

## MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

10:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.  
O.E. Smith Auditorium, IWK Health Centre  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008

**Present:** Leticia White, Chair  
Christine Marchessault, Treasurer  
Phyllis Williams, Vice-Chair  
Krista Baldwin, Secretary  
Gayle Salsman, Registrar  
Dorothy Edem, Continuing Competency Coordinator  
Michael O’Hara, COTNS legal counsel  
Joy Moulton, Office Manager

**Regrets:** Victoria Apold, Governor-in-Council Representative

### **Members:**

Stacey Ackroyd	Shirley Anderson	Jo-Anna Arseneau
Nicole Boudreau	Tyla Burnett	Margaret Champion
Megan Connors	Pauline Cousins	Christina Darrigan Skinner
Jen Davis	Susan Doble	Marie Fay
Jennifer Finlayson	Karey Fleming	Melissa Gibbons
Margaret Higgins	Carolyn Kelly	Cheryl Lake
Nancy Littler	Sarah MacKenzie	Terry McLaughlin
Kerry Mosher	Kimberley Offman	Elizabeth Ritchie
Sherry Ross	Annette Rudman	Jennifer Saunders
Colleen Shubaly	Becky Sittler	Diane Smith
Mary Ellen Sullivan	Heather Thompson	Liz Townsend
Nicole Works	Alexandra Yip	

### **Proxies:**

Rosemary Algar	Diane Delorme	Annette Fraser
Myrna King	Diane MacKenzie	Erika McFarland
Phyllis Spurway	Paula Gouthro	Natalie Thornley
Anna Jien	Miranda Doherty	Karen Landry
Carmel O’Keefe	Kristy Spear	Farran Dennis
Susanne MacLean	Anne Carswell	Audrey Peake
Leanne Beaton	Darlene Boudreau	Monique Dupuis-Lake
Stephanie Weir	Nancy Garber	

### **Regrets:**

Alison Mansfield	Chantale Stanley	Aline Couturier
Kathleen Drysdale	Andrea Hilson	Natasha Hopfner
Cynthia Stilwell	Lygia Figueiredo	

### **Telehealth:**

Bridgewater: Alana Manzer, Sarah Vanderwal, Robin Stadnyk and Jocelyn Brown  
Truro: Neil Morse and Krista Stott-Jones

## **1.0 Call to Order**

Leticia White called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM.

L. White introduced Board Members, Phyllis Williams, Christine Marchessault and Krista Baldwin; Registrar, Gayle Salsman; Continuing Competency Coordinator, Dorothy Edem; Michael O’Hara, Legal Counsel and Joy Moulton, Office Manager. Regrets were received from Victoria Apold, Governor-in-Council Representative.

## **2.0 Approval of Agenda**

It was moved by Stacy Ackroyd, seconded by Heather Thompson, that the Agenda be approved as circulated. Motion carried.

## **3.0 Approval of Minutes**

It was moved by Jennifer Finlayson, seconded by Carolyn Kelly, that the Minutes be approved as circulated. Motion carried.

- 3.1 Appointment of Committee to review 2008 Minutes – Stacy Ackroyd and Nancy Littler

## **4.0 Reports**

### **4.1 Chair’s Report**

**Leticia White:**

Key Strategic Areas:

- Be Fiscally Responsible
  - Improve Human Resources
  - Further development of Policies around the use of technology using email and web and teleconferencing. Using web-conferencing today.
- Work with other Organizations
  - Working with Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO), Nova Scotia Health Professions Regulatory Network and Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI).
- Continuing Registrant Competence
  - Distribution of the COTNS Continuing Competency Program Portfolio in July 2007, development of the Self-Assessment and Professional Development Plan documents and the development of a work plan around the College’s Code of Ethics.
- Fair, Timely and Transparent Registration and Complaints Processes
  - With the assistance of Legal Counsel, M. O’Hara, the College has completed a review of its existing policies and procedures around registration. The result was setting up a Credentials Committee which will be responsible for making decisions around registrations; thus allowing the College Board to act as an internal appeal process on decisions related to registration.

- Dorothy and Gayle commuting around the province holding education sessions re: the Continuing Competency Program. This is a good way to get members involved in the College. A practice Committee group has been set up in Sydney.

The Board would like to thank Gayle, Joy, Michael and Dorothy and all volunteers.

## **4.2 Registrar's Report**

### **Gayle Salsman:**

The Registrar had the chance to meet with occupational therapists from most of the regions – this provided a chance to highlight the Continuing Competency Program Portfolio and discuss other practice issues. This was well received by occupational therapists throughout Nova Scotia and the College plans to do this again in upcoming years.

In addition, the office has undergone several administrative changes including changes to the database, renewal forms and new cards and receipts which will be sent out later with a very professional look and some staffing increases. The reason we have been returning many of your renewal applications is because of the updates to the database, the information we needed was for the CIHI database. We cannot send this if there are fields we cannot answer. We are looking into eventually having on-line registration which is on the agenda to be explored in the upcoming year. The CIHI database is proving to be a very useful tool and we hope to eventually have all 10 provinces reporting (at this time Quebec does not report to CIHI).

Gayle highlighted the current Complaints process and how the committee has dealt with successfully and timely under the new process. We will continue to monitor this process. The College has met its funding target for dealing with Complaints and Hearings. Many Colleges across Canada and in Nova Scotia are reporting that they have to raise fees because of the burden of handling Complaints. On checking with other colleges, the cost per hearing where process is in place is approximately \$75,000. COTNS currently has \$200,000 set aside for this process, so we are in good financial shape.

Gayle also advised that the government is in the process of a new regulation which is the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act which affects how we do our business (FARPA).

Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act (FARPA) – Terry McLaughin would like to know what was proposed by government. Gayle and Michael O'Hara gave an overview of the proposed legislation.

