

Synopsis of the Minutes of the One Hundred and Thirty First Annual General Meeting

The full meeting can be viewed on the [OAA's YouTube Channel](#)

Highlights can be read on the OAA Website by [clicking here](#).

The 131st Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held virtually on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 at 2:00 pm with President Susan Speigel presiding over the meeting as Chair.

She began by introducing the other members of the 2021 OAA Council:

Farida Abu-Bakare	Bill Birdsell
Heather Breeze	Donald Chen
Barry Cline	Gord Erskine
Paul Hastings	Jennifer King
Natasha Krickhan	Kathleen Kurtin
Jeffrey Laberge	Michelle Longlade
Agata Mancini	Lara McKendrick
Elaine Mintz	Deo Paquette
Kristiana Schuhmann	Gaganjot Singh
Andrew Thomson	

Executive Director Kristi Doyle reviewed the procedures for the virtual AGM.

CERTIFICATES OF LONG STANDING

[Certificates of Long Standing were presented](#) to the following members who have reached the milestone of 50 years of membership with the OAA:

Philip H. Carter	Stephen J-S Chang
Malcolm A. Freeman	David R.M. Johnston
David K. Mesbur	Marcus Scoler
James C. Strasman	James M. Wright

A citation for each long standing member was read, noting each honoree's considerable achievements and dedication to the profession. Photos and visuals of the long standing members' choice were displayed for the membership to view.

CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION

[Certificates of Appreciation were presented](#) to the following past Councillors whose terms on Council expired in December of 2019:

Donald Ardiel	Amir Azadeh
Jeremiah Gammond	Milda Miskinyte
Sarah Murray	David Rich

Executive Director Kristi Doyle read the individual citations acknowledging their contribution and thanking them for their dedication to the OAA and the profession.

DEATHS

The Chair read the names of members and associates, listed below, who had passed away since the last AGM, and asked all to observe a moment of silence.

Ronald D. Brandon	Joan Burt
Peter J. Cook	Gerald Andrew Gallacher
Bernard Gillespie	Petre Cornel Ionescu
Mona N. Lamontagne	John B. Love
Brian Raymond McCulloch	Manfred R. Neumann
Renzo Angelo Pillon	Arthur John Russell
Barry W. Sampson	Gerald A. Spring
Ihor Stecura	Shashikrant Washikar
Garry Watchorn	

MINUTES

All members had received a copy of the Synopsis of the Minutes of the 130th Annual General Meeting held on August 6, 2020.

It was moved by Sean Patrick O'Reilly, Lisle and, seconded by Dawn Elizabeth Rasenberg, Centralia,

THAT the synopsis of the minutes of the 130th Meeting held on August 6, 2020 be accepted as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The Chair recalled the motion that had been passed at the 2020 AGM and reported that Council met in September following the AGM to consider it. The motion resolved to remove the mandatory requirement for licensed members to obtain and use a digital seal issued through Notarius.

After review, Council agreed that the mandatory requirement for a digital seal be rescinded. This direction had been reported to the members post haste, and the options for both physical and digital OAA seals, as well as high-resolution seal images, were explained to members. Notwithstanding the above, members can continue to use digital seals at their discretion.

The second part of the AGM motion focused specifically on enforcement of design requirements with building officials. OAA Council addressed this issue early in 2021. A communication with the membership was shared which outlined actions undertaken.

Those actions included education resources for building officials, enforcement postings on the OAA Website, and communicating with Chief Planners and Chief Building Officials regarding professional design requirements.

For building officials, a document articulating the professional design and general review requirements as set out in the *Architects Act* was created to complement the Joint OAA/PEO Bulletin setting out the requirements for professional design with a focus on the information relative to the practice of architecture. The communication integrates the scopes of practice for an Architect along with a Licensed Technologist OAA.

