

Minutes/Meeting Notes

Annual General Meeting for the College of Paramedics of Nova Scotia Session 5

DATE: May 25, 2022

2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Microsoft Teams Platform

Attendance retrieved from Microsoft Teams Platform

1. Call to Order

The President called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm, noting that for the meeting to proceed at least 12 paramedic members must be present at the meeting, per Bylaw Article 20.4.

The President noted that the agenda had been previously approved by Council in accordance with College Bylaw 20.1, which indicates Council approves the agenda for the AGM.

The President introduced Michael MacMillan, PhD, who has been engaged by the College to be the Parliamentarian for this AGM. As the parliamentarian, Dr MacMillan is an expert in rules and usages of a deliberative assembly, such as the College's AGM and will assist in following the rules of order during the meeting today.

- Attendance recorded: Noting 17 licensed paramedics and 5 members of the public were in attendance during the call to order.
- Present at today's AGM according to the Microsoft Teams Platform by category were:

Practicing: Stacey Boyko, Ryan Brown, Kevin Carey, Chris Carriere, Zach Fitzsimmons, Laura Hirello, Karl Kowalczyk, John MacIsaac, Pamela MacLennan, Travis MacNeil, Evan McNeil, Brian Oliver, Bruce Sangster, Janel Swain, Mark Walker, Shelagh Wright

Restricted Practicing: Chris Lukeman

Temporary: N/A

Restricted Temporary: N/A

Public Guests: Donna Denney (Registration Committee member), Jacquie Messer-Lepage (Executive Director, Saskatchewan College of Paramedics), Dr Michael MacMillan (Parliamentarian), Nick Burke (Public Representative OIC Appointment), Nicole Webb (College Staff)

2.0 Standing Rules

The President introduced this agenda item and noted the following:

- Any Registrant who wished to address, this includes making motions, the meeting, must do so by introducing themselves, with:
 - Their registration number, their class of license, category of license (Practicing, Restricted Practicing, Temporary or Restricted Temporary) and the geographic district they are from.
- The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised is the parliamentary authority in all instances not covered by the College's Bylaws, and/or policies.

- Meetings of the College are conducted in a harassment free, respectful environment.
- Motions may be introduced by any voting registrant (paramedic in the practicing and restricted practicing categories of licensure). The first voting registrant to raise their hand will be recognized by the President at which time the voting registrant must verbalize the motion. The President will be confirming the motion.
- Motions must be seconded by any voting registrant (paramedic in the practicing and restricted practicing categories of licensure). The first voting registrant to raise their hand will be recognized by the President and verbalize that they seconded the motion.
- During the debate:
 - The voting registrant who introduces the motion is entitled to speak first.
 - Voting registrants of the assembly are entitled to speak only once, for a maximum of two minutes, on a debatable motion, unless permission to the contrary is given by the assembly.
 - All comments must be directed to the President, who presides as the chair of the meeting. Online comments submitted in the “Chat function” of the Teams Platform will be received and read aloud.
 - Total debate shall not exceed 15 minutes unless two thirds of the voting registrants decide to extend the debate.
- Voting:
 - Per Paramedics Regulation 33(a) A registrant who is entered in the temporary roster or restricted temporary roster may attend and participate in meetings of the College as a non-voting member. So, during the voting process any registrant with a temporary or restricted temporary license.
 - Voting Registrants will use the “Poll feature” of the Teams Platform to cast their vote.
 - Motions are decided by a majority vote unless otherwise indicated. A majority vote is more than half of the voting registrants who are present.
 - In the case of a tie vote, the chair will cast the deciding vote.
- Members of the public may only ask questions. They may not make motions, vote or participate in debate.

The president then asked the attendees if there were any questions regarding the standing rules.

No questions were brought forward from the attendees.

3. Introduction of Council Members

The President introduced this agenda item.

The President the list of current Councillor’s including those who were outgoing and incoming:

- Kevin Carey (CCP class of licensure), Ryan Brown (PCP class of licensure), Travis MacNeil (ICP class of licensure), Sandee Crooks (Central Geographical District), Brian Oliver (Eastern Geographical District), Elizabeth Mann (Public Representative OIC Appointment), Nick Burke (Public Representative OIC Appointment), Caitlin Lees (Public Representative OIC Appointment), and Andrew Nemirovsky (Public Representative OIC Appointment).
- Incoming members: Paul Carr (Northern Geographical District), Jason MacKay (returning to Council for the ACP Class of Licensure), and Ryan Grist (returning for the Western Geographical District)
- Outgoing members: Laura Hirello (Northern Geographical District)

4. Approval of the 2021 AGM Minutes

The President introduced this agenda item, noting the minutes were previously distributed via the College’s portal for all registrants and that they are available on the College’s website under “About CPNS”, then “Annual General Meeting.”

