



COUNCIL MEETING **MINUTES**

December 13, 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-left at item 2b.
David Goldsmith, Public Councillor
Douglas Reynolds, Public Councillor
Brandon Williamson, Associate R.P.F., Southwest Councillor
Wendy LeClair, R.P. F., Northeast Councillor
Maegan Ciurko, Central West Councillor
Ritikaa Gupta, Central East Councillor
Scot Rubin, R.P.F., Northwest Councillor

Fred Pinto, R.P.F., Executive Director and Registrar
Louise Simpson, Registration Manager
Priscilla Doyle, Office, and Registration Coordinator

Regrets: Sally Krigstin, Public Councillor
Malcolm Cockwell, Southeast Councillor
Daniela Corapi, Public Councillor

Absent: Larry McDermott, Public Councillor

1. Call to Order- C. McDonell-

- a) Opening Remarks-Chris McDonell called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and welcomed Council Members and staff. He particularly welcomed new Councillors Maegan Ciurko, R.P.F., Central West Councillor, and Ritikaa Gupta, R.P.F., Central East Councillor who briefly introduced themselves. Malcolm Cockwell, R.P.F., the new Southeast Councillor, was unable to attend the meeting.
- b) Record Attendance and Confirmation of Quorum- the attendance was recorded as above. As a 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 rejoin 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)

Motion: Reynolds/Rubin-That the agenda is accepted as circulated.
All in favour. Carried.

- f) Approve the minutes of September 13, 2022 (an attachment was provided)-

Motion: Williamson/Nitschke- That the minutes of the September 13, 2022 meeting are accepted as circulated and will be made available to OPFA members on the website.
2 abstentions. Carried.

2. Discussion Items

- a) **Work Plan 2021-2022** (an attachment and link were provided)- F. Pinto

- There are three main items to highlight:
 1. The Indigenous Knowledge Standard e-textbook and test remain outstanding but work continues;
 2. Funds were received for the digitization of the office paper files;
 3. Funds were recently awarded by the Court for a recent authorized practice case.
- Fred Pinto has contacted cybersecurity firms, however, they have not expressed interest. There is a self-assessment tool available. Hub International through which the OPFA has its insurance has a series of questions related to cybersecurity. These could be completed to assess risk. The membership data is secure.

- b) **Work Plan 2022-2023** (an attachment and link were provided)-F. Pinto

- Three main components were highlighted:
 1. Service to members-municipalities are more aware of the need to hire professional foresters;
 2. Cybersecurity;
 3. Indigenous Standard e-textbook. Fred Pinto will follow up with Peggy Smith to see what progress has been made.
- Work to close the Georgetown office continues. The office space is being rented on a month-to-month basis;
- Communication Plan-\$20,000 has been budgeted which is a small amount compared to the amounts spent by forestry NGOs (Non-Government Organizations). Fred Pinto has contacted other NGOs for collaboration and work is ongoing.

c) **Budget 2021-2022 Finances**-F. Pinto/P. Nitschke

- Council was provided with financial statements (Balance Sheet, Budget vs. Actual, Income Statement, and Statement of Cash Flow) before the meeting;
- There is a projected \$30,000 surplus, which is due largely to low enforcement costs, low travel costs as well as income received from the 2022 annual conference. Please note the actual amount of unspent money will be determined by the auditors as they may relocate some of the revenue and expenditure;
- KPMG will be conducting the annual financial audit in early January. The OPFA has a 5-year contract with KPMG which will expire after this audit is complete. The Finance Committee is looking into this and will bring a recommendation to Council.

d) **Budget 2023** (an attachment was provided)- F. Pinto-

- Council was provided with a draft Budget for 2023;
- The approval of the budget has been delayed so that expected revenue from the membership fee increases for 2022-2023 could be incorporated into it;
- Legal fees and subscriptions have increased;

Motion: LeClair/Nitschke-That the 2023 Budget is approved as circulated.
All in favour. Carried.

e) **Statutory Committee Membership** (an attachment was provided)- F. Pinto

- Maegan Ciurko has volunteered to be the Elected Councillor on the Registration Committee;
- Malcolm Cockwell has agreed to be the Elected Councillor on the Discipline Committee and the Executive Committee;

Motion: Williamson/Reynolds- That membership of the following statutory committees for 2022-2023 is confirmed as:

Registration Committee:

Christine Leduc, R.P.F., Chair
Sarah Sullivan, R.P.F., Vice Chair
Jim McCready, R.P.F.
Ulf Runesson, R.P.F.
Frank Knaapen, R.P.F.
Neil McLean, R.P.F.
Maegan Ciurko, R.P.F., Elected Councillor
Andrée Morneault, R.P.F.
Krish Homagain, R.P.F.
Sally Krigstin-Public Councillor
Ildiko Apavaloae, R.P.F.