The recent reset of the group Engineers, Architects, and Building Officials (EABO) has also increased opportunity for communication between the OAA and building officials, specifically around professional design requirements. It also provides a direct avenue to share information with building officials, with the support of other allied professions. In 2021, EABO agreed one of its priorities for 2021 would be ensuring authorized use of professional seals and, tangentially, to identify situations of illegal practice by other designers as well as enforcement of professional design and general review requirements under the *Architects Act* and *Professional Engineers Act*.

Additionally, the OAA has added information regarding its enforcement efforts and authority, as well as aggregate statistics, on the OAA Website

and in the e-newsletters. This serves as an additional resource and education tool for building officials, as well as the public and membership.

Finally, over the course of successive years, the OAA President has written to all CBOs and Chief Planners regarding the Act's requirements for engaging an architect at the outset of the site plan process when the building requires regulated professional design services. A similar letter will be sent later this year.

The Chair invited comments or questions with respect to any business that arose from the Minutes of the 2021 meeting.

A member enquired as to the status of the discussions with the Association of Registered Interior Designers of Ontario (ARIDO) and the regulation of interior design.

The Chair responded that work is continuing, however, the government has indicated that its priority at this time must be to focus on issues related to the pandemic.

There were no further comments or questions.

APPOINTMENT OF THE AUDITOR

It was moved by Elektra Vrachas, Toronto, and seconded by Thea Karlavaris, Toronto,

THAT the firm of Grant Thornton LLP Chartered Accountants be appointed as auditors for the Ontario Association of Architects for 2021.

MOTION CARRIED

ELECTION OF HONORARY MEMBERS

The Chair reviewed Section 28 of Regulation 27 under the *Architects Act* relative to the Nomination and Election of Honorary Members. She noted that there were three nominations to be put before the Annual Meeting and a pre-recorded nomination from architect Sheena Sharp was broadcast for [Michael Copas](#).

It was moved by Sheena Sharp, Toronto, and seconded by Stephen Ginsberg, Toronto,

THAT Michael Copas be elected as an Honorary Member.

MOTION CARRIED

The Chair shared a pre-recorded nomination from architect Toon Dreessen for [Wayne Medford](#).

It was moved by Toon Dreessen, Ottawa, and seconded by Vanessa Fong, Toronto,

THAT Wayne Medford be elected as an Honorary Member.

MOTION CARRIED

The Chair shared a pre-recorded nomination from architect Megan Torza for [Marta O'Brien](#).

It was moved by Megan Torza, Toronto, and seconded by Daniel Gaito, Coburg,

THAT Marta O'Brien be elected as an Honorary Member.

MOTION CARRIED

REVIEW OF ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairs invited Immediate Past President Kathleen Kurtin to provide commentary on the 2020 Annual Report posted to the OAA Website on May 14, 2021.

The Immediate Past President [made a few remarks to the membership and presented a summary of activities from 2020](#), which are précised below. (The full remarks may be viewed through the link above or [read here](#).)

“...the report continues to reflect the OAA’s new visual identity, and focuses on the most important information using a pared back approach...I would like to start with the major priorities Council set in 2020 to guide us in achieving our mission.

In 2020, Council continued its commitment to priorities established in 2019, but expanded them to include:

- focus on a comprehensive education continuum
 - member engagement
 - climate stability
- all viewed through a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion.*

Protecting the public interest continues to be at the forefront of our actions, and providing support to the membership so they can continue to uphold their professional duties is a key part of that effort. The OAA quickly recognized the impact of the pandemic and responded with a series of strategies to help us all through this period. The OAA promptly transitioned to working from home, conference was cancelled, and the Continuing Education cycle and

Certificate of Practice fee payment deadlines were extended.

We leveraged online tools, moving a number of services to virtual platforms including the AGM, celebration of our Design Excellence awards, and a new online webinar series. We successfully launched a new visual identity and website... e-newsletters and social media, became even more essential to communicate things like our COVID-19 updates page becoming a crucial site for ensuring relevant updates were shared in a timely manner.

The OAA remains committed to applying the lens of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion across its programs, priorities, and initiatives.

