

# MINUTES OF THE 104<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ENGINEERS AND GEOSCIENTISTS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was held in a hybrid format on Saturday, October 28, 2023 from the Whistler Conference Centre in Whistler, BC.

The Chair welcomed Irene and Romi, cultural ambassadors from the Squamish Lil'Wat Cultural Centre who welcomed us to this land. The Chair expressed his gratitude to Irene and Romi and for the opportunity to gather on the unceded land of the Squamish and Lil'Wat peoples.

The Chair then proceeded to advise the assembly of the emergency exits and protocols for the venue and noted that the legal and notification requirements for the meeting had been met and the meeting duly constituted. After establishing that quorum of registrants was present, Chair, Mark Adams, P.Eng. declared the meeting open at 9:40 am.

The first item of business was greetings from the Honorable Selina Robinson, Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, which were recorded in advance of the meeting.

The Chair addressed the assembly and advised that the AGM is an opportunity for registrants to hear from the Board and senior staff on the organization's strategic progress and financial standing. He added that this was our first year operating under our new 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, which outlines the work we will undertake over the next 5 years. We continued to operationalize the *Professional Governance Act* including introducing audit programs for individual and firm registrants, and making changes to our Continuing Education and Annual Reporting processes based on registrant feedback. Our commitment to environmental and social impact also remains strong, with work continuing to educate registrants on important topics including equity, diversity, inclusion and reconciliation.

## *Introduction of 2022/2023 Board*

The Chair then introduced the members of the 2022/2023 Board.

## *Introduction of Staff*

The Chair introduced each member of the Engineers and Geoscientists BC Executive Team and took a moment to thank all of the Engineers and Geoscientists BC staff who were actively participating in the meeting working behind the scenes for their efforts.

## **Introduction of Parliamentarian**

Eli Mina, Registered Parliamentarian, was introduced as the parliamentarian for the meeting.

## **OVERVIEW OF MEETING RULES AND PROTOCOLS**

The Chair provided a brief overview of the meeting's rules and protocols for registrants attending in-person as well as those attending the meeting virtually. After advising registrants of the voting instructions, he launched a practice vote to ensure that all attendees could successfully vote using the online module.

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

The Chair moved to Item 3 on the agenda, the presentation of the organization's Annual Report. The Annual Report is made available on Engineers and Geoscientists BC's website and also available to download in the webinar platform.

He advised that discussion would begin with the Board Chair's Report, followed by the CEO's Report and a 15-minute question period for both reports. He also informed the assembly that later in the meeting, Jessica Steeves, a member of the Audit Sub-Committee, would present the audited financial statements and asked that any questions related to the organization's finances and audit process be held until Item 3.3 on the agenda. He also advised that during Item 5, we will also be hearing from Chief Executive Officer, Heidi Yang, P.Eng., FEC, FGC (Hon.) about the creation of an independent advocacy body and asked that questions related to that topic also temporarily be held until then.

## **BOARD CHAIR'S REPORT**

The Chair then began to provide a report on the organization's activities from this past fiscal year and shared some of the highlights from the organization's work from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

Some of the key highlights included: continued progress on the operationalizing of requirements under the *Professional Governance Act*, the development of a Regulatory Learning Module focused on Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, tangible action undertaken on climate change through the development of new greenhouse gas emission mitigation resources and climate related practice guidelines, strengthening our data governance to comply with the *Freedom of Information and Privacy Act* requirements, conducting a risk assessment and identification of possible threats from machine learning technologies like ChatGPT and the initiation of creating a separate advocacy body for engineering and geoscience in BC.

The Chair then thanked all of our volunteers, registrants, staff and Board members for being resilient during our rapidly changing environment.

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Heidi Yang, P.Eng., FEC, FGC (Hon.) Chief Executive Officer, briefed the assembly on major operational activities of the past year.

