
 - 1) the format of the reports that are provided (one as of November 30, 2021, and one as of February 28, 2022). The Finance Committee has worked with RBC to develop this format. Council can provide feedback;
 - 2) performance of the investments;
 - 3) outlook for the future.
- Council was then joined by Samuel Carriere and James Kinkaid from RBC Dominion Securities who reviewed the submitted reports mentioned above:
 - There is a group of 15 portfolio managers who manage the OPFA's investments;
 - The investments are in two portfolios, one is a U.S. portfolio and the other is a Canadian portfolio which helps diversify the investments. The U.S. investment amounts are reported in Canadian dollars on the reports converted as of the date of the report;
 - Funds from Scotia Bank were transferred to RBC on July 26, 2021, and later the funds from TD Canada Trust were transferred;
 - Management fees are not itemized in the reports but may be added in the future. The Total Investment Return shows the returns after management fees are deducted. Management fees are itemized in the monthly transaction reports;
 - Management fees are 1.4% of the portfolio value annually and are applied on the last day of each month. There are no transaction fees;
 - As of February 28, 2022, the rate of return on investments was -2.18%. This is because of market volatility due to higher interest rates and the conflict in Ukraine. Historically, markets have recovered within 6 months after a conflict has ended. The OPFA's investments do not have holdings in Russia or Ukraine.

- The outlook of investments should improve later in the year when inflationary pressures, such as the conflict in Ukraine, supply chain issues, and the rise in energy prices are expected to improve.

- The President thanked Mr. Carriere and Mr. Kinkaid for their time and they left the meeting.

b) Equity & Inclusion Task Team Update- (an attachment was provided)-L. McDermott

- Council was provided with the Count Me In Diversity Profile Survey proposal which was reviewed. The task team is proposing a voluntary survey of members.

Discussion:

- The task team will need to look at how the results of the survey will be evaluated and used;
- The objective of the survey is to develop a baseline, this needs to be stated in the report;
- David Goldsmith will forward a self-identification form that was used by the government to Larry McDermott;
- Council would like the task team to continue with its work and passed the following motion:

Motion: Nitschke/Williamson- That Council supports the Equity and Inclusion Task Team to develop a survey to describe our membership and to develop relevant policies for the management of that information and that it should be in line with the strategic plan.

All in favour. Carried.

c) Financial Update & 2021 Audited Financial Statements (an attachment was provided)-P. Nitschke-

- Council was provided with the 2021 audited financial statements for approval. The report will be signed by the President and Executive Director after Council approval and will then be distributed to members via the 2021 Annual Report;
- Peter Nitschke, R.P.F., Chair of the Finance Committee reported that the OPFA is a well-organized association whose finances are in good order and thanked David Goldsmith for his help on the Finance Committee.

Motion: Goldsmith/Gagnon That the 2021 audited financial statements are approved as circulated.

All in favour. Carried.

d) Summary Budget Update to End of February 2022)-P. Nitschke-

- The budget is the same as last year except for the additional cost to digitize the office paper files. Funding was received from EcoCanada last year and additional funding was provided this year from a new source; however, the new funding ended on March 31. Funds will be used to finish the digitization, shred the paper files, remove/discard the furniture and close the Georgetown office;
- The birds' nest location certification webinar, discussed later in the agenda, did not profit;

- The Finance Committee will provide Council with a Quickbooks summary as of the end of March or April, at the May 31, 2022, Council meeting;
- The Finance Committee may increase its membership and may bring the names of new Committee members to Council at the May 31 meeting.

e) **Appointment of Auditors for the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year-P. Nitschke-**

- The Finance Committee recommends that KPMG be appointed as the financial auditors for the 2021-2022 fiscal year;
- KPMG signed a 5-year contract with the OPFA after responding to a request for proposals. Their contract ends on November 30, 2022;
- The question arose as to whether the Members should approve the appointment of the auditors. They have not done so in the past and is required by the OBCA (Ontario Business Corporation Act); however, the OPFA is exempt from the OBCA and can set its own policy on the matter;
- Fred Pinto will check with legal counsel to see if Council or our members appoint the auditors and will report back to Council. This information will be used for the 2023 AGM. This year, Council will approve the appointment of the auditors as stated in the OPFA's Bylaw.

Motion: Nitschke/Reynolds-That KPMG is re-appointed as the financial auditor for the 2021-2022 fiscal year ending November 30, 2022.

All in favour. Carried.

f) **2021 Resolution -** (an attachment was provided)-S. Bros, R.P.F., Chair, Awards, and Recognition Working Group-

- Council was provided with the resolution that was received at the Annual General Meeting in April 2021;
- Resolution 2021-1 was moved by Michael Rosen, R.P.F., and seconded by Joel McCracken, R.P.F., and was approved by the membership at the 2021 Annual General Meeting;
- The Awards and Recognition Working Group provided a report for the September 15, 2021 meeting and were to conduct a full review, including looking at the legislation, equity, and inclusion, and report back to Council;
- OPFA legal counsel recommends that the awards that are not consistent with the PFA be discontinued. Other regulators have had some issues and have disbanded or transferred their awards program to other organizations;
- Sarah Bros, Chair of the Awards and Recognition Working Group joined the meeting to update Council:
 - A written report has been drafted and is being reviewed by the working group and will be submitted by the end of April and provided to Council for the May 31 meeting. The report includes a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis for each option below. Each option must be analyzed regarding the risk to the OPFA;

1.