Throughout the year, we received candid, constructive criticism on how to better confront unconscious biases. In response, we hosted free webinars on topics like harassment in the workplace and addressing diversity, along with virtual roundtables on equity, diversity, and inclusion. The OAA held Indigenous cultural competency training while continuing important work on an environmental scan of like initiatives being offered through other organizations. We updated the OAA website to meet Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards and introduced closed captioning for webinars. As well, the OAA changed registration forms and standards for correspondence to remove prefixes and include gender binary language. The goal has remained to ensure Ontario’s diverse voices are represented in the profession.

...The OAA remains vigilant in its efforts to promote climate stability and has been collaborating with experts in the field, integrating sustainability criteria into its awards programs and other initiatives, and adding its voice to the call for climate action.

Our renewed and refreshed OAA Headquarters is more than offices and meeting spaces—it is the public and physical embodiment of an architect's skill and what is achievable in sustainable design. For OAA members, it is also your space, and I look forward to inviting you all to our grand public opening, once we're safely able to do so.

The OAA continued to focus on expanding knowledge of and within the profession in 2020. Our comprehensive education approach ensures students have the information they need to become great architects, provides resources to members to augment their skills, and expands outreach efforts to build public awareness... Our annual Queen's

Park Picks event, celebrating and showcasing treasured architectural landmarks nominated by MPPs from across Ontario, was reimagined as an online exhibition which garnered unprecedented public, media, and political attention...

We need to embrace the learnings from this past year and continue to challenge our profession to not only respond to the exponential change that is coming, but to anticipate that change and lead the way. Change is difficult and often messy, sometimes painful, as is the design process. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the membership as president for the past two years. And I'm confident the OAA is in good hands and able to meet the challenge."

The Chair invited comments or questions with respect to 2020 Annual Report.

There were no further comments or questions.

PRESENTATION OF 2020 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT AND 2021 FINANCIAL OUTLOOK BY THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND TREASURER

The Chair reported on the [2020 Financial Statements](#) as past Senior Vice President and Treasurer.

The Chair presented the members with the Auditors' Report, which was read into the official transcript confirming that the financial statements represented fairly the financial position of the OAA as at November 30, 2020. The President also reported on a number of highlights from the 2020 financial statements, including the fact OAA finances were well-managed and positioned to address unforeseen situations like the pandemic. Effort has been made to address members' challenges by extending fee deadlines and offering relief under policies addressing financial hardship and leave of absence.

The Chair highlighted the following key items from the 2020 financial statements:

- Since the licensing exam was deferred to 2021, fees collected to date will be accounted for in 2021;
- Conference was cancelled, resulting in no revenue generated for 2020 (with expenses reduced accordingly);
- Continuing Education revenue increased significantly as a result of the launch of biweekly webinar series;
- In-house education offerings were

cancelled, however the Admission Course continued to be offered online;

- Committee, Council, and direct program expenses significantly decreased as a result of the switch to virtual platforms; and
- OAA membership continues to grow.

For 2020, members' equity was reported at \$42.5 million, \$31 million of it held in Pro-Demnity Insurance Company. The remaining funds are held in the major capital reserve, operating reserve, and legal reserve. Unrestricted Members' Equity for 2020 is \$2.9 million which may be used as a contingency to address unbudgeted expenditures and unanticipated revenue fluctuations.

A lump sum payment of \$270,000 was made on the OAA mortgage used to finance the recent OAA Headquarters renew and refresh.

In summary, it was reported that the OAA is structurally and financially well-established, leaving the OAA well-positioned for the future.

The Chair invited questions from the members. There were no comments posted online regarding the 2020 Annual report.

The Chair invited the Senior Vice President and Treasurer, Agata Mancini to present the [2021 Financial outlook](#).

Mancini reported that finances for 2021 to date are tracking normally. Key highlights included:

- It is expected that there will be no in-person events for the year which will result in savings under travel, meals, and accommodations;
- No membership fee increases were budgeted this year due to the pandemic; and
- A deficit is anticipated for this year's virtual Conference, given the unknowns of hosting the virtual conference and in order to make it optimally accessible for all members.

