

CANADIAN ACOUSTICAL ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, October 8th, 2019 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order 16:10

Present in room: Jérémie Voix, Umberto Berardi, Dalila Giusti, Alberto Behar, Bill Gastmeier, Joana Rocha, Michael Kiefte, Mehrzad Salkordeh, Roberto Racca, Andy Metelka, Bryan Gick, Benjamin Tucker [guest]
Remote: Frank Russo, Olivier Robin [guest]

Agenda approved: Moved by Jérémie.

2. President's Report (Jérémie)

ICSV (International Congress on Sound and Vibration) 26, which CAA co-organized, was a success; CAA's portion of the profits was slightly over \$11,000 – Jérémie submitted a cheque to CAA's treasurer.

Local Chapters – CAA will support any initiative to operate a local chapter, albeit not financially; the Association will promote and advertise the chapter through its web site; the chapter will collect its own dues as sees fit.

Canada Wide Science Fair – The Board deemed not financially feasible to support a booth at this annual event, unless a local university can run it as will be the case in 2020 for Edmonton with Prof. Tucker.

Membership task force – Task force members had just completed a 90 min meeting to discuss ideas for boosting membership and had agreed to continue collaborating online and focus on three top priority initiatives: a) enhance a practitioners' corner in the journal welcoming non- peer reviewed contributions; b) create a permanent Social Media Editor position that would greatly enhance the CAA outreach, and c) involve the CAA in organizing student competitions and having a presence at science fairs to engage young participants.

Jérémie formally proposed the formation of a Social Media Editor position, per the Statement of Work circulated earlier to the BoD, and recommended appointing to it Romain Dumoulin (Research Professional at McGill). Jérémie asked the Board to grant Mr. Dumoulin free registration to the annual conference and cover travel & accommodation costs as compensation for his work. Dalila as treasurer encouraged restraint in the financing of this position. Michael suggested that the support would be especially needed if the position were held by a student or young member. Frank proposed that the position and support be set up as a two-year trial period. Dalila and Johana recommended looking at several social media platforms for popularity and reach. Jérémie suggested the appointing of a formal performance evaluation committee to review the coordinator's performance; this committee would be composed of the current treasurer (Dalila), executive secretary (Roberto) and past president (Frank).

- With the conditions above, a motion to create the position was made by Jérémie and seconded by Roberto; carried unanimously.

CAA online subscription site – The Linux server operating system hosting the site has been upgraded and migration to OJS 3.1 has been completed; a new sysadmin Sélim Izrar is now looking after CAA hosted systems.

Jérémie suggested that the Editor of the CAA journal Canadian Acoustics sign the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) to increase the journal's exposure and ranking in indexing systems.

3. Social media outreach (Frank)

No information to add to discussion; will pass along the social media credentials to Romain Dumoulin to carry forward.

4. Awards Report (Joana)

Joana provided a full summary of awarded prizes; she also thanked Alberto as new coordinator for Hétu prize, reviewed the contents of the updated application form and recommended that better coverage of open awards be given in the social media to increase interest in potential applicants.

In subsequent discussion, Dalila suggested that the Board consider increasing the value of some of the smaller awards; others remarked that it is not so much the monetary value as the prestige of receiving an award that matters to winners, though the prize money can be an important benefit especially for postgraduates struggling to fund their research.

Joana commented on the fact that some awards are poorly canvassed or cater to very niche sectors, so may not be highly subscribed.

A suggestion was made to expand eligible candidates from just students to junior members of industry; this was deemed worth considering but would be a major shift of paradigm. Johana encouraged Board members to formulate ideas for new or modified awards in consultation with other Directors so that proposals could be presented at the next BoD meeting.

It was also suggested to issue plaques or other tangible trophies and to generate broader online coverage of the awarding of prizes with the support of the newly appointed Social Media Editor.

5. Past and Upcoming Meetings

ICSV26: Montreal

Information was already provided by Jérémie as part of the President's report.

AWC 2019: Edmonton

Benjamin Tucker provided some numbers for the conference about to begin: 73 registrants both full and day (23 of them students); ~15 exhibitors; 65 people expected to attend the banquet (full conference student registrations include banquet, unlike other years)

AWC 2020: Sherbrooke

Olivier Robin provided an updated to the Board. Philippe-Aubert Gauthier, the original convener, left his position at Sherbrooke University and Olivier has taken up the role. Call for the conference has gone out; Delta hotel has been chosen as venue and most of contract details worked out; still working on guaranteed minimum (Dalila suggested trying to cap at \$7500 based on 70-person attendance and no dinner on hotel premises). Olivier was optimistic on having a strong attendance. He asked for input from the Board with suggestions for keynote speakers; there will also be a public lecture on the last day of the conference with media outreach (as an aside, Olivier advocated greater outreach and publicizing of acoustics and suggested an award for acoustic science popularization). Site visit planned at Sherbrooke University with cocktail reception and visit of acoustics research labs or music department; gala dinner at Bombardier Museum (30-minute prearranged bus ride to reach it). Some discussion took place about logistics for delegates to reach Sherbrooke; likely many from Ontario will drive.

AWC 2021: St-John's

Frank indicated that no information had yet been provided by conveners Benjamin Zedel & Len Zedel about setup of conference framework (such as bank account and hotel contract); he undertook to follow up with the two organizers to check on status. Some concerns were voiced about inclement autumn weather in Newfoundland at the usual time of year for the conference, but it would be problematic in terms of hotels etc. to try for a much earlier date.

Conference manual

Jérémie and Frank gave a status update on the development of a reference document for organizers of future congresses. A draft was circulated to the Board for editorial feedback. Much of the information has been incorporated from Christian Giguère's original manual from 2001. Screen shots of all relevant steps in setting up the annual conference web site will be included as an Annex. Mehrzad committed to contributing insight on contacting and canvassing potential exhibitors and sponsors.

6. Treasurer's Report (Dalida)

The CAA funds invested made a good amount of return, which along with other revenue gives the Association a solid financial position to continue supporting the journal, awards and other activities and benefits for its members.

A total of \$5,650 were to be distributed in awards at the conference.

As mentioned previously by Jérémie, the CAA received nearly \$12,000 from its co-participation in the organizing of ICSV26. The forecast budget for Journal expenses was reduced to \$25K from \$30K, as costs in recent years have been regularly below \$20K. Umberto noted that in 2018 there was no proceedings issue, so that year posted a much lower cost; 2019 however will be a full run. Dalila confirmed that she did take that into account and that \$25K would comfortably cover all costs.

The number of sustaining subscribers has remained stagnant at a low of 17; advertising revenue on the other hand has improved. Actuals for 2019 were \$9K in surplus revenue over proposed, and \$20K less in expenditures. Journal costs were substantially lower than was proposed, and only \$2,000 were disbursed in student travel support vs \$10,000 budgeted.

The proposed budget for 2020 shows a shortfall of \$8,200 for the year mostly due to expected low income from the conference based on a conservative estimate.

Regular membership fees can be maintained at \$120 following last year's increase.

Dalila pointed out that the \$10K allocated for student travel subsidies cannot be used to offset general conference expenses, i.e. it is not a grant to the conference. She asked the Board for opinions on whether we should change that and allocate \$10K to the conference to be used as they see fit (or stay with \$500/student for travel but let the conference use any leftover for other expenses). Board discussed the matter and it was agreed to leave things as they are – only subsidies for actual student travel will be disbursed.

Alberto moved to approve budget; Umberto seconded. Carried unanimously.

7. Secretary's Report (Roberto)

The membership numbers have essentially stabilized at around 150 regular and 20 students after the tapering of a surge brought about by the automatic memberships conferred by non-member registrations at the 2017 annual conference. The policy of granting membership as a benefit of conference registration at non-member rates has now been discontinued by resolution of the Board of Directors starting with the 2018 CAA/ASA joint conference, which should avoid in the future these fluctuations likely due to "conference inductees" not renewing a paid membership at the expiry of the included one.

The number of sustaining subscribers remains unchanged at 17, which is a low point in this category so important to the support of the Association. Roberto noted that he kept up the practice of following up on every new or renewed sustaining subscription with a personal note of thanks and offer of assistance with networked journal access etc., and of reviewing the user profile of every new or renewing member for any missing or incomplete data. This has avoided potential delivery problems and maintained a steady level of personal support and communication with members and subscribers which hopefully strengthens their sense of relationship with the Association.

Previously reported difficulties with the online payment system for memberships, caused by a complex requirement by PayPal to re-qualify the Association's merchant account, have likely resulted in missed or delayed renewals. An additional problem arose from an upgrade of the Online Journal System that took place in summer 2019 and triggered a glitch preventing the online purchase of new memberships. Roberto remarked that he had intervened with a workaround solution whenever contacted by a potential new member unable to complete the process, but that the glitch might have impacted the uptake.

Roberto also reported that an ongoing problem with some institutional subscribers (especially those represented by subscription agencies) reporting missing issues of the Journal, due to delays in billing cycles or postal anomalies, was now being better managed thanks to the increased involvement of the Journal's production team in the handling of these circulation matters.

8. Editor's Report (Umberto)

The Editor reported that 2019 was a strong year for the journal in quality and diversity of content; in March it produced a special issue dedicated to Murray Hodgson, and in June a topical issue on audiology and neuroscience; the September issue carried the conference proceedings, and December would feature a collection of regular contributed papers.

No regional issue was produced in 2019 after a lukewarm experience with Halifax the previous year, but Umberto noted that it does not have to be a regular feature. For the next instance of a regional issue a featured location with strong activity in acoustics would be considered, such as Alberta.

A new copyeditor, Pierre Grandjean from Sherbrooke University, has been engaged to replace Olivier Valentin and has undertaken the duty quite successfully.

A new version of the online platform for submitting and reviewing papers, OJS 3.1, has been introduced; this makes the editorial process consistent with that used by several other journals.

There are plans to work on a special issue targeting topics of interest to acoustics practitioners, with emphasis on noise control consulting engineering. Umberto noted that the challenge was to find an optimal guest editor to solicit and manage the contributions and to ensure a consistent format for the article submissions. Mehrzad pointed out that formatting guidelines can be difficult to follow; Dalila noted that many consultants can't make the time to format papers and expect the journal to do that.

9. Varia

Jérémie asked Directors who ran the length of their term whether they would be willing to stay on; all agreed to stand and be nominated at the AGM.

Umberto acknowledged publicly the Early Career Award given by the ICA to Jérémie.

10. Next meeting : May. 12th, 2020 @ 2pm(MDT), online

Spring meeting of Board of Director to be held on 12 May 2020 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM (Eastern Time) as an online conference.

11. Motion to Adjourn

Moved by Jérémy and seconded by Umberto. Adjourned at 18:50.