M. O'Hara indicated that the legislation will apply to all professions including health, trade, real estate, carpenters, and teachers. There will be a new government department which will be set up to ensure that all applicants are treated in a fair, transparent and timely manner. The government will have the ability to determine whether or not the standards of a profession are deemed to be fair, transparent and timely and can issue fines if they feel they are not. There will be an appeal process for both regulators and applicants.

This legislation has been proposed by the Provincial government and was brought forward in very fast manner due to political pressure taking place across the country. The trade barriers trend across the country – and the recognition of foreign trained workers. This is

similar to legislation in other provinces such as Ontario where the Audit Process has cost COTO \$60,000. There was a comment from the members that this appears to be taking away self-regulatory rights. Gayle indicated that the Nova Scotia Health Regulators are very active, working and meeting with different levels of government on this issue.

The result of this legislation will mean that the College has a lot of work ahead of it in order to prepare to be able to meet the standards imposed by this legislation.

In addition, there is the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT). There are proposed amendments with respect to this agreement which will see regulators forced to recognize an applicant from other provinces with no further assessment. This legislation is going to force the occupational therapy regulatory bodies across Canada to bring our standards in line. ACOTRO will be meeting in the fall to deal with this further.

Dr. Elizabeth Townsend – Brought forward her concern regarding the challenge occupational therapy has in the retention of experienced occupational therapists. We need to do more research and look at our legislation to ensure we are inclusive of non-traditional occupational therapists. We need a new strategy to approach health human resources. She would like to see this issue on future agendas.

#### **4.3 Treasurer's Report**

##### **Christine Marchessault:**

We are financially stable having higher-than-predicted revenues and lower expenses especially in incentives and training due to the low number of committee volunteers.

For the past six months, registrar has been bombarded with requests for information. Items on Strategic Plan are high priority.

It was noted that lawyer expenses were higher due to more legislation changes. The office staff are totally swamped; therefore, the need to increase hours of office manager and registrar or creating a new position. Credentialing – regulatory part of it.

Extra surplus money designated to Continuing Competency, Hearing and Legislation and Special Projects.

There was a brief discussion on a large extensive audit versus now. It was decided that the audit stay as is.

- 4.3.1 Shirley Anderson moved and Jennifer Saunders seconded that Raymond Ells be appointed as auditor for the year 2008-2009. Motion carried.

#### **4.4 Report of the Practice Committee**

##### **Gayle Salsman:**

There has not been a lot of work done on this committee except for the two practice guidelines that were done in the last couple of years. They are looking at content and

professional boundaries. The reviewing of the Code of Ethics has been ongoing. There are eight people in the Sydney area who are highly motivated and have offered to work on this committee. We need to look at the flavor of what the practice of occupational therapy looks like across the province.

#### **4.5 Report of the Continuing Competency Committee**

##### **Dorothy Edem:**

She highlighted the annual report. She stated that there have been amazing members. She thanked members on the committee and the previous members for their great contribution. The object of the binder, which everyone should have received, was to keep it simple so that there would be no increase in fees. It looks professional and was at a manageable cost. She applauded the feedback received. In November she presented at National in Toronto and did a workshop and poster. People were amazed at the work of such a small college and province.

She has worked in participation with the College and has done education sessions around the province with good attendance and wonderful feedback.

She noted that the Pilot Project Section 2 Assessment is the meat of all of this. She had been looking for 30 volunteers to assess this project and have 50 volunteers. She reminded those present that they had until the end of the month to complete this project, if they were not already completed. So far there has been great feedback. How to structure and format the information will be reflected on before it is sent out to the members.

The Committee will have a full report analysis which will be presented to the Board. Then it may be taken on the road. We are the vehicles; you need to make it happen.

Peer Assessment – how to structure it – audit what people are doing. 2010-2011 – implement all portfolios before testing audit.

This Committee is seeking volunteers.

A comment was received from Jane Cameron, Physiotherapist Manager, in rehab in Pictou County. She really likes the look of our Binder and that our occupational therapists are using it. College of Physiotherapists is following in our footsteps.

#### **4.6 Report of the Nominations Committee**

##### **Neil Morse:**

Lygia, Gayle and I have met. There are two vacancies on the Board. We have received two nominations: Christine Marchessault and Leticia White.

#### **4.7 Call for Nominations**

The question “Are there any further nominations to the College Board?” was asked three times.

Having none, Christine Marchessault and Leticia White were acclaimed to fill the positions on the Board for two years.

Thanks to Christine and Leticia were expressed.

##### 4.7.1 Appointment of the 2008-2008 Nominations Committees:

N. Morse and L. Figueiredo agreed to act as the Nominations Committee.

Motion: Jennifer Finlayson and Susan Doble.

#### **5.0 Tentative date for AGM 2009**

Tentative date for 2009 was set as June 20<sup>th</sup>. Some grumblings about Saturday and some have difficulty making it. A. Rudman stated the forum was lovely and it is pleasure to be able to attend on a Saturday. It was also noted that it was a pleasure to have a distance link that works.

E. Townsend

(1) Requested that a regular item on the AGM Agenda be for a Members forum.

(2) It is important that COTNS act in a manner that promotes retention of occupational therapists that are experienced but may not use the specific title, occupational therapist. It is important to be able to draw from these individuals. Is there a method of maintaining these individuals in the Register? COTNS must also ensure that its programs, including continuing competency programs allow these individuals to see themselves as part of the profession.

(3) How in fact can COTNS have more a public appearance that relates to internationally trained therapists? We are well below the radar and we are such an important profession.

#### **6.0 Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:03 AM.

Megan Connors thanked the Board for all their hard work from all members of the College.

Joy Moulton  
Office Manager