



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, May 17, 2022

1. Welcome/Call to Order

After establishing quorum had been met, Chris Hansen, CPRS-NS President called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

2. Minutes of 2021 AGM

Chris asked if anyone wanted to note errors or omissions from last year's AGM minutes. Hearing none, the minutes were moved for acceptance by Dan Bedell and seconded by Mary Barker; motion carried.

3. President's Report

Chris noted her report is similar to last year, noting:

- The Board continued work to rebuild the Nova Scotia chapter.
- Our finances are in good order, thanks to our Treasurer, Kate Comeau.
- We offered an excellent series of professional development sessions, our Professional Development Chair, Amy Thurlow, and the PD subcommittee did a great job.
- We had our first in-person holiday get-together after quite some time, which in itself was a milestone, considering the times we are in (i.e., the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic).
- The chapter has made great progress in growing our membership, which Allison Currie will review shortly.
- Chris thanked every board member for their hard work, which saw the chapter make huge strides this year.
- The only disappointment has been COVID, which has lingered for a long time. Chris noted she hopes CPRS-NS will be able to meet more often in-person next year.
- Chris sent special thanks and appreciation to the 2021/22 student representatives: Logan Oderkirk and Lesley MacLean, as well as retiring board members: Amy Thurlow and Sean Lewis.

4. Financial Report

Kate Comeau, CPRS-NS Treasurer, provided a financial report and shared the "Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022" [*The first page of the financial statement shared on-screen during the virtual meeting read, "April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2021." However, the year in the later date should have read 2022 versus 2021*]. In her report, Kate noted:

- The chapter is in a good financial position, which can partially be attributed to CPRS-NS receiving fees from National from previous years, that were not previously received, nor accounted for. The chapter also saw few expenses due to virtual PD sessions.

- The expense categories were also reorganized, compared to financial reports made in previous years. This was done to help with ease of reference for both members, and future CPRS-NS board members.
- We are experiencing a delay in receiving some funds from National (we receive membership fees from them), due to some changes within the National office. These are currently in our accounts receivable, and we will be following up with National on this matter on this matter.
- Kate moved to have the financial report passed, Amy Thurlow seconded, and the motion was carried.

5. Professional Development/Education Report

Amy Thurlow, CPRS-NS PD Chair, began her report by thanking this year's PD committee members. The committee included: Tanya MacLean, Ellen Shaffner, Melissa Noonan, Sarah Robertson from Purdue Pharma, Logan Oderkirk and Lesley MacLean.

Amy noted 2021/22 offered some interesting challenges and opportunities and PD session continued to be offered online. The exception was an in-person Holiday Social event in early December, which was a welcome opportunity to socialize and network.

A survey was offered to members at the start of the year to determine best times and preferred topics for the upcoming year. There were 29 survey responses, which confirmed the preferred time for the PD session is late afternoon (4-6p.m.) and the preferred date is Wednesday. The survey also found that 74% of respondents were willing to attend in person events (masked and distanced). Only 7% were a firm no on that one. In terms of program delivery, 59% preferred a multi-access option (virtual and in-person combined events), 26% preferred to come virtually, and 30% preferred in person.

We also received a number of suggestions for selected topics. PR education issues and trends was the top choice, which was the featured topic of the January PD session. In total, seven Professional Development events were held during the past year. Attendance ranged from between 17 and 34 people. An overview of the sessions include:

October – Danielle Hartley with DHPR presented on Indigenous public relations and engagement with Indigenous communities and organizations.

November – Tara Wickwire spoke on the topic of Personal Branding.

December – CPRS-NS hosted an in-person Holiday Social at Piatto Pizzeria and Enoteca in Halifax.

January – The PD session highlighted a panel of new and seasoned public relations practitioners speaking on Trends in PR Education. Panelists included:



- Margaret MacDonald Conway, MSVU BPR alum and Senior Base Public Affairs Officer, Canadian Forces (CFB) Halifax, Royal Canadian Navy
- Leanne Birmingham Beddow, MSVU BPR alum, PR Consultant and Part Time Faculty at MSVU
- Mark Inglis, NSCC alum, and Development Officer, Alumni Relations at Cape Breton University
- Sarah Brannen, NSCC alum and Consultant, Public Affairs at National PR

March – Coady Slaunwhite, Acting Partnering and Engagement Officer with Parks Canada in Cape Breton, speaking about the challenges and opportunities associated with communicating at Parks Canada during the pandemic.

April – CPRS NS board member and Director, Public Affairs and Marketing at the Halifax International Airport Authority, Tiffany Chase, presented Grounded: An Airport Communicator's Global Pandemic Survival Guide.

6. Membership Report

Allison Currie, CPRS-NS Membership Chair, shared the objective of this year's membership communication plan, which was to find ways current members felt engaged through CPRS-NS's communications, provide feedback opportunities, and providing value for membership fees. The plan also focused on employers as a target audience in building membership.

To help meet these objectives, the board took on a number of tactics, including:

- Connecting with MSVU and NSCC students to talk about membership benefits, while also recruiting two student representatives for the board of directors.
- Produced and sent personalized CPRS-NS note cards to members
- PD team offered opportunities for feedback as well as hosting monthly PD sessions
- Encouraging membership renewals during month via social media
- Discussions and engagement with National CPRS office on how we can work to provide more value to individual members and employers
- Keeping in touch with other CPRS boards to learn from one another regarding recruitment activities

In terms of a membership update: As of May 2021 – 32 voting members, plus our student members and as of May 2022, CPRS-NS has 47 voting members plus our student membership.

7. New Business

None

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8. Nominating Committee Report

Chris reviewed the those nominated for the following roles and portfolios for the CPRS-NS 2022 Board of Directors, including:

- President: JoAnn Alberstat, PRK
- Vice President: Shelley Murphy
- Treasurer: Kate Comeau, APR
- Secretary: Melissa Noonan
- Immediate Past President: Chris Hansen, APR LM
- Membership Portfolio: Allison Currie
- PD & Education Portfolio: Coleen Logan
- APR Portfolio: Carolyn McCormack, APR
- Communications Portfolio: Sarah Robertson
- Archivist: Mary Barker, APR FCPRS(H) LM
- Members at Large:
 - Tiffany Chase
 - Charmaine Gaudet, APR
 - Dawn Delaney

Chris asked for further nominations (x3). Hearing none, nominations were closed, and Chris called for the vote. Hearing no contrary minded, the new board was approved. Before moving to adjournment, Chris commended the great work and progress of the previous board, and noted that with JoAnn now at the helm, the board will be in good hands for the upcoming year.

9. Adjournment

Fay Lee motioned to adjourn, and the business portion of the meeting was adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

*The meeting proceeded with a professional development session:
“Stop sending me these”: What Reporters Really Think of Your Press Releases,
presented by Brett Ruskin with CBC*