

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

April 17, 2023

12:00 pm – 4:30 pm (EST)

In-Person & Zoom Video Conference

Holiday Inn Peterborough Waterfront

150 George Street N, Peterborough, Ontario

ATTENDANCE

Present In-Person:

Chris McDonell, R.P.F.	President
Peter Nitschke, R.P.F.	Vice-President
Denis Gagnon, R.P.F.	Past-President
Wendy LeClair R.P. F.	NE Councillor
Scot Rubin, R.P.F.	NW Councillor
Maegan Ciurko, R.P.F.	CW Councillor
Malcolm Cockwell, R.P.F.	SE Councillor
Brandon Williamson, Associate. R.P.F.	SW Councillor
Sally Krigstin	Public Councillor
David Goldsmith	Public Councillor
Larry McDermott	Public Councillor

Guest:

Ken Elliott, R.P.F., Chair, 2023 Annual Conference Working Group-for item h. only.

Present via Zoom Conferencing:

Douglas Reynolds	Public Councillor
Daniela Corapi	Public Councillor
Ritikaa Gupta, R.P.F.	CE Councillor

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a. **Opening Remarks** – Chris McDonell called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. and welcomed Council members and staff joining in-person and via Zoom Conferencing.
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b. Record Attendance and Confirmation of Quorum

- The attendance was recorded as above. A quorum was confirmed as a quorum is $\frac{1}{3}$ the membership of Council or 5 Council members.

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. Other Business Items

- The President asked if there was any other business.
- An in-camera session was added to the agenda to discuss human resource matters; staff will not be present.

e. Finalize and Approve the Agenda

- **Motion:** That the agenda is accepted as circulated. Reynolds & Nitschke.
- **All in favour. Carried.**

f. Approve the minutes of January 24, 2023

- **Motion:** That the minutes of the January 24, 2023 meeting are accepted as circulated and will be made available to OPFA members on the website. Gagnon & LeClair;
- **All in favour. Carried.**

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Audited Financial Statements

- Led by Fred Pinto and Peter Nitschke;
- In March, Council voted via email to accept the 2021-2022 financial audit report for the fiscal year ending November 30, 2022, as is acceptable to the *Professional Foresters Act, 2000* and the OPFA Bylaw;
- 12 Councillors voted to accept, and 0 voted to reject the 2021-2022 audited financial statements as circulated. The motion was therefore carried;
- **Motion:** That Council confirms that the electronic vote on the acceptance of the 2022 audited financial statements is accepted as circulated. Rubin & Nitschke;
- **All in favour. Carried.**

b. Recommendation on the Review of the Investment Policy Statement and the Reserve Fund Policy Review:

- Led by Fred Pinto and Peter Nitschke;
- The Reserve Fund Policy states that the target value in the reserve fund will be reviewed each year and adjusted as necessary. The target value has a shortfall for a second consecutive year and the Finance Committee passed the following motion: Council is recommended by the Finance Committee to approve the transfer of the net surplus funds from the previous fiscal year to the reserve fund;
- The financial audit shows an excess of revenue over expenses of \$55,922 for the fiscal year ending November 30, 2022, fiscal year. As there is a need for \$34, 960 for operations for the current fiscal year, the Finance Committee recommends that \$20, 962 be transferred to the reserve fund;
- The Finance Committee will review the Reserve Fund Policy and will recommend any policy changes to Council at its May meeting for resolution at the September meeting;
- **Motion:** Be it resolved that \$ 21,000 be transferred from general revenue to the reserve fund based on the surplus of the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Goldsmith and Williamson;
- **All in favour. Carried.**

c. Reappointment of Auditors for the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year

- Led by Peter Nitschke;
- Council was provided with KPMG's previous Audit Proposal for 2018-2023 for reference, and their current Audit Proposal for 2023-2027;
- **Motion:** KPMG is re-appointed as the financial auditor for the 2022-2023 fiscal year ending November 20, 2023. Nitschke and Reynolds;
- **All in favour. Carried.**

d. Financial Update

- Led by Fred Pinto and Peter Nitschke;
- The current fiscal year is unfolding as it has in past years;

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- The Finance Committee will be reviewing the current Fee Schedule including the potential need for an additional 5% increase in membership fees for the 2023-2024 fiscal year soon.

e. Membership Fees and Reporting Delinquencies:

- Led by Fred Pinto;
- Late fees were increased effective December 1, 2022, as a disincentive for the late payment of membership fees, competency reporting and Good Character Declaration. The Good Character Declaration was a new requirement as of December 1, 2022;
- As of March 31, many members had not yet fulfilled their obligations;
- The Bylaw should be reviewed to make the process meaningful, transparent and defensible;
- A review of the Bylaw and the procedure for dealing with membership delinquency will be reviewed by Scot Rubin, Daniela Corapi, Doug Reynolds, Fred Pinto and Priscilla Doyle. They will report back to Council.

f. Work Plan 2023:

- Led by Fred Pinto and Louise Simpson;
- Cyber security- The cybersecurity program at Cambrian College has agreed to have their students review our current cyber security practices. There is also an online self-assessment that staff can undertake;
- Indigenous Certification Standard- The e-textbook is progressing, however, there is concern that progress is slower than expected. A plan acceptable to the author of the e-textbook has been developed;
- Communications- a 3-year project is being explored with some of the other forestry regulators in Canada which will likely include contracting professionals to assist in the process. Louise Simpson is also working on some communication pieces;
- The Social Media Working Group is working to promote forestry and profile new members and the achievement of foresters. Ritikaa Gupta, Chair of the Social Media Working Group, is speaking at the conference to encourage members to access the OPFA's social media outlets including LinkedIn;

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- Job Descriptions of Council Members-a task team is required. Public Councillors generally serve two 3-year terms but remain on Council until they are replaced by the Ontario government.

g. OPFA Operating Name and Legal Name:

- Led by Doug Reynolds, Chris McDonell and Fred Pinto;
- This was identified during the development of the 2012-2026 Strategic Plan in that there was concern that “Association” had the connotation of a club rather than a regulatory body;
- Council discussed the merit of changing the operating name to better identify the OPFA as a regulator to registrants and the general public;
- There are costs associated with changing the operating name such as researching if a potential name is trademarked and/or used by others and then trademarking the new name, developing a brand id and updating social media;
- Some options for a working name are the:
 - Ontario Professional Foresters which would not require a change to the logo and,
 - The Professional Foresters of Ontario which would require a name change but whose acronym may be problematic;
- Legal counsel suggested using a tagline for signature blocks, the website, and social media outlets. This has been done by other regulators in Ontario;
- Council agreed that a name change should continue to be explored and that in the meantime a tagline would be used immediately;
- **Motion:** All communications issued by the regulator will carry a tagline under the logo of “The Regulator of Professional Foresters in Ontario”. Reynolds and Cockwell;
- **All in favour. Carried.**

h. 2023 Annual Conference Update:

- Led by Ken Elliott, R.P.F., Chair, 2023 Annual Conference Working Group;
- There are 130 in-person and 128 virtual delegates for the conference;
- This will be the first hybrid (virtual and in-person) conference for the OPFA and the first time the conference has been hosted in Peterborough;
- The Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry will be speaking during the conference;
- The Mayor of Peterborough will welcome everyone to Peterborough and will provide the Indigenous land acknowledgement;
- A special outdoor opening ceremony will be conducted by Curve Lake Elder Lorenzo Whetung;
- Sponsorships targets have been met by the working group.

i. Limiting Personal Information of Committee and Council Members:

- Led by Fred Pinto;
- An email was received from the Ontario College of Teachers regarding limiting the use of personal information of its Committee and Council members to prevent harassment of these members;
- The OPFA has limited personal information on its website and so it is not a concern.

j. Indigenous Peoples' Professional Standard Approved by the Law Society of Alberta:

- Led by Fred Pinto;
- OPFA Council was provided with a link to a recent news item related to the implementation of an Indigenous Peoples' professional standard approved for the Law Society of Alberta;
- While some called for it not to be implemented it was voted by the general membership to proceed.

k. Results of the Count Me In Survey:

- Led by Larry McDermott and Louise Simpson;
- The survey was sent to all members and was voluntary and anonymous;
- 40% completed the survey which is considered to be a very high response rate. This may be due in part to the survey being relatively short and optional. A rationale for the survey was provided and reminders to complete the survey were emailed;
- The objectives of the survey were to: 1) set a benchmark for diversity within the OPFA and monitor changes over time, 2) Get feedback on representation within the OPFA & suggestions for improvements, and 3) Learn more about perceptions of barriers to joining the profession;
- The results of the survey were summarised for Council, however, the Equity & Inclusion Task Team will be working on a more detailed summary of the barriers and comments which will be provided to Council. The individual answers have been deleted.

3. INFORMATION ITEMS (not for discussion unless elevated to 2. Discussion Items)

a. Executive Committee Minutes

- Submitted by F. Pinto
- Council was provided with the Executive Committee Minutes of the February 28, 2023, Executive Committee meeting.

b. Membership Statistics

- Submitted by F. Pinto
- Council was provided with the membership statistics as of March 31, 2023.

c. Council, Finance & Executive Committee Meetings 2023

- Submitted by F. Pinto
- The next scheduled meetings are:
Executive Committee-Tuesday, May 2;
Finance Committee-Tuesday, May 23;
Council-Tuesday, May 30.

4. TERMINATION OF MEETING

Chris McDonell thanked everyone for attending and asked for a motion to terminate the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

- **Motion** – That the Council meeting of April 17, 2023, was terminated. Reynolds and McDonell.
- **All in favour.** Carried.

5. PROVIDED DOCUMENTS

- a. Agenda
- b. Council Meeting Minutes January 24, 2023
- c. 2022 Audited Financial Statements
- d. KPMG Audit Proposal 2018-2023
- e. KPMG Audit Proposal 2023-2017
- f. QuickBooks Summary Statements February 28, 2023
- g. Work Plan 2023 Summary
- h. Name Change Summary Options
- i. Ontario College of Teachers email
- j. Delinquency Summary Annual Renewal Requirements 2023
- k. Investment Policy Statement
- l. Reserve Fund Policy
- m. Annual Reserve Analysis
- n. Executive Committee Minutes February 28, 2023
- o. Membership Statistics as of March 31, 2023
- p. 2023 Council, Finance & Executive Committee Meeting Dates