

CANADIAN ACOUSTICAL ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

Held at Sutton Place Hotel, Vancouver

20 September 2016

Attending in person: Frank Russo (chair), Bill Gastmeier, Dalila Giusti, Hugues Nélisse, Roberto Racca, Mehrzad Salkordeh, Kathy Pichora-Fuller, Jérémie Voix, Bryan Gick

Attending on-line: Michael Kieft, Joana Rocha

Frank called meeting to order at 15:06

As first order of business Frank called for approval of the minutes from the April BoD meeting, noting that they had already been reviewed by Board members and published. Approval moved by Mehrzad, seconded by Bill. Carried unanimously.

President's report (Frank Russo)

Frank reported growth of the Association's footprint on social media under his present curation, with 122 followers on Twitter and 547 on LinkedIn. He pointed out that, as stated from the outset, he would not be continuing in the role indefinitely. A post-doc and long-time student member of the Association, Huiwen Goy, had agreed to take the role of social media coordinator.

Frank reported on the ICA meeting in Buenos Aires that he attended as Canadian co-representative with Michael Stinson; Canada had 8 votes out of 70, split between the two representatives. Frank noted that ICA made a financial profit at their 2013 meeting in Montreal that was shared with ASA, thanks to a registration fees sharing agreement brokered with the host organization. That could be a possible paradigm to consider for future joint meetings with ASA (past 2018) and other organizations. Frank also reported that ICA is working with UNESCO involvement to have 2019 recognized as the Year of sound, patterned after the International Year of Light in 2015. Major outreach is planned if that happens, with sponsorship sought from big names. Future ICA meetings will be held in Aachen, Germany (2019) and Gyeongju, Korea (2022). An ICA budget is available to support Special Symposia that are advanced through national member organizations (\$1500-2000 per instance).

Board renewal: Kathy is leaving this year; Christian Giguère (past president) is in contact with possible candidates to replace her, to be confirmed by the time of the AGM so that a name can be put forward. Next year a number of turnovers is anticipated; Frank himself is to step down soon from his role of President. Christian will be looking for new recruits to replace next year's outgoing members, as per usual practice of having a full slate to propose at the AGM rather than relying on there being sufficient nominations from the floor.

Future meetings: Frank reported that Peter VanDelden had been making excellent progress in preparing for AWC-2017, which included securing keynote speakers, sponsorships, and a competitive rate for the conference venue. Peter would join the meeting later for a more detailed update in person. Frank also reminded the Board that the CAA had entered into an agreement with ASA to co-host a meeting in Victoria in the fall of 2018, which would take the place of AWC-2018. The Association's MOU with the ASA states that the CAA will not take on any financial obligations in the running of the conference nor will share in any profits. Frank noted that the CAA had been asked to suggest any special sessions by 28 September 2017, and that Mike Stinson (current president of the ASA) had also raised the possibility of having joint CAA and ASA chairs for each session.

Trade association proposal: Frank indicated that RWDI had contacted him about the proposed formation of a national organization of acoustics consultants, which would not compete with the CAA and in fact would endeavour to swell its ranks. That group would set accreditation criteria and require membership in the CAA as a condition. Steve Meszaros, one of the two RWDI consultants spearheading the initiative, would address the Board later during the meeting. There was some general discussion regarding what standards would be required for accreditation, but the Board agreed to wait for the presentation.

Update on CAA 2016 conference (Kathy Pichora-Fuller)

Kathy informed the Board that the hotel room quota had been met and the preliminary budget looked very positive. 164 individuals had currently registered, of which two-thirds were full 3-day registrations. The technical program was entirely filled and all levels of sponsorship had been subscribed. Philip Tsui from RWDI and Maureen Connelly from BCIT provided great logistic support. A profit of around 10,000\$ was estimated, gross of any adjustments for the membership component of non-member registration fees which technically was a flow-through to the CAA. Kathy mentioned that it had not been possible to verify easily the actual membership status of registrants applying for member's rates. After discussion it was agreed that a membership database check would be run before registration began in the morning so that any registrants whose membership

status did not match their application could be notified. Dalila pointed out that membership benefits should be discounted from the profit of the conference.

Kathy indicated her willingness to draft a full outline of a conference organizers' manual meant to facilitate the task of future organizing committees. Input from others would be needed for sections on sponsorship and exhibits organizing. She planned to begin the task right after the conference.

26 students received a subsidy package which included a free night at the hotel (paid directly from the conference budget) and admission to the conference. This was subject to the applicant presenting a talk as first author and submitting the corresponding proceedings paper. Travel costs were the responsibility of the student or their supervisor. Dalila recommended that a budget analysis of this approach be performed before considering it as a paradigm to be endorsed for the future.

Secretary's report (Roberto Racca)

Roberto provided and reviewed the current tally of Association members and Canadian Acoustics subscribers as summarized in the table below, which shows by comparison the numbers reported at the April 2016 and October 2015 meetings.