Discussion:

- The 25 Year pin, 50 Year pin, and certificates of appreciation to those who have served on a committee or Council, will continue to be awarded by the OPFA and they are in compliance with our legislation;

- The OPFA is a regulatory body, not an association or advocacy organization. There is more government scrutiny as discussed in the Grey Areas newsletter that was sent to Council. This will be brought forward for discussion later in today's meeting;
- Sarah Bros will be presenting the working group's research at the OPFA initiatives session of the annual conference on April 13 as it relates to the resolution that was approved by members at the AGM in 2021;
- Chris McDonnell thanked Sarah Bros and the working group for their work and Sarah Bros exited the meeting.

g) Update on the 2022 and 2023 Annual Conferences-L. Simpson/F. Pinto-

- 238 have registered, 80 of whom are speakers and those from trade booths which is lower than last year;
- There will be a session on the OPFA initiatives. This will allow more time for members to ask questions than can be accommodated at the Annual General Meeting;
- Approximately \$19, 000 in sponsorship has been received;
- Virtual field trips will be pre-recorded and a live panel will answer questions;
- The 2023 Annual Conference will take place in Peterborough with Ken Elliott serving as Chair. Ken has served on OPFA Council in the recent past

h) Bird's Nest Location Certification Webinar-(an attachment was provided)-F. Pinto

- Council was provided with information on the birds' nests certification webinar which was held on March 3 for members and non-members;
- Some members had identified that they do not have the competencies to identify bird nests;
- The webinar was open to all who provide services to municipalities, not just OPFA members;
- To reduce the risk to members and to protect the public interest, the CIF (Canadian Institute of Forestry) and the OPFA collaborated to develop and run the webinar which remains available through the CIF. It has received very good feedback;
- Participants were invited to complete an internet-based test. Those who passed received a certificate.
- The webinar is advertised on our website and will be mentioned during the upcoming annual conference.

i) Update on Registration (an attachment was provided)-F. Pinto/L. Simpson-

- Council was provided with the proposed changes to FARPACTA (Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006) that affect registration and the OPFA's response to the changes;
- These changes were announced and regulators were given the opportunity to provide feedback, which staff did;
- The changes mainly affect the length of time it takes for a "fully qualified" applicant to be registered. It is unclear, however, what is meant by "fully qualified";
- It is unclear whether the time limit of one year includes the time it takes the applicant to undergo the Credential Assessment Process (CAP). If so, the OPFA may require applicants to undergo the CAP before they apply for Provisional Membership, as is required by the forestry regulator in Alberta. It would also result in major complications for the existing Provisional Members. The OPFA also requires 18 months of mentored forestry experience;
- The Bridge Training will likely have to be updated when funding is available;

- The Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) will no longer require the OPFA to complete annual reports as it has in the past but is now using a risk-based assessment of registration practices, for which the OPFA is considered low-risk;
- Council was also provided with a report on membership trends;
- Membership has been growing since 2010 with a slight decline in Student Membership in 2018;
- Practising members increased after 2014; however, Associate Membership has increased recently due to the standard scopes of practice that have been developed with which the candidate is not required to undergo CAP;
- There are currently 162 Provisional Members, 63% of whom have graduated from programs that are not accredited by the CFAB (Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board) and are employed by a wide range of employers;
- The age distribution of all members has shifted slightly. The numbers in the 31-50 age range have increased and outnumber those in the 51-70 age range whose numbers have decreased;
- The OPFA collects the birthdate of applicants as members are required to be 18 years of age or older.

j) **Professional Networking Task Team Update** (an attachment was provided) – F. Pinto

- Council was provided with the Terms of Reference for the task team;
- Action is being taken by the task team to help new members enter the profession and match members' skills with employment demands. This was initiated by a new Full Member, who is the Chair of the task team;
- An Expression of Interest (EOI) was sent to members and a task team has been assembled. Their work is ongoing.

k) **Grey Areas Newsletter-External Review of Regulators by the Auditor General of Ontario**-D. Reynolds-

- This item was taken out of the Information Items section below for discussion;
- Council was provided with an article about the mandate of the Auditor General of Ontario to audit self-governing professions;
- Some regulatory bodies such as the Ontario College of Teachers are considering a name change such as the Ontario Teacher's Regulatory Authority, to better communicate the nature of the organization, which is to regulate. The Ontario College of Teachers has a report in this regard on its website;
- There has been movement from the government for regulatory bodies to move in this direction, which the OPFA should be aware of.

3. **Information Items** (not for discussion unless elevated to 2. Discussion Items)

- a) **Executive Committee Minutes** (an attachment was provided)- submitted by F. Pinto- Council was provided with the Executive Committee Minutes of the March 1, 2022, Executive Committee meeting.
- b) **Next Scheduled Meeting** (an attachment was provided)-submitted by F. Pinto- The next scheduled Executive Committee meeting is Tuesday, May 3 and the next Council meeting is on Tuesday, May 31. Council was provided with the 2022 Council and Executive Committee meeting schedule.

4. **Termination of Meeting** – Chris McDonell thanked everyone for attending. He asked for a motion to terminate the meeting at 12:11 p.m.

Motion- Williamson/Reynolds - That the Council meeting of April 5, 2022, is terminated.
All in favour. Carried.