She began by recognizing that this year the organization initiated a second comprehensive review of our core activities. She commented that the landscape around us has shifted significantly, and the PGA has outlined a growing scope of work for our organization, as well as a mandate focused on regulation. This has led to the decision to initiate the creation of a separate advocacy body, which would be discussed in further detail later on the agenda.

Other major activities were the launch of our firm audit program in the fall of 2022, the proactive investigation of cancelled registrants to ensure that they did not continue engaging in a reserved practice, the continued piloting of online, proctored exams, making licensure in BC more accessible to candidates from around the world and the development of Professional Practice Guidelines on Sustainability which were updated to reflect evolving climate and sustainability considerations in professional practice. We also published the *Guide to Inclusive Practices*, a new resource to help our stakeholders build safe spaces around them and further equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Heidi Yang thanked all of our staff and volunteers, as well as our Board, registrants, and those we've collaborated with across the country.

The Chair then opened the floor for questions regarding the Chief Executive Officer's Report and the Board Chair's report.

Several questions were received from registrants both in-person from the floor and online. Questions focused on the following topics: how the organization is complying with changes brought into force under the PGA and how those changes have affected the organization on an operational level (staffing levels, office space needs and access to staff), how to engage better with registrants to improve voter turnout for Board elections, future plans for licensing internationally trained applicants and future CE program initiatives. Questions were addressed by the Chair and Chief Executive Officer.

## AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Chair called upon Jessica Steeves, P.Eng., member of the Audit Sub-Committee, to report on the audit process and to present the financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

Ms. Steeves confirmed that these statements have been approved by the Board and do not require a motion for approval at the AGM. They are available to registrants and the public in our Annual Report.

The Chair invited Jennifer Cho, Chief Financial and Administration Officer to the stage to address any broader financial questions and then opened the floor for questions regarding the organization's financial standing.

Several questions were brought forward from registrants online as well in-person. They primarily focused on changes to the organization's financial position and its reserve funds, the growing scope of work for the organization as a result of the PGA, how the organization intends to manage the financial impact to programs and services as a result of the discontinuation of some advocacy programs, and the potential impacts to licensing fees in the future.

Once all questions from the floor were addressed, the Chair called a 15-minute break.

## **REPORT FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE**

The Chair welcomed Kate Haines, Superintendent, to present a report from the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance (OSPG). The Chair advised that Ms. Haine's remarks had been pre-recorded for the meeting as she was unable to attend in-person.

The Chair thanked Ms. Haines' and informed the audience that if anyone had any questions for Ms. Haines to please direct them to: [AGMquestion@egbc.ca](mailto:AGMquestion@egbc.ca).

Following the report from the OSPG, the Chair called for another practice vote to test the technology.

## **SUPPORTING MODERN REGULATION: DIVESTING ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES**

The Chair informed the assembly that the next item on the agenda pertained to a report on our recent work to initiate the creation of an independent advocacy body for engineering and geoscience in BC. He then invited Heidi Yang, Chief Executive Officer to the podium.

Mrs. Yang initiated the discussion by reminding registrants that over the past three years, the organization has experienced many changes, primarily having to do with our role as a regulator, and what government expects us to do in service to the public. We are directed by legislation that sets the mandate we must deliver on. Public protection has always been Engineers and Geoscientists BC's primary mandate, but for much of our history, we have also had a secondary mandate, which was to promote our registrants' interests through advocacy activities.

In 2019, government responded by introducing new legislation for Engineers and Geoscientists BC, and for other regulators that work in the built and natural environments. This was the *Professional Governance Act*, or PGA, and when it came into force in 2021 it fundamentally changed our mandate by significantly altering our secondary role, only allowing advocacy activities that directly support regulation.

Mrs. Yang then proceeded to speak to the organization's preliminary review of its advocacy-focused programs in 2021 to determine what was allowable under the PGA. Some adjustments were made to a few programs at that time, but for the most part much was left in place, since so much change was underway with the PGA.