Category	Paid-up 2016 (as of 18 Sept. 2016)	Paid-up 2016 (as of 1 April 2016)	Paid-up 2015 (as of 5 October 2015)
Regular member	148	133	165
Emeritus	1	1	1
Student	33	18	22
Sustaining subscriber	26	26	28
Indirect subscribers			
- Canada	6	5	3
- USA	4	4	6
- International	4	3	5
Direct subscribers	3	3	4
Total	225	193	234

Roberto noted that the numbers appeared to be growing again compared to the slump we saw in April, and were nearly on par with the overall tally of a year before save for a shift from regular to student memberships. The increase in the latter could be attributed at least in part to the successful canvassing of students to join the Association shortly before the September conference so they could benefit of bursaries to present their work. Difficulties with the on-line membership renewal system might still account for some loss of membership through failed transactions that frustrated people. Overall, however, it appeared that the on-line membership management process now worked smoothly in the large majority of cases and the sequence of automated e-mail reminders as memberships are about to lapse generally resulted in timely renewals with no intervention.

During the registration process for this year's conference the Secretary was called to assist in various cases with the verification of membership status of student registrants to establish eligibility for travel support or student paper competitions. Roberto stated that in his view this revealed a more pervasive issue with the isolation between the conference registration and the CAA membership databases. He suggested that were the two databases linked, on-line conference registration application forms could be directly informed (in terms of rates offered etc.) by the status of the applicant. Conversely, a conference registration as a non-member could lead directly to the creation of a corresponding membership record. In discussion of this point, Jérémie explained how the process of creating memberships for non-member registrants is handled by sending e-mails to all the latter asking them to create user accounts for themselves within one week, that he then converts to members (always full, not students). If they do not accept, then they do not get the benefit from their higher registration.

Roberto went on to mention that some members, as in the past, had expressed the wish for special categories of membership recognizing retired status or other situations of lack of gainful employment; interest had also been expressed in the option of paying reduced rates for longer-term memberships. On a more conceptual level, members had expressed confusion at the inconsistent use of the terms “subscriber” and “subscription” in much of the template wording of the on-line membership management site. This ambivalence between subscription and membership became more critical in the case of institutional subscribers who would mistakenly assume that a membership in the Association (e.g. in the name of the contact person) would be created or renewed as part of the subscription. In discussion, Jérémie indicated that some templates on the registration site had reverted to earlier wording after an update (in their proper format they provided in fact a clearer distinction between subscription and membership) and he would now restore the appropriate versions. The issue of the request for alternative levels of membership was noted and Frank indicated he would contact directly some advocates for this change requesting their input in suggesting categories.

Lastly Roberto reported that the handling of paper based subscription renewals (generally limited to indirect subscriptions managed by an agency) had still resulted this year in a couple of lapses in the updating of subscription status and missed issues of the Journal due to communication delays in informing the Secretary of paper renewals (delivered to a PO box in another geographic location). The situation had somewhat righted itself after at least one subscription agency started sending all postal mail directly to the Secretary.

Frank moved to approve Secretary's report; Dalila seconded. Approved unanimously.

Standards committee update (Tim Kelsall, joining briefly at 17:15)

Tim expressed willingness to remain as chair of the Canadian standards committee. Only one standard being handled, namely a summary of all world standards in acoustics that are pertinent to Canada. Translation into French is an issue except for those original third-party standards that already have an official French version (USA standards do not); in practical terms it is not a major drawback, but in terms of Canada being bilingual it is a shortcoming. Jérémie asked Tim to provide the minutes of the standards committee meeting for insertion in the Journal.

Frank moved that Tim be confirmed as chair; Dalila seconded. Passed unanimously.

Guelph 2017 AWC update (Peter van Delden, joining briefly at 17:25)

Peter reported that the selected conference hotel (Delta) is well sized for the event and with convenient rooms placement. Main themes being pursued are hearing conservation, noise control, and in-air acoustics. Plenary speakers are being identified in these areas. NRC had expressed interest in delivering a talk on architectural acoustics on the Thursday (exhibition day); Peter noted that parallel sessions on that day would be on unrelated topics to the NRC presentation. Frank recommended that the conference strive to solicit content from a broad cross section of the topics represented in the Journal. Peter also indicated that the hotel would be available the day before the conference for workshops or training sessions, that should be non-promotional in nature. There was some general discussion about the need for a standard of scientific quality to be established for proposed courses or workshops.

Finance and registration being organized by Dalila. Estimated expenses \$55,000 of which \$25,000 for food; no cost for meeting rooms if block of 110 room nights is met; \$129/night rate. Estimated revenue from registration \$45,000; sponsorships and exhibits \$15,000. Already expressions of interest from potential sponsors. Social events to include opening reception, banquet and possibly technical tours.

Peter indicated that the organizers were looking at possible new avenues of advertising the event, including list servers and newsletters from other associations. Web site content was already being developed and would be published online as soon as the current conference's content could be superseded. There was some discussion about organizing an outreach event to students and general public, e.g. a public lecture.

Brief presentation on proposed trade association (Steve Meszaros, joining briefly at 18:00)

Steve briefed the Board on the concept of a trade association of acoustics consultants being spearheaded by RWDI. Currently looking for interest across the industry, with a plan to put together a framework and charter and have potential members review it. Proponents of the new entity don't see it at all as a potential competitor to the CAA, as it would be more focused on the technical trade aspects and less on the scientific. Likely the charter of the trade association would impose a requirement for principal consultants of member companies to belong to the CAA (a paradigm implemented by a similar trade group in Australia for the corresponding national acoustical association). The purpose of the trade group would be to promote the importance of acoustic design in everyday practice, and make the public more aware of the importance of the sector. Also would recommend standards of practice and establish minimum competency requirements for membership, as well as enhancing the status of acoustics as a branch of engineering (e.g. facilitate ability of acousticians to achieve a P.Eng.)

Frank commented that he would not want the CAA to lose its inclusive status as both scientific and technical association; there had therefore to be a complementarity of purpose with the trade group. There was some discussion regarding the group's

proposed ability to bestow accreditation and set standards on membership; in particular, how would the integrity and credibility of the process would be assured. Bill noted the importance to consider the National Association of Acoustical Consultants (NAAC), a well-established entity in the USA with inroads in Canada, since the new group could be redundant to its goals.

Frank expressed general appreciation of the principles of the proposed trade association but noted the need for further development of the framework; at this stage the CAA would not explicitly endorse the initiative but would remain open to potential future collaboration.

Treasurer's report (Dalila Giusti)

Dalila presented financial summaries for the current year and proposed budget for 2017. She noted that a significant new addition to the 2017 budget is an increase to the Student Subsidy from \$2,500.00 to \$10,000.00 following deliberation at the previous Board meeting, and pointed out that if the full \$10,000.00 is spent the Association might be posting a deficit. This may not be the case if healthy membership revenues are maintained, and/or the 2016 Conference has a profit, and/or the full amount allocated for Student Subsidy is not spent.

Dalila remarked that awards are substantially under-represented this year due to apparent low interest in applications. She also expressed some concern about the approach taken by the 2016 conference in providing student support, as it is not easily reflected as a budget item and makes it difficult to make decisions on allocation of funds for student travel in future events. Dalila looked for opinion of the Board on whether to continue including the travel subsidy in the conference budget, given the "in kind support" alternatives being explored. General agreement was that we should keep the \$10,000 in place.

There are ongoing issues with securing advertising revenue, due to some advertisers not paying their invoices. Membership and sustaining subscribers' dues are remaining about steady. Production costs for the Journal are lower than in the past. Next year the CAA's membership in ICA will be up for renewal and fees due; likely to renew for 3 years.

Investments did very well last year, but the returns are likely to be lower this year. Tax return was filed in May 2016 and included an engagement review report.

Bill moved to approve the report; Mehrzad seconded. Carried unanimously.

Dalila indicated that she would wish to start grooming a successor for the treasurer's position, in an overlap model similar to what was done with the editor's role.

Award coordinator's report (Hugues Nélisse)

Report to stand as a submitted document without discussion.

A notable point made in the report was that this year many of the awards went unclaimed for lack of any applicants. In this light the CAA's position with regard to whether any new awards should be created has to be reviewed and assessed.

Editor's report (Jérémié Voix)

Jérémié requested funding for implementing DOI (Digital Object Identifier) indexing of journal content. The cost moving forward would be USD 275 / year for all new content; the cost for retroactive indexing of all past issues could be up to USD 3,000. Board agreed to allocate \$5,000 for the project. Dalila will reflect this in the budget.

The question of whether to execute an outstanding publishing agreement with EBSCO as previously discussed has remained open due to uncertainty on official postal delivery address, and now to the possibility of the journal potentially going to Springer as publisher (see other item below).

Jérémié informed the Board that a secure web site will be implemented for the Journal; this will require a certificate costing USD 100 yearly.

Impact factor evaluation of the journal Canadian Acoustics by Thompson-Reuter yielded a very low rating (ranking at the bottom of the acoustics category). It may still be better than having no impact rating at all, but Jérémié said he would be also considering a rebuttal. On this note Jérémié called broadly for contribution of good quality articles to the Journal.

Jérémié introduced the question of whether we should go to Springer for publishing Canadian Acoustics (as Australian Acoustics did in 2015). The transition would affect the current open access status enjoyed by the journal for issues other than the current one. Jérémié suggested that the members be polled for an opinion of where the journal should be headed – continue trying to be a scientific publication or change to more of a newsletter. After a brief discussion the BoD recommended that the journal advisory board discuss the issue and provide recommendations; they will then be reviewed in a special session.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Frank, seconded by Dalila. Meeting ended at 18:53.