



MINUTES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
CANADIAN PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY – NS
HALIFAX, NS

June 25, 2020

Present: Chris Hansen; Chair, Mary Barker, Merle Emms, Amy Thurlow, Melissa Foshay, Karen Stone, Kate Comeau, JoAnn Alberstat, Tiffany Chase, Sean Lewis, Annie Khalil.

Opening remarks: Chris noted this was the third meeting held via teleconference due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Agenda: Agenda approved as distributed by Chair.

Approval of May 6 Minutes: Motion to approve minutes seconded by Mary, all were in favour and the motion was passed.

Business arising:

- 1. Financial report:** Melissa and Kate Comeau, new Treasurer, will meet next week with ScotiaBank to add Kate as a signing authority. The invoice for the annual credit card fee arrived at the office via Canada Post during COVID when Melissa was working from home. The \$49 charge did not appear on the online account, was not paid by the deadline and the card was cancelled. Flowers were ordered for the AGM presenter on Melissa's personal credit card. The charge was \$80.50 including delivery. Melissa moved that she be reimbursed for this cost. Amy seconded the motion. A \$540 invoice was received from CPRS National to cover the Chapter's insurance (Northbridge Insurance policy for non-profit organizations.). Melissa will send the cheque tomorrow. Melissa reported a ScotiaBank account balance of \$4,681 and moved the finance report be approved. Amy seconded the motion. Approved. Chris noted the Chapter's second account at Investor's Group has not yet been explored due to COVID restrictions. The account had an approximate balance of \$2,500 before the COVID-19 lockdown.
- 2. Communications:** Chris asked JoAnn for any carryover Communications information. JoAnn noted she had issued communications regarding the AGM via social media and email. Melissa replied to follow-up emails regarding the AGM. She also updated the website with the names of new Board members.
- 3. Professional Development:** Amy reported that PD sub-Committee members will be meeting on July 9 to brainstorm ideas for presentations. She underlined that the turnout was good for the AGM virtual presentation and that member feedback was quite positive. Networking for BPR and NSCC students will be done virtually for the fall term, and hopefully face-to-face in the winter. The first event is scheduled in September and is planned as a networking mix; the last event would be the AGM scheduled the following May. Amy noted that National's coffee chat idea is

working very well and is exploring that structure as a possibility for our Chapter. Kate supported this idea, adding that the coffee chat is a good way to connect people.

4. **Membership:** Chris noted that National has developed a proposed membership relief and retention strategy in the face of COVID-19. This creates a new membership category with a lower fee of \$155 in addition to society fees. This is scheduled for approval at the National Board meeting tomorrow. She said this initiative has potential to bring in new members for CPRS-NS. The emerging professional level membership would be at the same price point. This category would be available for existing and new members who have faced financial hardship. Renewal would be at the full rate. Chris said she will send information to everyone after the meeting. Amy mentioned she hasn't seen a lot of recent graduates come on board. Karen added that consultant and government employees are also missing and there is a need to reach out to them as well. It was agreed that Chris will send this information to NSCC. The current state of NS membership is as follows: 37 regular members (including 10 life, two retired and two affiliate members) and 74 student members. Thirteen members were lost from October 30, 2019 to June 2, 2020 with several new members joining in that period including Sean and Annie.
5. **National Conference:** Chris noted the National CPRS Conference is virtual this year due to Covid-19 and will be held July 9-10.
6. **Chapter/Council:** Karen noted the CPRS bylaws do not allow for the creation of a "Council." Members discussed the name of this new body and agreed the name is confusing in that Nova Scotia is an Atlantic Province but has a standalone chapter and is not part of the Atlantic Advisory Council. It was decided a letter to National would be drafted on this issue. Members discussed the fact that both CPRS-NS and the Atlantic entity are aiming for networking and PD opportunities. The regional approach is different than running a chapter and more needs to be done to understand the difference. Members agreed that increasing membership will happen if there is a good program and a better product is offered. It was noted that the Atlantic entity is scheduled to have a virtual event for members in PEI, Newfoundland, and New Brunswick. There was a general discussion about the history of CPRS-NS and the lead-up to the establishment of the Atlantic entity. Sean will reach out to his contact at the Atlantic Advisory Council. Karen will draft the letter and consult with officials at National. Chris and Karen will consult on a membership recruitment strategy focused on value of membership. The idea of establishing qualifications for Chapter Board President and Vice-President was also raised in the context of succession planning and ensuring a strong board.
7. **Next meeting:** The next meeting date was set for Wednesday, September 16 at 4 p.m. Should COVID restrictions change allowing for an in-person meeting, a venue will be found. Chris will also send out a discussion paper on succession planning and draft an outline of a membership recruitment strategy by August 1.
9. **Adjourned:** A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Kate.