Additionally, the minutes were placed in the chat area for all Registrants to review.

After asking if there were any questions or concerns regarding the minutes the President called for a motion to approve the minutes.

- Motion to approve the minutes from the May 26, 2021, Annual General Meeting Session 4.
Motioned: Registrant Sangster 31324
Seconded: Registrant Hirello 12346
President restates the motion
Vote: Majority in favour. Motion passed

5. President's Annual Report

The President introduced this agenda item and presented their report noting the following:

- First was an acknowledgement of paramedic services week. Spoke about the different practice environments and thanked paramedics for their service on behalf of the citizens of NS and Council.
- This year the College reached the milestone of completing its fifth year of operation.
- The College acknowledged how the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact society. Continued to assess several measures that would support the healthcare system while being mindful that they serve the public interest including:
 - Modifying the continuing competency program requirements for 2021 -2022, permitting registrants to place a heavier emphasis on the self-directed learning requirements.
 - The Registration Committee and Council engaged with the College's legal counsel to identify a pathway to licensure for primary care paramedic graduates who had not yet passed the provincial entry to practice exam. Created a Restricted Temporary licenses for the "Paramedic Graduate."
- The College approved the first-ever formal Critical Care Paramedic education program in Nova Scotia. It is being delivered by the Nova Scotia Health Learning Institute for Health Care Providers (the Learning Institute) formerly known as the Registered Nurses Professional Development Centre.
 - The first cohort of CCP students were enrolled in the program in September 2021.
- The College was selected for a review of its registration processes by the Fair Registration Practices Act Review Officer of the Nova Scotia Department of Labour, Skills, and Immigration. Based on that review, the College acknowledged there were two areas where its registration processes could be improved.
- The College also conducted a significant amount of policy work over the past year. Implemented new policies for the College's Governance Process, Executive Limitations and Registration and Licensing; also conducted a review of all the current Registration and Licensing policies.
- The College also moved to a new website and online portal for registrants providing enhanced security, efficiency, and user experience.

At the end of the report, the President declared it filed.

6. Approval of Auditors

The President introduced this agenda item and noted that the Council made the recommendation to continue with Grant Thornton as the auditors for the 2022 – 2023 fiscal year.

- **Discussion point included:**
- Motion to approve Grant Thornton as the College's auditors for 2023.
Motioned: Registrant Sangster 31324

Seconded: Registrant Brown 11821

President restates the motion

Vote: Majority in favour. Motion passed

7. Executive Director/Registrar Annual Report

The President introduced this agenda item and invited ED/Registrar to present their report.

The ED/Registrar address the meeting noting the following:

- Operationally the College staff continues to support:
 - The Council, as well as all College Statutory, Standing and Ad-hoc committees.
 - Registration and licensing process.
 - Complaint/professional conduct process.
 - Fitness to practice processes
- Executive Director position is supported by the CPNS staff, researching, and preparing work on a day-to-day basis.
 - Registration and Licensure, we must ensure that we comply with important pieces of legislation including the Human Resources Act, the Nova Scotia Fair Registration Practice Act, and Canada's Free Trade Agreement.
 - For the first time since the College's inception, it was selected for a *Fair Registration Practices Act* review by the *FRPA* Review Officer. The *FRPA* review demonstrated the College complied with all but two of the twelve review questions, including question three, registration of Interprovincial applicants, and eleven, internal review processes.
 - At the time of this report the College had already begun to address the requirement to demonstrate:
 - A fully documented and transparent internal review process. A process that existed in accordance with the Paramedics legislation but was not documented in policy.
 - Compliance with the registration of interprovincial applicants. There are policies in place to meet this requirement, now it is a matter of ensuring that information is clear and transparent on the College's website.
 - There were 26 meetings this year. Each meeting requires 2-3 days of preparation time by staff prior to the meetings and post-meeting another 1-2 days for final documentation.
 - Attended 53 external Committee meetings on behalf of the College and made 8 presentations about the College to various groups.
- Significant technological improvements were made this year including:
 - A new user-friendly website for registrants, the public and College staff.
 - New database. Since its inception the College has been seeking a database that will suit its administrative and policy driven needs, as opposed to confirming to the requirements of static databases or paying for the costs to have changes made to a providers database.
 - The new database is the College's database built in the Microsoft Office environment, which means we have control over how processes work within the database and the security affords by Microsoft Office.
 - While there may be ongoing improvements to the database, there is no intent to move the database again.
 - The College's new website from Box Clever allows more control over content and an accessible user experience.
- In reviewing the professional conduct process in the annual report, it is important to note that:
 - In the ground ambulance setting when a complaint is brought forward there continues to be a trend where the complainant complains about both paramedics. Making each complaint separate matters.
 - The most common complaint is associated with how the paramedic interacted/communicated with the member of the public is the most common complaint, approximately 51% of all the current complaints. The remainder can be grouped as provision of care concerns (20%), criminal matters (11%), documentation concerns (8%) and incapacity (3%).

- Investigations continue to cost in the range of \$110,000 annually, if we can reduce complaints, we can avoid fee increases.
- The Fitness-to-practise process is a non-disciplinary process that allows those who suffer from an incapacity to recover/rehabilitate and return to the practice of paramedicine with measures that protect the public interest. The costs associated with Fitness-to-Practice had an impact on the Budgets Professional fees expense line in comparison to previous years. One assessment will cost no less than \$3500 and generally each Fitness to Practice file requires two assessments. This does not include the costs having remedial agreements developed and reviewed by the Fitness to Practice Committee.
- Reviewed data regarding the College's Registrants found on page 19 of the annual report.
 - Year over year there has been a:
 - Decrease in Labour mobility applicants.
 - Increase in Initial Registration and Licensure Applicants.
 - Of the 1361 +/- registrant who could have renewed in February and March of 2022 only 1235 renewed before March 31, 2022, a decrease of over 131 registrants.
 - Since the College's inception we have send in excess of 1750 registrants, but only 1235 renewed their licenses by March 31, 2022. There are 500 + registrants who have not renewed their licences with the College.
 - Percentage of registrants by geographically by region: 15.8% Northern, 36.2% Central, 24.5% Eastern and 23.3% Western
 - Male 758, Female 473, Undifferentiated 4.

The President asked if there were any questions for the ED/Registrar.

Questions & Discussion:

- Stacey Boyko: You should create a non-practicing license renewal. Brings in some monies and allows for return of paramedics easier.

ED/Registrar: Currently in Nova Scotia there is nothing in the legislation for non-practicing license. The College is aware of other health care regulators that permit this type of license

- Stacey Boyko: Is that just the legislation in Nova Scotia? I have been a paramedic for 18 years in Saskatchewan and just relicensed as a non-practicing paramedic

ED/Registrar: Great question, yes other jurisdictions have different legislation that allow for other licenses including non-practicing

The President thanked the Executive Director/Registrar and declared the Executive Director/Registrar's Annual Report for 2022 filed.

8. Audited Financial Statements for 2022

The President introduced this agenda item and called upon the ED/Registrar to complete a review of the financial statements and to address any questions.

The ED/Registrar reviewed the financial statements for the members in attendance, referring to the following:

- Finances are managed with a conservative approach. The College cannot fail as an entity because our legislation dictates that we cannot. Do not want to be in a position where the College is forced to use all its reserves and/or apply a one-time special licensing fee. One appeal court process could dry up the finances quickly.
 - One example is another regulatory body that had to issue a one-time fee of \$1000 to their registrants. Council is ensuring there are reserve funds in hopes of mitigating any special licensing fees.

- Executive Director referred the attendees to page 28, 29 and 30 of the annual report to review the three-year budget forecast. Emphasis was placed on this being a forecast and that any number of things could occur to change the forecast for the 2024 budget.
- It is prudent for any organization to have a three-year forecast budget as it demonstrates sound financial planning for the future. When creating the forecasted budget several factors were considered, including:
 - the membership fee information from several other healthcare regulators in Nova Scotia.
 - the unpredictability of the College’s revenue source, noting the population of licensed paramedics decreased from 1361 to 1235 during the renewal period of February 1 to March 31, 2022.
 - The financial risks associated with the professional conduct process. Significant costs have been incurred because of both professional conduct and fitness to practice matters before the College during the 2022 fiscal year. It is also very clear that going into the 2023 fiscal year that there are a few matters that will most likely proceed to hearings. Hearings can cost upwards of \$50,000 per hearing.
 - The volume and significance of complaints the College received in the last year.
 - The College intentionally entered a deficit position for 2022 and the 2023 fiscal years, with an intent to return to surpluses by 2024.
 - Fees were increased to \$500 this year with a forecasted deficit of approximately \$57,978.
 - As in previous years the budget will be close monitored to determine whether they will be a need to increase licensing fees in 2024 to \$575.
 - It is important to note, while the College is predicting licensing fee increases for 2024, they will not be increased unless there is a need to do so.

The President asked if there were any questions about the 3-year forecasted budget for the ED/Registrar.

Discussion points included:

- No other questions/comments were posed.
- Executive Director referred attendees to the audited financial statements that begin on page 31 of the annual report.
- Spoke to how an audit works. Management puts together the financial statements for the auditors. The auditor’s thoroughly review and analyse the statements looking for material errors. The financial statements are taken and validated on whether we are in compliance with the principles looking at risks, internal controls, and the accounting principles.
- Viewing page 35 of the annual report, the title is missing, and it should be labelled as Statement of Financial Position. This is also known as the balance sheet. This demonstrates that the College at present is in a good financial position with access to \$615,000 for operations in 2023 and a good reserve fund of \$703,000.
- Viewing page 36 of the annual report, the title is missing, and it should be labelled as Statement of Operations. This is also known as the income statement; it records the income and the expenses of the College. As anticipated the College had a deficit for the 2022.
 - A new revenue source, “Shared Costs” was recorded for the 2022 fiscal year. This represents monies for an expense that was shared among 17 of the 22 self-regulating health care professions in NS. It is not a true revenue source as it offsets an expense of approximately \$52,000 that was shared with those other regulators. The costs were for legal fees associated with a Department of Health and Wellness Consultation on Common Foundations Legislation.
 - Professional fees which include legal, membership to organizations the College is part of, bookkeeper, consulting and fitness to practice assessments are up significantly this year because of proceedings before the NS supreme court, shared costs for the DHW consultations with the 17 self-regulated health professions, and fitness to practice assessments.
 - Office fees which include the database, website, hardware & software, office operations and communications were higher year over year because of the costs associated with developing the new database and website.
 - The deficit was forecast to be more significant than the \$ - 6035 that was recorded.
- Viewing page 37 of the annual report, the title is missing, and it should be labelled as Statement of Changes in net assets. This records the change between the current and prior period for net asset balances. Of particular interest is that the Colleges net assets decreased year over year by the deficit that was recorded.

- Viewing page 38 of the annual report, the title is missing, and it should be labelled as Statement of Cash flows. This statement summarizes the movement of chase and cash equivalents that move in and out of the College. It demonstrates at year end the College had cash and cash equivalents equalling \$1, 207, 568. This demonstrates that the College is in a good position to pay any of its debts and fund its operating expenses.

The President asked if there were any questions for the ED/Registrar.

Discussion points included:

- No other questions/comments were posed.
- Motion to approve the audited financial statements for 2022.
Motioned: Registrant Hirello 12346
Seconded: Registrant Oliver 32805
President restates the motion
Vote: Majority in favour. Motion passed

The President declared the Audited Financial Statements for 2022 filed.

9. Business Arising from 2021 AGM

The President addressed this agenda item, noting that there was no business arising from the minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting Session 4.

10. Elections for 2022

The President introduced this agenda item noting the following:

- There is no requirement for a run-off vote at today's AGM as there were no ties in any of the elections.
- The Election for a President and Vice President positions on Council took place earlier today.
 - The Incoming President is Kevin Carey.
 - The Incoming Vice-President is Ryan Brown.

11. Resolutions & Motions to be voted upon pursuant to Bylaw Article 22

The President introduced and addressed this business item by noting no resolutions or motions were put forward in accordance with the College's Bylaws.

12. Other Matters as determined by Council

The President noted that the Council had no further matters to bring forward at this year's AGM.

13. Member Forum

The President called for any comments, questions, or concerns from the membership in attendance.

Discussion points included:

- No questions were brought forward from the attendees.

14. Adjournment

The President called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

- Motion to adjourn the Annual General Meeting – Session 5, May 25, 2022.

Motioned: Registrant Sangster 31324

Seconded: Registrant Wright 31293

President restates the motion

Vote: Majority in favour. Motion passed

The AGM was adjourned at 3:04 pm.