Discipline Committee:

Ken Elliott, R.P.F., Chair
Malcolm Cockwell, R.P.F., Elected Councillor
Tim Lehman, R.P.F.
Arben Pustina, R.P.F.
George Graham, R.P.F.
Daniela Corapi, Public Councillor
Douglas Reynolds, Public Councillor

Complaints Committee:

Dave Puttock, R.P.F., Chair
Jeff Barton, R.P.F.
Allan Foley, R.P.F.
Gordon King, R.P.F.
Daniela Corapi, Public Member
Douglas Reynolds, Public Member
Chris McDonell, R.P.F., President
Donna Lacey, Associate R.P.F.
Peter Nitschke, R.P.F., Vice President
Brandon Williamson, Associate R.P.F., Elected Councillor

Executive Committee:

Chris McDonell, R.P.F., President
Peter Nitschke, R.P.F., Vice President
Denis Gagnon, R.P.F., Past President
David Goldsmith, Public Councillor
Malcolm Cockwell, R.P.F., Elected Councillor

All in favour, Carried.

- Ritikaa Gupta has agreed to be the new Chair of the Social Media Working Group.

Motion: Nitschke/Rubin- That Ritikaa Gupta is appointed as Chair of the Social Media Working Group.

All in favour, Carried.

f) **Professional Member Registration Process** (an attachment was provided)-L. Simpson

- Louise Simpson presented a PowerPoint presentation to Council on Provisional Membership. The highlighted information is as follows:
 - Provisional Membership has grown since 2017. There are currently 175 most of which are from the Southwest section of Ontario;
 - Provisional Members work in a wide range of jobs;
 - 62% graduated from programs that are unaccredited by the CFAB (Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board) and 38% graduated from accredited programs;
 - Those from unaccredited programs have a more onerous process to become a Full Member which includes the Credential Assessment Process (CAP) and additional Bridge Training;

- At one time Provisional Members had to have a Bachelor of Science degree or equivalent (which was undefined) to undergo the CAP, however, a few years ago Council approved an equivalency table that has enabled more Provisional Members to undergo the process;
- Currently, 85% of Provisional Members are striving for Full Membership and 15% are aiming for Associate Membership. It is expected that some of those seeking Full Membership will opt for Associate Membership either as they begin the CAP process or if a large number of competency gaps are identified through the CAP;
- They have six years to complete the process to achieve practising membership after which they must request and be approved for an extension by the Registration Committee. Currently, 21 have been granted an extension. All Provisional Members must report twice a year on their progress;
- The average time for them to become a practising member is 1.5 years for those from an accredited program and 4 years for those from an unaccredited program, however, the time taken for those from unaccredited programs is highly variable between individuals. Some are highly motivated and complete the requirements within 1.5 to 2 years, while others take 6 years or more;
- Resignations of Provisional Members in 2022 have increased. This could be due in part because of the recently increased annual membership fees for those who have been a Provisional Member for 6 years or more, however, there are various other reasons why they have resigned in the past. A survey of those who resign is planned;
- Only 33% of Student Members from accredited programs apply for Provisional Membership;
- There is various support provided to them, however, more work is needed. In particular, raising employer awareness of the value of hiring R.P.F.s will increase motivation for students and Provisional Members to complete the process.

g) **Credential Assessment Process (CAP) Changes** - (an attachment was provided)-
L.Simpson