Mancini reported changes by the Budget Committee in addressing allocation of funds to special initiatives. The Council Policy Contingency budget was increased to \$290,000 to address initiatives brought forward by certain committees as opposed to forecasting anticipated projects in the next fiscal year.

The current mortgage has been moved to CIBC, resulting in a lower interest rate, and will result in a savings of \$200,000 over the next five years.

The Chair thanked the Senior Vice President and Treasurer and invited comments or questions with respect to the 2021 Financial Outlook.

There were no further comments or questions.

PRO-DEMUNITY INSURANCE COMPANY

[The Chair welcomed Pro-Demnity Insurance Company Chair](#) Joanne McCallum, who made a presentation to the membership, which highlighted the activities and performance for the past year of Pro-Demnity.

McCallum reported on Pro-Demnity's activities for 2020 and provided an update on 2021 to date. Over the past year, in addition to supporting the members through Pro-Demnity's claims services, risk advice, and COVID-19 special e-bulletins, there were other initiatives that were highlighted, including:

- Working to maintain financially stable operations while supporting practices by waiver of admin fee, increased payment options, and suspension of cancellation for non-payment;
- Upgrading processes, technology, skills, and capacity to fortify the ability to serve the members now and in the future;
- Setting strategic direction by defining some growth opportunities and confirming commitment to the members; and
- Taking its refined purpose, ambition, and values, undertook the creation of a client-centric organization that places architectural practice at the centre and ensures staff has the tools it needs to support the members.

McCallum noted several key financial highlights:

- A slight increase from 2019 to 1,500 clients;
- Claims costs totalled \$14 million, which was more than budgeted—70% was used for defending members and 30% was paying out damages and settlements;
- Overall profit for 2020 was \$2 million, and increase from 2019 due to decreased costs, and a decline in reported claims.

It was reported by McCallum that Pro-Demnity's future plans include expansion of its Risk Education and Risk Services offered. As a first step, members have been asked to complete a survey on its website. Further information on Pro-Demnity's Board and Management Team may be found on [its website](#).

The President thanked the Chair of the Pro-Demnity Board for the presentation.

ADDRESS BY 2021 OAA PRESIDENT SUSAN SPEIGEL

OAA President Susan Speigel presented her address to the 131st Annual General Meeting of the Association.

The full President's address may be [viewed here](#) or [read here](#).

Following her address, the President called for comments and questions from the membership. It was noted that should there be questions not answered within the time frame of the meeting, responses will be prepared in a post-meeting report for the members.

A member posted a question on the issue of the pandemic and Long Term Care facilities and what efforts the OAA is undertaking to protect the public and vulnerable residents by advocating better practices and design standards.

The President responded that the OAA took the lead by holding a Long Term Care Roundtable with Ontario firms that have experience in this type of work. The feedback has been consolidated and additional research was also undertaken. Work is being undertaken to draft a submission of recommendations to the government.

A member enquired with respect to the amount of the mortgage remaining on the OAA Headquarters building.

The Senior Vice President and Treasurer responded that the latest value of the mortgage stands at \$4.5 million.

There was a question from a member regarding meetings and events in the future and how OAA intends to utilize technology in that aspect as a more sustainable approach.

The President responded that though the future of the pandemic is somewhat unknown, it is expected that the OAA will undertake a more hybrid approach to its meetings and events. The success of the Continuing Education webinars and other online events have received positive feedback to date.

A member requested an update on the Intern Architect title change discussion.

The President responded that the feedback from the survey in May 2020 was recently presented to Council through the Interns Committee. Council determined that based on the responses received, additional research needs to be done before any decisions are made. Council further determined that there is a need to research and understand further the deeper challenges and issues interns are facing.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Gordon Hunt, Toronto and seconded by Paula Louise Hamilton, Puslinch,

THAT the 131st Annual General Meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED