

# CANADIAN ACOUSTICAL ASSOCIATION

## Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, 17 May 2023 13:00 PM – 17:00 PM (EDT)

by Zoom videoconference

### 1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at ~13:00 PM (EDT).

Present online: Jérémie Voix (chair), Umberto Berardi, Victoria Duda, Bill Gastmeier, Bryan Gick, Dalila Giusti, Michael Kiefté, Hugues Nélisse, Roberto Racca, Frank Russo, Mehrzad Salkhordeh.

### 2. President's Report (Jérémie Voix)

Jérémie reported on the recent migration of the Association's websites; the main CAA site theme was refactored (outsourced in India) and a new website running the latest version of PHP and WordPress was ready to be launched (<http://test.caa-aca.ca/>), thanks to the work of webmaster Philip Tsui. As part of an ongoing initiative to enhance the CAA's documentation, a Wiki has been built starting with Michael Kiefté's efforts to revamp the Association's old Operations Manual. Access permissions still need to be finalized but the site was demonstrated live to the directors. Jérémie also reported that the migration of the OJS site from OpenJournalSystem.com to PKP, completed in July 2022, had been working without issues since that time. Migration of scripts (for example, to generate listings of BoD, sustaining subscribers, advertisers, members, etc.) was just re-finalized by Cécile Le Cocq in early April 2023. The budget of \$700 (10h) was entirely allocated to Cécile's work to program the automation system and shall be expensed.

Moving on to new business, Jérémie announced some changes in roles within the Association that had taken place or would be proposed. He informed the Board that Bernard Feder had resigned from the position of Advertising Coordinator on April 28<sup>th</sup> after holding that role continuously since 2014. The Board expressed their gratitude for Bernard's dedicated support. Jérémie indicated that he would take up the role himself, as the new automated Ad Management system simplified the task considerably. He then mentioned that he had been actively seeking a successor as President and that Umberto would be willing to accept the role if someone would take up his duties as Editor-in-Chief. Jérémie proposed that a switch in their respective positions be put to the approval of the CAA members at the next AGM.

Next, Jérémie outlined a proposal to introduce fixed 3-year mandates for the executive officers' positions, the first year being an "elect" role and the last year a "past" role both assisting the current active officer, with executive mandates overlapping each other staggered by one year. In an extensive discussion which dealt with concepts such as having a "nomination committee," incorporating equality, diversity, and inclusiveness (EDI) considerations in the selections, etc., broad consensus emerged for a suggestion made by Umberto to double the proposed mandate duration (with 2 years in "elect," "current" and "past" position) for stronger continuity. It was agreed that procedural details of the proposed executive mandate structure would be elaborated in the period leading to the Fall BoD meeting and reviewed at that event. Frank suggested that when putting forward the scheme at the subsequent AGM, a Gantt chart will be presented showing the mandates of current directors (normally, a maximum of six consecutive one-year terms) to encourage members to consider filling positions as they become vacant. Roberto advised including, as part of the registration process for AWC2023, an option for delegates to express interest in joining the CAA Board.

Jérémie concluded his report by mentioning that the two active CAA Local Chapters for the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and Montreal are now using Google Groups as their communication platform, so people interested in either group can simply register at <https://groups.google.com/u/1/g/caa-gta-local-chapter> for GTA (moderated by Mikk

Tomme) or <https://groups.google.com/u/1/g/caa-montreal-chapter> for Montreal (moderated by Romain Dumoulin and Raphael Duée).

### **3. Treasurer's Report (Dalila Giusti)**

Given that no formal budget presentation or approval takes place at the Spring BoD meeting, Dalila only gave an informational overview of the Association's finances. She characterized them as being in good shape and likely to benefit from the current rise in interest rates. She noted that the bulk of the liquid assets were held in investment funds with fixed maturity terms (3 to 5 years) and guaranteed principal, so that the capital was never at risk; based on past performance the rate of return over the term to maturity could be as high as 30%. Of five GIC investments currently held, the three accounting for most of the invested capital would be maturing between 2024 and 2027. Dalila indicated that the tax return for the 2022 fiscal year had to be filed and was due by June 30, 2023.

### **4. Secretary's Report (Roberto Racca)**

Roberto opened his presentation with a tally of memberships, which showed a precipitous drop in paid-up regular members to a mere 73 – a loss of more than 50 from the number reported at the Fall 2022 Board meeting and of about 70 year-on-year from Spring 2022. The number of student members, at 24, had picked up from a dip the previous Fall to slightly exceed the level of a year earlier, but there had been a disconcerting loss in sustaining subscribers: only 9 had renewed their support out of the 20 that were current as of the Fall 2022 Board meeting. Roberto speculated that while the drop could be attributable to people having become disillusioned with membership because of the erratic publication of the journal in 2022 (due to overwhelming technical challenges), a more likely scenario was that renewals had not taken place because the automated reminder e-mails either had not been received or had been overlooked. He pointed out the revealing fact that among those who had failed to renew were several directors, people strongly vested in the CAA whom only lack of reminders would have caused to lapse (this announcement was met with shocked realization and an immediate flurry of online renewals).

On a similar note, Roberto remarked that about half of the seven advertisers who had placed insertions in the previous year of Canadian Acoustics (the first to feature the online purchase of ad space through the journal site as a form of yearly "subscription") had not done so for the 2023 publication year. Although this might be partly in reaction to the erratic publishing in 2022, he noted, it is more likely reflected lack of reminding (again, missed auto-notification e-mails?) and follow-up regarding the online renewal process. Roberto advised that directly reaching out to the advertisers would be important whether to allay concerns they might have about publication regularity or to simply prompt them on the renewal schedule.