- Council was provided with a document explaining the changes to the Credential Assessment Process(CAP). These changes were also presented to the Registration Committee on November 3;
- Currently, candidates undergoing the CAP have to compile a portfolio of course descriptions, examples of work documents, and competency witness testimonials, and describe how their education and work experience meets each of the competency elements within the Certification Standards. This is a very onerous and time-consuming process that can be challenging for individuals to complete around their work and personal lives. The cost of the assessment to the candidate was initially \$500 but was then increased to \$1000 in 2021 by all of the forestry regulators in Canada except the OPFA;
- The Forest Professional Regulators of Canada (FPRC) have recently approved changes to the CAP process, and the implementation of these changes is under discussion. The intent is to divide the CAP into two phases: 1) candidates submit their transcripts and course descriptions for evaluation and receive a report indicating which competencies were met by their education, and 2) candidates submit a compilation of their work experience for the competency gaps identified in phase 1. Phase 2 will be optional: candidates can decide whether they wish to compile this information and

undergo a phase 2 assessment, or if they prefer to take Bridge Training (or other gap-filling methods) to fill the competency gaps identified in phase 1. This will reduce the candidate's work considerably and it will allow them to undergo phase 1 soon after they are accepted as a Provisional Member rather than the several years it currently takes. The cost of each phase will be \$500. More work is being done to determine which candidates will need to undergo phase 2;

- Other forestry regulators have similar issues but no comparison has been done.

h) **Communication Plan** (an attachment was provided) - F. Pinto/C. McDonell

- Council was provided with a draft Communications Strategy Proposal & Implementation Plan;
- The Communication Plan was seen as good by Council but ambitious. Short, medium, and long-term priorities should be considered as the \$20,000 budgeted is a very modest amount. Fred Pinto will look into collaborating with others;
- Activity on social media should be increased and should include LinkedIn. Members could also be good ambassadors for the profession;
- The benefits of membership for the member and the employers should be focused upon;
- Changing the name of the Association could be considered as the OPFA is often viewed as a fraternal organization.

i) **Membership Survey**-(attachments and a link to the survey were provided)-F. Pinto/L.Simpson

- Council was provided with a draft of the Membership Survey and given the link to the draft survey for testing purposes;
- The last survey was conducted in 2018;
- Answers to the survey will be stored on Google Drive, only viewed by Louise Simpson who will compile the data and will be deleted after 60 days;
- Council found the survey to be satisfactory, however, found that it takes more than the suggested 10 minutes;
- The survey should identify any areas that require attention that will be brought to Council's attention;
- Participants in the survey will not be required to provide their name and email address unless they wish to be contacted.

j) **2023 Annual Conference Update** (an attachment was provided)-F. Pinto/L. Simpson

- The 2023 Annual Conference will be a hybrid event held at the Holiday Inn in Peterborough on April 18-20;
- Plans are progressing and a contract with the live-streaming company has been signed;
- Council will meet, as it has in the past, face-to-face in Peterborough during the conference and the currently scheduled April 4 meeting will be cancelled. Council will be given details of the new meeting date and time when it is available.

k) **Council Corner Article-*The Professional Forester* Newsletter.** (an attachment was provided)-F. Pinto/C.McDonell-

- Council was provided with a list of past authors of the Council Corner article in the quarterly *The Professional Forester* newsletter. and was asked for volunteers to write articles for 2023;
- The following Councillors will write articles as follows:
 - March- Chris McDonell
 - June-Brandon Williamson
 - September-Scot Rubin
 - December-Maegan Ciurko

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 October 21, 2022, Executive Committee meeting;
- b) **RBC Wealth Management Market Update** (an attachment was provided)-submitted by F. Pinto-Council was provided with a market update from RBC Wealth Management;
- c) **Enforcement Summary**-(an attachment was provided)-submitted by F. Pinto-Council was provided with a summary of the enforcement activity for 2016 to 2022;
- d) **Membership Statistics**(an attachment was provided)-submitted by F. Pinto- Council was provided with the membership statistics as of November 30, 2022;
- e) **Council & Executive Committee Meetings 2023** (an attachment was provided)-submitted by F. Pinto- The next scheduled Executive Committee meeting is Tuesday, January 3 and the next Council meeting is on Tuesday, January 24. Council was provided with the 2023 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 11:45 a.m.

Motion- Reynolds/Gupta - That the Council meeting of December 13, 2022, is terminated.

All in favour. Carried.