

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

Nova Scotia Archives, 6016 University Ave, Halifax, NS

1. Welcome/Call to Order

JoAnn Alberstat, CPRS-NS President called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and confirmed for the record that quorum had been met.

2. Minutes of 2022 AGM

The meeting began with a land acknowledgment. Hearing no errors or omissions in the 2022 AGM Minutes, JoAnn asked that the Minutes be accepted as presented. A motion was moved by Dan Bedell and seconded by Tiffany Chase; motion carried.

3. President's Report

JoAnn reported the following:

- First in-person AGM since 2019. The first in-person professional development session since early 2020 was held in April at the Mount.
- In December, an in-person Holiday “networking” social with IABC provided an opportunity for members and students to connect.
- PD continued to be a priority and was mainly held online. JoAnn thanked the PD Committee for informative and engaging sessions.
- JoAnn thanked Allison Currie for her leadership and creative ideas on membership engagement and recruitment.
- She thanked Sarah Robertson, Communications Chair for her redesign of the website.
- Thank you to all who follow CPRS-NS on social media this year, increasing numbers on Facebook and LinkedIn. Instagram will also be added.
- Our Chapter finances are in good order, thanks to Treasurer, Kate Comeau.
- The Awards Committee was reestablished this year, led by Dawn Delaney.
- JoAnn thanked the Board and student representatives for their hard work.
- JoAnn acknowledged the passing of a lifelong CPRS member and industry trailblazer, Ed Murray.
- The Board Chair concluded her report by encouraging members to give back by volunteering for committee.

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, 2022 – March 31, 2023.”

In her report, Kate noted:

- The chapter is in a good financial position; however, we were under our projected membership revenues. Revenue for PD events was more than double what was anticipated and there was a slight increase in investments. Coupled with some cost savings from Communications, PD, and member events, the Chapter ended the year in great financial standing.
- The Chapter can anticipate revenue receivable from CPRS National in the coming months.
- The Treasurer reminded the new Board that the fiscal year began for CPRS-NS on April 1, 2023. Expenses incurred after that date will be reported in an upcoming financial statement.
- Kate thanked the Board for their careful recordkeeping and thoughtful discussion around financial matters in the past year which left us in a good position.

Kate called for a motion to accept her report. The motion was moved by Amy Thurlow and seconded by Dawn Delaney. The motion was carried.

5. Professional Development/Education Report

Sarah Robertson, CPRS-NS PD Chair, began her report by saying CPRS Nova Scotia strives to provide value to members through professional development and networking opportunities. PD offered this year aimed to grow local membership in the short and long term while helping members take their careers to the next level.

This year, five PD sessions were held online, one in person, plus the AGM. Most were held on Wednesdays at noon hour, and featured local, national, and international presenters. The topics ranged from the tactical to the strategic, to creative and inspirational.

Sessions were free of charge to members, including Mount students, while others paid to attend. Attendance averaged 30 people and included students, members, and non-members, with online sessions reaching as far as Toronto and Hamilton, ON.

The sessions included:

October – Virtual Session: Cybersecurity Communications featuring Giles Crouch, NordSpark. (20 attendees)

November – Virtual Session: Unlocking Powerful Creative, with industry experts Jon Richard, Creative Director and Tanya Kavelaars-DiPenta, Senior Director of Marketing, from National PR. (38 attendees)

January – Virtual Session: The Changing Face of Leadership Communications with guest speaker Matt Kucharski, President at Padilla. (32 attendees)

February – Virtual Session: Access by Design - Achieving Accessibility in Nova Scotia, a panel discussion with Government of Nova Scotia experts, Angela Campbell, Michael Noonan, Etta Moffatt, Graeme MacDougall, Dave Whynacht, and Jennifer Smith. (28 attendees)

March – Virtual Session: Renovating a Brand with Callie Gallant, Director of Marketing and Communications, Brigadoon Village. (10 attendees)

April – In Person: Putting People First: Engaging Employees through Strategic Communications. Moderated by Tiffany Chase, the panel included Dr. Amy Thurlow, MSVU, Caitlin Ferguson, Medavie, Robyn MacIsaac, Crestview. Held at Mount Saint Vincent University. (17 attendees)

Sarah thanked this year's PD committee members, Tiffany Chase, Coleen Logan, Kaitlyn MacLean, Carolyn McCormack, Angela Murray, Najah Dhuny and JoAnn Alberstat as well as the student representatives - Najah Dhuny and Peter Gillis - and Melissa Noonan for event promotion.

6. Membership Report

Allison Currie, CPRS-NS Membership Chair, spoke about the importance of connecting, retaining, and reengaging members. She thanked Sarah Robertson for her communications support.

To help meet the outlined objectives, the Board took on several tactics, including:

- Met with MSVU and NSCC PR students in September to talk about CPRS-NS, membership benefits and invite two student representatives to sit on the Board.
- Sent personalized CPRS-NS notecards to members reminding them to renew, celebrate milestones or to acknowledge losses.
- Dispatched paid and organic social posts.
- Publicly acknowledged the achievements of the local care community.
- Met with membership chairs in the National office to discuss what's happening across the country.

- Lobbied National CPRS for group rates for employers.
- Reminded members about Membership Month, and ensured PD events add value to the community.
- As of May 2021, there were 37 voting members. In May 2022, there were 47 members. May 2023, CPRS-NS has 42 voting members plus 77 student members.

7. New Business

None

8. Nominating Committee Report

Chris Hansen, Immediate Past President gave her report, introducing the nominations for the CPRS-NS 2023-2024 Board of Directors:

- President: JoAnn Alberstat, PRK
- Vice President: Shelley Murphy
- Secretary: Coleen Logan
- Treasurer: Carolyn McCormack, APR
- Immediate Past President: Chris Hansen, APR LM
- Remaining Board members Sarah Robertson, Dawn Delaney, Tiffany Chase.
- New Board members Alison Gillian APR CMP, Katie Feltmate, and member-at-large, Charmaine Gaudet, APR, FCPRS.

Chris acknowledged retiring Board members Mary Barker, Kate Comeau, Allison Currie, and Melissa Noonan.

JoAnn Alberstat asked for further nominations (x3). Hearing none, the Board Chair called for a motion to accept the nominations as presented. Melissa Noonan moved the motion. Seconded by Angela Murray. The motion was carried.

9. Recognition of Outgoing Board Members:

The Board Chair, JoAnn Alberstat acknowledged and thanked outgoing Board members Kate Comeau APR, Treasurer, Melissa Noonan, Secretary, and Allison Currie, Membership Chair.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of CPRS-NS, JoAnn acknowledged outgoing Board member, Mary Barker, APR FCPRS(H) LM, Archivist, with a special honour. Mary served on the Board for 25 years, chairing numerous portfolios. Nationally, she served on the CPRS Board of Directors and presented at numerous conferences and webinars.

In recognition of her tireless service and unwavering support, Mary was presented with the CPRS-NS Lifetime Achievement Award. In turn, Mary thanked the Chapter for the distinction.

10. Adjournment

Chris Hansen moved a motion to adjourn the business portion of the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

The meeting proceeded with a professional development session:
“Communications in the COVID era:” Reflections on the future of public relations presented by Daniel Tisch APR, FCPRS, Chairman of Argyle.

He reflected on communications in the COVID era, building on his white paper on the future of public relations, commissioned by CPRS. A question-and-answer period closed the presentation.