Discussion followed mostly on the matter of potential pitfalls in the membership expiration reminder and the purchase / renewal process via the OJS portal that could have led to the mass drop in paid-up memberships. Roberto noted that various hurdles could be contributing singularly or in combination with the failure of notifications to be seen and acted upon: missed or delayed sending of automated e-mails, interception of the same by increasingly draconian spam filters, and ultimately e-mail fatigue. To help counter the latter, he suggested redesigning the e-mailed notifications with an attractive and recognizable-looking HTML based layout, to make them stand out in inboxes and preview panes. He further noted that the current way of simply linking from the e-mail to the OJS renewals page (which is thwarted by the authentication stage, forcing users to figure out their way ahead) is a prominent cause of frustration, as the regular help requests that he receives attest to, and potential abandonment. He recommended implementing in the notifications a "Renew now" button taking directly to the secure payment portal with applicable user details transferred programmatically. Jérémie indicated that he would explore these options with OJS software developers, as well as investigating possible causes of non-delivery of renewal notifications.

### **5. Awards Report (Victoria Duda)**

Victoria informed the Board that a reminder about the prizes application deadline of April 30 had been posted two weeks before that date on the Association's Twitter and LinkedIn channels and e-mailed to the awards coordinators; however, she noted that an initial typo in the reminder text (later corrected) that indicated May 30 as the deadline might have elicited some confusion. She then provided an update on the status of the various awards requiring

submissions, the majority of which had received at least 2 applications (up to a high of 5) save for the Bregman Student Prize and Northwood Student Prize for which no entries had been received. The Hétu Prize in Acoustics formerly coordinated by the late Alberto Behar still needed a new coordinator to be appointed. The Canada-Wide Science Fair Award in Acoustics remained to be adjudicated, as did the Student Presentation Awards connected with the upcoming annual conference in the autumn. Following an earlier recommendation of the Board the monetary value of most awards had been raised to \$650 from the prior \$500, and the total pool of all prizes amounted to \$11,400. Victoria announced the rekindling of the Directors' Award for best student paper and best regular paper published in Canadian Acoustics over the prior year; she presented the list of qualifying articles and invited as many members of the Board as were able to participate in the scoring process over the coming weeks.

## **6. Editor's Report (Umberto Berardi)**

Umberto informed the Board that all initial production difficulties with the new company now printing Canadian Acoustics had been solved. He said that the main challenge currently facing the editorial team was the small number of submissions received as authors prioritized other journals over Canadian Acoustics; in particular, the journal does not yet seem to be a target for researchers in some disciplines such as audiology or bioacoustics. Umberto provided an update on the status of the current publication year:

- Journal issue vol. 51 - n.1/2023 was ready to be published (4 articles accepted and at the stage of copyediting)
- Journal issue vol. 51 - n.2/2023 would be a regular issue (5 papers already in the second round of review, so no problems were anticipated in having content)
- Journal issue vol. 51 - n.3/2023 would be the AWC proceedings issue – so it was expected that this would be a strong issue as customary for AWC.

Umberto noted that it had been challenging to train members of the editorial board to work with the new production workflow system. He also raised the recurrent theme that there were still gaps in the editorial board, as it had been difficult to recruit managing editors, enlist reviewers, and attract paper submissions in the fields of bioacoustics, physical acoustics / ultrasound, and underwater acoustics.

Umberto also recommended that communications with awards recipients mention the invitation to publish an article on their research in Canadian Acoustics.

## **7. Social Media Editor Report (Romain Dumoulin)**

No formal report was presented; Jérémie briefly updated the Board on behalf of Romain on the following of the Association's channels on LinkedIn and Twitter and steadily ongoing posting of content.

## **8. Past and Upcoming Meetings**

### **a. ISO TC43 Plenary Montréal 2023 (Jérémie Voix, ÉTS)**

Jérémie gave a short summary of the event, which had just taken place a few days before (2-6 May) at the École de technologie supérieure (ÉTS) in Montréal. The event had brought together the members of the TC43 standards subcommittees SC1 (Noise), SC2 (Building Acoustics) and SC3 (Underwater Acoustics) and was well attended by delegates representing TC43 participating countries worldwide.

### **b. AWC 2023: Montréal (Olivier Doutres, ÉTS – Joined Zoom meeting temporarily)**

Olivier reported that all preparations were on track for the conference, to be held 3-6 October 2023 at the Hotel Bonaventure in Montréal. He indicated that 156 abstracts had been received to date, a promising sign for strong attendance and technical content given that the abstract submission window would still be open until 1 July. Discussion with members of the Board focused on how the 10,000\$ student travel subsidies should most effectively be allocated; suggestions were aimed at encouraging participation from students outside of the province or at any rate farther away than the main urban areas of Montréal, Québec, and Sherbrooke.

c. **AWC/ASA 2024: Ottawa** (Joana Rocha and Sebastian Ghinet)

This proposed event would be jointly hosted with ASA in Spring 2024 in Ottawa.

d. **AWC 2025: Vancouver/Banff** (Umberto Berardi / Fitsum Tariku)

Tentative.

**9. Varia**

No new matters were raised.

**10. Next Meeting**

Agreed on a physical meeting on 3 October afternoon in Montréal for Board members attending AWC, with other members joining by video conference.

**11. Motion to Adjourn**

By Jérémie, at ~17:00 PM (EDT).