In 2022, this review was revisited but with the lens of what the organization must do, what we should do, versus what we could do. Over the course of a year a broad evaluation of our work and our programs was conducted. Through this evaluation, we identified that some of the programs we have invested in and dedicated resources to for many years, no longer advanced our regulatory mandate and were not suited to who the organization is today under the PGA. This led to exploring the idea of a separate advocacy body for engineering and geoscience, which after many detailed discussions, was approved by the Board in April 2023. This decision was made in tandem by the Board when approving which programs should stop, which ones should be modified, and which ones should be transferred to the future advocacy body.

## **CHANGES TO PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES**

Mrs. Yang then led the assembly through an overview of the key program changes that were made.

This includes changes to some programs focused on community-building and registrant benefits programs that we intend to transition to the advocacy body such as the Branch program, the Affinity Program and the Career Advertising program. She reported that the intent is for these programs to eventually become revenue generators for the advocacy body, but they will remain in place at Engineers and Geoscientists BC until an appropriate timeline for transition can be determined.

Mrs. Yang continued to explain that other programs that no longer fit within the organization's mandate as a regulator will come to a stop within the next two years, including: the Awards program, Sponsorships, our Outreach program, our technical Divisions (transition plans are underway to transfer division activities to current or new advisory groups), and our Women in Engineering and Geoscience Division (this will transition to a broader working group that will still support the recruitment and retention of women in the professions, but with a broader approach that also focuses on other equity deserving groups and the intersections between them).

Mrs. Yang added that by making these transitions this will enable Engineers and Geoscientists BC to apply renewed focus to our core mandate of public protection and strengthen our regulatory processes.

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF ADVOCACY BODY**

Heidi Yang then moved on to Item 5.2 where she provided an update on the establishment of the advocacy body.

She informed the assembly that as the advocacy body initiates its work, we will be keeping registrants up to date through our regular communications channels.

The floor was then opened to questions from both in-person and virtual attendees. Several questions were raised surrounding the financial viability of the advocacy body to become a self-sufficient entity and future plans for Branches and Technical Divisions.

## **REPORT FROM ENGINEERS CANADA AND GEOSCIENTISTS CANADA**

The Chair welcomed Engineers Canada President Nancy Hill to provide an update on the work of our national engineering organization. After Ms. Hill's update, the Chair thanked her for her presentation.

The Chair then proceeded to welcome Geoscientists Canada President Doug Bell to the stage to provide a report on behalf of Geoscientists Canada. After Mr. Bell's update, the Chair thanked him for his presentation.

## ***Acknowledgment of Guests from Other Regulators***

The Chair welcomed special guests joining us in person and virtually this morning as representatives from engineering and geoscience regulators across the country, post-secondary institutions, and from other professional regulatory bodies. He thanked them for making time to join the meeting, and for their support as we work together on shared issues to strengthen our professions.

## AGM MOTIONS

The Chair informed the assembly that in accordance with our bylaws, registrants had the opportunity to submit motions in advance of the AGM for the Board's consideration. All motions must have been received no later than 5:00 PM on September 27, 2023 to allow adequate time for review and inclusion in the hybrid meeting and to support fair and informed debate. Registrant motions are advisory and non-binding on the Board.

The Chair advised that two motions were submitted in advance of the meeting. They were reviewed and deemed to be in compliance with our Bylaws and Robert's Rules of Order. They were received from the same mover and seconder. He then proceeded to provide an overview of the meeting rules, which establish how motions are put forward and debated.

Mark Adams, Chair, then read the first motion which was displayed on-screen. The motion was moved by Kevin Preston, P.Eng., and seconded by Brett Patrick, P.Eng.

He then asked the mover, Kevin Preston, P.Eng., to approach the microphone to speak to the motion.

The floor was then open for debate. During debate a registrant had proposed that the first motion be amended into two parts. The assembly voted to split Motion 1 into two separate parts prior to voting on that motion.

Upon calling the question, the following motions were carried:

**MOTION 1a: That the Board consider past surpluses when setting future annual licensing fees.  
CARRIED**

**MOTION 1b: That the Board consider limiting future increases to no more than 2% per year.  
CARRIED**

The Chair then proceeded to read the second motion which was displayed on-screen. The motion was moved by Kevin Preston, P.Eng., and seconded by Brett Patrick, P.Eng. The Chair invited the mover of the second motion, Kevin Preston, P.Eng. to speak to the motion. The floor was once again open for debate. Upon calling the question, the following motion was carried:

**MOTION 2: That the Board consider that a larger seed fund be given to the new advocacy body to be spent on expenses of existing programs being transferred to it, plus a reasonable staffing budget for those programs.**

**CARRIED**

## IN MEMORIAM

The Chair acknowledged registrants of the organization who had passed away over the last year. A moment of respectful silence was observed.

## RESULTS OF THE 2023 COUNCIL ELECTION

The Chair welcomed Heidi Yang, P.Eng., FEC, FGC (Hon.) Chief Executive Officer, in her capacity as Chief Electoral Officer, to review the results and election process.

The Engineers and Geoscientists BC election was conducted by electronic ballot. The process is run through a two-tiered, secure third-party administered system, so while the organization can access an up-to-date voter list, the results are held by the third party and not released to us until the close of voting. By using this system, neither Engineers and Geoscientists BC nor the third party can connect voter to vote. As Chief Electoral Officer, I am satisfied that the election was conducted in a fair, confidential and impartial manner.

This year 12.6% of eligible voting members participated. 5,188 votes were cast.

The following individuals were elected to serve on the Board:

- Michelle Mahovlich
- Matthew Salmon; and
- Veronica Knott

Mrs. Yang congratulated those who were elected and invited the Chair to continue with the next item on the agenda.

## **RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS**

The Chair took a moment to thank the Board members who had completed their terms of service on the Board.

He began with acknowledging outgoing Past Chair Carol Park for her many years of dedicated service and leadership on the Board.

Also completing their terms at this time were:

- Jessica Steeves, P.Eng.
- Suky Cheema
- David Wells, JD

On behalf of Engineers and Geoscientists BC, the Chair expressed his sincere thanks to all of the outgoing Board members for their tremendous dedication of time and energy to the organization and to the professions.

## **INDUCTION OF THE 2023/2024 BOARD**

Mark Adams, P.Eng., announced that he would continue in the role of Immediate Past Board Chair in the 2023/2024 year.

New and returning Board members are:

- Veronica Knott, P.Eng.
- Karen Ling, P.Eng.

- Mahsoo Naderi-Dasoar; P.Eng.
- Michelle Mahovlich, P.Eng., P.Geo.
- Mark Porter, P.Eng., StructEng., FEC
- Matthew Salmon, P.Eng., and
- Jens Weber, P.Eng.

Engineers and Geoscientists BC's public representatives appointed by government are:

- Leslie Hildebrandt, ICD.D, LLB
- Emily Lewis, CPA, CMA

Joining the Board as of October 31<sup>st</sup> are Cathy McIntyre, MBA, C. Dir. and Bill Chan, CPA, CGA, ICD.D..

### **Board Chair in Review**

Heidi Yang, P.Eng., FEC, FGC (Hon.), Chief Executive Officer acknowledged Mark Adams, P.Eng., outgoing Board Chair for his service and commitment over the past year and thanked him on behalf of Engineers and Geoscientists BC for his continued contributions to the professions and the public.

### **Stripped Gear Presentation**

Outgoing Board Chair, Mark Adams, P.Eng., was then honoured with the "Stripped Gear" medallion in a ceremony presented by outgoing Past Board Chair Carol Park, P.Eng.

### **CLOSING REMARKS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

In closing, the Chair thanked all attendees for attending the annual conference and AGM and encouraged attendees to help identify and recruit candidates for next year's Board election.

The Chair then offered thanks to those who had organized the AGM, as well as the annual conference sessions over the last few days.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.