

## Society Board Meeting Report

**At the virtual meeting of the Board of Directors on June 25, 2020 the following decisions and reports were made:**

### **Report from the Chair**

The Chair reviewed her report which, was provided in the meeting package. She noted she had received positive feedback regarding the OSPE Annual General Meeting (AGM) and recommended including online aspects for future events. She added there is still confusion regarding the change to the nomination process and emphasized the need to have a transparent process. V. Mueller noted the Board Development and Strategic Planning (BDSP) Committee will be meeting with governance expert Jack Shand over the summer to develop a transparent process for the Nominations Committee to follow.

The COVID-19 Economic Recovery Working Group was developed with individuals from each of OSPE's advocacy task forces. The working group met regularly over May and June to implement a three phased approach focusing on immediate, short- and long-term recommendations. They will be developing a third letter on long term recommendations to be distributed in the fall. Topics planned for this letter include the ring of fire, building code, intellectual property, flood prevention and small modular reactors. Her report included a timeline of events starting in 2012 regarding mandatory professional development. There is a communications plan to inform OSPE members about the recommendations made to government. This plan included emails and blogs to members. She also recommends a webinar series for mass engagement of engineers. She has asked committee and task force chairs to consider hosting one-hour sessions, open to members, to discuss initiatives and subjects of interest.

With respect to the Joint Relations Committee (JRC), she noted no movement by PEO on Continuing Professional Development (CPD). OSPE attended the JRC meeting requested by PEO following the May 6<sup>th</sup> letter. During this meeting, OSPE requested a joint communication be sent out to all PEO and OSPE members stating OSPE and PEO are working together in the best interest in the profession. To date, no response has been received regarding the draft letter OSPE provided. It was confirmed that the PEO JRC representatives are Marisa Sterling, Luc Roberge, Darla Campbell, Christian Bellini and Johnny Zuccon.

D. Carnegie asked if there were opportunities to send a delegation to PEO Council to make the discussion regarding CPD more visible. R. Aimey noted Council has in camera sessions where we could not participate; however, OSPE is planning a virtual town hall for its members. At this town hall the Chair will present the recommendations and open the floor to questions and comments from our members. T. Murad agreed with D. Carnegie, suggesting our points with respect to CPD should be sent to Council in a letter. T. Murad noted that the problem began because OSPE went straight to the government, and therefore were seen as troublemakers. As professionals, we should go to the cause of the problem, the Council, and explain that we have exhausted other means and are now approaching Council with our concerns. He suggested we should request meetings with Council to elaborate on our findings and emphasized that letters should continue to be sent until a reasonable response is received. L. Yu and R. Aimey agreed that sending a letter to council is a good idea. D. Carnegie suggested gathering data and evidence from other jurisdictions to show the benefits of CPD.

M. Frayne brought forward a concern regarding developing competency standards with the Ontario Engineering Academy (OEA). R. Aimey agreed not to set new standards, but if OSPE were to develop a micro-credential, it would need to meet the same high standard set by other jurisdictions. She added the individuals on the OEA Steering Committee will have to ensure the investment in PD meets the standards to ensure value moving forward. T. Murad clarified that as long as we don't offer a certification, we are able to determine our own quality.

A. Gkalimani noted she agreed with the communications plan, however had concern regarding limiting it to our membership. She suggested in order to gain more members, we need to explain ourselves to a broader audience. R. Aimey explained that the first town hall will be members only, so that their views are heard. A non-member town hall will also take place, but with a focus on what OSPE is and what we offer.

A. Wojtyla senses a lack of accountability from PEO on the JRC. Their new members don't progress each year. R. Aimey noted PEO is afraid of losing members because a majority of license holders are not practicing engineers; therefore, if they are required to do professional development, they may choose to not renew their licence. S. Perruzza provided some history stating OSPE has been advocating for CPD since 2009. PEO had committed to implementing mandatory CPD as part of their submission to the Elliot Lake inquiry, and the commissioner included it in his report suggesting it be put into place by April 2016. When the government asked PEO why PEAK was voluntary, they stated they didn't have the regulatory authority to make it mandatory. When the Act was revised, it was included that PEO could set up a CPD program. S. Perruzza stated the council meeting conversation then discussed the fact that 2/3 of PEO license holders are non-practising and implementing CPD would result in lost revenue. Council then determined the decision would have to go to referendum, however this demonstrates PEO is beholden to its membership and not to public safety. S. Perruzza encourages OSPE to stand up and be vocal as we have been trying to affect change quietly and it isn't working.

J. Chisholm noted there is a great deal of tension with PEO right now, so it will be difficult to convince them of the importance of CPD. He cautioned fighting with them as they could sever their relationship with us and suggested allowing them to work through it themselves. T. Murad agreed OSPE has presented these topics to JRC, however it was for information only. The request needs to be a specific call for action. He suggested making a direct ask, and having it recorded. He is concerned OSPE's energy and resources are being drained by this topic instead of focusing on the problem of our declining membership.

### **Report from the CEO**

The CEO, S. Perruzza, provided a written report that was included in the board package, highlighting operational, marketing and advocacy updates. He noted that M. Woodhouse will be off recovering indefinitely, and that Tess O'Mara has resigned her position in order to focus on her family during the pandemic. He added that COVID-19 has significantly impacted OSPE's in-person events. Membership has decreased slightly as members have lost jobs, however, OSPE is offering a 3-month deferral. Regarding advocacy, S. Perruzza noted areas of focus include safety guidelines, COVID-19 economic recovery working group and responding to government consultations. He noted the government is looking for red tape reduction and more cost-effective options, which has the potential to take jobs away from engineers. Marketing has increased traffic to the website and social media accounts. The job board has experienced a decline for a number of years and has now been transitioned to a new platform. A virtual Engineering Employment Event (E3) has been planned and the Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Forum has also been converted to a virtual event. The provincial government has stopped funding new projects, but the federal governments is continuing, so OSPE has shifted focus to be federally aligned.

OSPE is conducting research with Halmyre and the first rounds of interviews have been completed. We have asked about regulatory and insurance requirements, university curriculum, cost of training and outsourcing engineering labour globally.

The Construction and Design Alliance of Ontario (CDAO) has launched an insurance working group including representatives from OSPE, Consulting Engineers Ontario, Ontario Association of Architects, General Contractors Association and Ontario Electrical League. The first meeting also had 4 insurance companies attend and identified the following issues causing a spike in insurance: 1) contract language, 2) municipalities requiring additional insurance and 3) increased number of claims due to weather, materials and design. When the weather and materials claims are investigated, it is due to designers using the wrong materials or the buildings were not designed to code. The conversation forced an analysis of claims and the underlying causes.

R. Clifton asked whether staff are needed back in the physical office yet. He suggested that the team continue working from home until there is a vaccine. S. Perruzza noted that there is concern regarding using transit to commute into the office and the unnecessary exposure that some staff would experience. He added a return to office plan is being put into place but would not happen before September. Protocols such as staggered days are being considered as well. R. Clifton suggested if people are being effective working from home, that there should not be a rush to reopen the office. S. Perruzza noted that he would inform the Board prior to any decision is made to return to the office.

D. Carnegie asked for clarity regarding a decline in membership in 2018. S. Perruzza noted that based on a recommendation from the Auditors, the way that suspended and lapsed members were reported needed to be changed. He also identified an error in the reporting on the marketing update which should show a decrease in the age category 55-64.

A. Wojtyla questioned what the difference was between Intern and Student memberships. It was explained that an Intern member is an individual enrolled in PEO's Engineering Intern (EIT) program and students are enrolled in a University program. Intern memberships are paid, Student memberships are free. B. Shukla clarified that the demographic information has been obtained from Google Analytics regarding age and gender. At this time, he has not seen other gender options.

R. Aimey asked for further information on the new Career Centre stating some companies list jobs for positions that don't exist. She also asked if there were any statistics on successes using our events and platforms. S. Perruzza noted that firms will advertise for jobs when they are in the bidding process, however, do not make the hires when the contract isn't won. A. Wojtyla asked for clarity regarding the number of jobs posted. B. Shukla noted the new platform includes a sales team who does their own outreach. The system also pulls jobs from other boards to display on our site. 40% of the 1076 ads are paid. Statistics regarding how long posting are up or how many people get hired aren't currently available. One of the issues is depending on employers to report back to us with respect to hires. Our main differentiator is our targeted group, the engineering community. N. Burgwin noted a trend in membership declining over the last two months and asked whether a calculation of expected decrease due to COVID-19 had been done. B. Shukla noted that once June numbers have been inputted, he can better see the rate of decline and will put together a forecast estimate for the Audit and Finance Committee. He added a number of members are delaying instead of cancelling.

T. Murad asked for clarification regarding the strategic plan and membership. S. Perruzza explained the work being done by Halmyre is ongoing. The most recent interview research is identifying key issues – what is important to members and non-members. This research will assist in developing key messaging and value proposition. T. Murad felt that this plan was a marketing plan and is not focused on increasing membership. He suggested having key performance indicators (KPI) as accountability is needed. He emphasized that the membership problem should be our focus.

### **Report from the Treasurer**

The Treasurer, R. Clifton reviewed the report which, was provided in the meeting package. He added that the new Audit and Finance Committee held their first meeting with D. Carnegie, M. Frayne and N. Burgwin. It was noted that Edna Giray, Accountant would step up to help cover the gap left by Mark Woodhouse's absence, as well as contracting BDO bookkeeping services for additional support. The summary chart was discussed, and the Treasurer noted no concerns.

A report regarding the How to Change the World (HtCtW) was provided in the meeting materials which explains the \$135,000 loss. The concern regarding this event was brought forward at the September 2019 Board meeting. The expectation was to sell to students and young professionals. Companies initially showed interest, however ended up resisting sending staff offsite for 2.5 days. Feedback from those attending the event was very positive. The partnership with HtCtW did not work well as they took on little risk. R. Aimey was disappointed to hear of the loss and thought more emphasis on the business of running the event and contracts in place to protect OSPE and minimize risk was needed. R. Clifton noted this was the first event that ran a loss and typically staff have done well to control expenses when required. B. Shukla noted he spoke to legal regarding recouping costs, however the legal fees would not make it worthwhile. A new process has now been put into place to minimize risk for future events. T. Murad asked for more explanation as the provided finances are not enough. He suggested a cost analysis needed to be done, with what resources and contractual obligations were required. He suggested having a pre-event/initiative study as to what we are expecting of the event. A feasibility study should have been done and KPI set. He questioned whether this event had an impact on membership or not. He suggested if companies don't want to invest in training their young professionals, it should be documented for the future. He requested a root cost analysis report including why did this happened and who is responsible.

### **Initial 2021 Draft Budget Review**

R. Clifton noted the Audit and Finance Committee reviewed the draft 2021 Budget, which was also included in the meeting package. He noted the committee expressed concern regarding Ontario Engineers Academy (OEA) expenses. It was agreed that the OEA budget discussion would take place during the Steering Committee section of the Agenda.

R. Clifton highlighted concern regarding events for 2020 based on COVID-19 concerns. The EDI event had been changed to virtual for 2020. B. Shukla explained the OPEA Gala Advisory Committee recommended canceling the gala this year and doing a double event next year instead. The concern regarding this plan is the event will be too long. OSPE has determine we will not have face-to-face events for the remainder of 2020 and will continue to run virtual events instead. We are waiting to hear back from PEO with regards to how they would like to proceed.

N. Burgwin suggested that the membership revenue be more conservative due to the unknown effects of COVID-19. He also asked whether affinity revenues will also be impacted by COVID-19. B. Shukla has spoken to The Personal and feels comfortable with the projection.

M. Frayne suggested doing a scenario analysis on professional development/career services revenues and expenses if the revenues aren't as high. B. Shukla noted the career services revenue has been decreased assuming in-person events may not be taking place in 2021.

A revised budget will be presented again at the September Board meeting for review.

### **Report from the Membership Advisory Committee**

B. Shukla reviewed the membership report which, was provided in the meeting package. He noted a focus on retention, including phone calls to those who have recently expired. An acquisition campaign to 50,000 individuals was mailed and emailed in January. That list should not be reused for six to eight months. Ongoing win back campaigns targeting those suspended more than 61

days has been done via Voice Logic, a phone call system, every 2 months. Most lapsed members indicate they have forgotten to renew and therefore, when we call to follow up, they will often renew. Facebook and Twitter are being used for marketing, as well as using other websites to display our advertisements.

The work being done with Halmyre has shown an increase in usage of the website, increase of views on the blog and increase in social media interactions. Halmyre has helped with engagement but not membership acquisition. The focus now will be on pocketbook issues, reasons to join OSPE and what individual engineers care about. OSPE converts approximately 10% of student members to full paying members, typically these individuals are on the path to licensure. Hub engagement should increase this conversion rate. R. Clifton noted his disappointment that Halmyre is not focused on acquisition and believes the focus should be on getting students early, getting Professional Engineers and informing engineering graduates. T. Murad suggested that acquisition needs to talk to the engineer's mentality and personality type and demographics should be involved. If OSPE engages with more people and listens to them, then we can learn how to talk to engineers.

The Membership Advisory Committee (MAC) will be meeting before September and development of an acquisition plan will be added to their agenda. Staff will also create a list of what efforts have been done in the past. A report will be provided at the September Board meeting. Individuals have not joined OSPE in the past because they have fellowship through the PEO Chapters, they are not a practising P.Eng. or they are frugal and want the benefits without paying. OSPE needs a new message, so the first step was to update the website, which was done at the end of 2019. The next step is to deliver key messages relevant to engineers. A. Wojtyla noted her network has had negative interactions with PEO, and therefore come to OSPE for support. This support needs to be promoted. T. Murad noted S. Perruzza is a charismatic CEO working with many groups; however, he needs to focus on encouraging OSPE membership within his alliances.

B. Shukla noted young professionals (YP) are asking for events and networking. It was suggested to do a YP Series of workshops including topics of negotiation, communication and money management. Hubs had to cancel in-person events due to COVID-19 but will be moving to virtual events. Staff are currently working on developing a governance structure for the Hubs, which will be provided to the Board for approval in September. D. Carnegie noted the Kingston Chapter views the Hub as a threat. S. Tessier also added that the Sudbury Chapter is having difficulty with engagement.

### **Ontario Engineers Academy (OEA) Update**

B. Shukla noted the Academy was having difficulty getting people to sign up for new courses. Therefore, OSPE offered the courses for free in order to collect feedback from attendees. Free introductory webinars are also being offered to entice people to sign up and pay for the full course. As all courses are now online, OSPE is focused on finding the best instructors, including those from out of the country. S. Perruzza noted that two Deans have reached out with possible opportunities however, industry will not pay as they don't want to take staff away from work. The OEA aims to address a skills gap. It was asked whether OSPE is offering courses people aren't interested in, or if this is an effect of COVID-19. Staff noted people aren't willing to sign up for professional development without their employers paying for it. Currently, industry isn't paying for any extra expenses. J. James emphasized the need for recognition and suggested partnering with companies who could provide jobs to those who complete the program. The direction of the OEA will be discussed by the Steering Committee, who will report back in September.

### **Strategy Discussion**

T. Murad, Chair of the Board Development and Strategic Planning (BDSF) Committee reviewed the risk registrar which was provided in the meeting package. This risk heat map contains previously identified areas of risk. He noted the BDSF will review this document over the summer, including considering COVID-19 risks. An update will be provided at the next Board meeting.

## **PEO Discussion**

S. Perruzza provided some history regarding the CPD and liability issue with PEO. He noted Engineers Canada had not been renewed by the Washington Accord and have been placed on a 2-year probation. This is due to the lack of national CPD and for not recognizing other accreditation systems. He noted a lot of PEO Councillors support OSPE and CPD but are very concerned regarding trusteeship. Consulting Engineers Ontario (CEO) have been moving away from PEO and will be changing their name to the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies. J. Chisholm noted the liability issue is not one he is hearing concern about within his network and is concerned with spending time on one issue. He stated the CPD process takes time and that PEO has already taken the first step in implementing the Practice Evaluation and Knowledge (PEAK) program. He recommends giving PEO space and suggested returning to the joint messaging of the “both sides of the same coin” campaign. R. Aimey clarified the insurance issue is not affecting the average engineers, but it is affecting business owners. She also stated that PEO has already been given enough time for CPD. T. Murad stated OSPE didn’t approach PEO diplomatically and are over representing ourselves as the voice of engineers. He stated he struggles with the way the letter was handled as it was changed after the working group reviewed it and the withdrawal was delayed. He emphasized the need to act civilized, with knowledge and trust, and not with shock and awe.

R. Aimey noted the industrial exemption is a potential topic to be covered in the Fall long term recommendation letter to government. S. Perruzza provided a brief history of the topic noting in manufacturing you don’t need to have a license to do engineering work, but it needs to be reviewed by a professional engineer. PEO went to the government stating a number of people were being killed by this unsafe work and therefore a bill was passed to remove the industrial exemption. However, S. Perruzza produced a report including statistics showing Ontario’s manufacturing sector being the safest in Canada. PEO did not respond to the report showing the safety statistics, and the act which, removed the industrial exemption was revoked.

In August of 2014 at the JRC, PEO members wanted OSPE’s support. S. Tessier noted she was on OSPE’s Board at that time, and it was not a battle PEO would win as they needed better data. Discussion ensued with regards to whether OSPE should get involved and agreed that OSPE will not include it on the long-term action letter.

## **Advocacy Committee/Task Forces: Updates**

### **Energy**

Emily Thorn-Corthay, Chair of the Energy Task Force, joined the call to provide an update to the Board on Task Force initiatives. She noted the Task Force is currently full, with 12 members and 8 subject matter experts (SME). Their first initiative regarding curtailed energy is working with Milton Hydro to run a pilot project; however, the program is awaiting approval from the Energy Board. She noted it has been frustrating trying to get a meeting with the Minister of Energy, however the meeting is required as our recommendations require legislative change. The Task Force has been sharing their findings on the website, blog, social media and in letters to the government. The second Task Force initiative is a report on clean thermal energy and should be released this fall. The third initiative’s content on electrical and thermal storage is complete and policy recommendations are being developed.

### **Environment**

D. Carnegie noted he has developed a skills matrix in order to identify current expertise on the Task Force. He noted a challenge with the groups plastics initiative as members are not engaged. He has given the group a break for the summer and has asked them to spend the time to develop white papers on a topic they are passionate about. Based on the content created topics that would get government traction can be further developed.

## **Infrastructure**

M. Frayne provided an update on the Infrastructure Task Force noting he is a new Chair. The group is currently only focused on one initiative regarding developing guidelines for sustainable infrastructure. It was suggested the group could also focus on flooding and stormwater. He also suggested using a panel discussion to connect with municipalities.

## **Research and Innovation**

N. Burgwin noted he is the new Chair, and past Chair L. Yu, has remained on the Task Force. He noted their initiatives focus on autonomous aircrafts and drones, data, artificial intelligence (AI) and 5G. The aerospace track held a successful event in March and a second publication will be released. The data track SME will be joining the Task Force as a member and will produce a statement paper and potentially a webinar. The AI track is trying to summarize the impact on industry and will eventually merge with the data track. The 5G track is being led by a SME from Telus and the initiative is in its early planning phase. He emphasized the need to create a database on what type of expertise our members have.

## **Diversity and Inclusion**

A. Wojtyla noted the Task Force has three subgroups focused on mental health, leadership and training. The mental health group has held a successful webinar and received great feedback. Due to webinar burn out, they are now planning video and group sessions. The leadership group is developing a web series as a toolkit and will include a buddy system. The training group will focus on the DiversifySTEM app and how to prepare microlessons. She noted the EDI forum will be held virtually and the Task Force is assisting in its planning. The Task Force was approached by the OPEA Gala Committee for feedback on its design elements. A. Wojtyla added the Task Force has discussed Black Lives Matter and are looking to partner with other organizations to help educate on systematic racism and language.

## **Human Resources Committee**

According to the OSPE bylaws the Board needs to appoint two Board members to the Human Resources Committee and the Society's President and Chair is the Chair of this committee. L. Yu and S. Tessier volunteered for the two positions.

## **Nominations Committee**

The Society's bylaws state that there shall be a Nominations Committee, consisting of a director who is not up for re-election, who shall be the Chair of this Committee. A. Gkalimani volunteered for this position.

## **Board Development & Strategic Planning Committee**

The Board Development & Strategic Planning Committee's terms of reference notes that the Vice Chair of the organization will Chair this committee and that the committee will include the Past Chair, and two other members will be appointed. J. James and M. Frayne volunteered for these positions.

## **NEMOSC: Director Appointment**

OSPE is invited to appoint a representative to the National Engineering Month Ontario Steering Committee. R. Aimey volunteered for this position.

## **Ontario Engineering Academy (OEA) Steering Committee**

Staff are responsible for the operations of the OEA; however, Board overview of strategy is required. It is recommended this committee meet once a month and report back to the Board. A typo was corrected in the terms of reference, goal #2 – from 'yrawing' to 'training'. The OSPE Board of Directors approved the creation of the Ontario Engineering Academy Steering Committee.

The OSPE Board of Directors approves the Ontario Engineering Academy Steering Committee terms of reference as amended.

### **OSPE President's Awards**

The President's Award had minimal nominations in 2019 and therefore, the process has been reviewed to be more transparent and robust. Nominees will now be reviewed using a matrix by the Membership Advisory Committee before being approved by the Board. The OSPE Board of Directors approve the revised criteria and evaluation matrix for the OSPE President's Award.

### **Committee/Task Force: Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference for advocacy committees and task forces has been revised to add student/young professional members and to mandate nominating for the OSPE President's Awards. It was discussed to also add a cap on terms for members and agreed that after completing two terms (3 years per term), a member must be absent for one year before returning. The OSPE Board of Directors approve the revisions to the Advocacy Committee/Task Force terms of reference as amended.

### **Membership Advisory Committee (MAC): Terms of Reference**

R. Aimey reviewed the changes including adding the responsibility of reviewing the President's Award nominees. It was clarified that the MAC would review and evaluate the President's Award nominees based on the criteria previously approved by the Board. MAC will then make their recommendation to the Board to select the winner(s). The Board of Directors approve the revised terms of reference for the Membership Advisory Committee.

### **OSPE Fee Schedule**

B. Shukla noted OSPE typically updates the Fee Schedule every 3 years and the last one was done in 2015. Creating this working group would allow OSPE to research what small-medium size companies need. D. Carnegie noted a decrease in fees and that the trend is not sustainable. The OSPE Board of Directors approves the creation of a Fee Schedule Working Group with the attached Terms of Reference.

### **Consent Agenda**

The consent agenda and supporting materials were received by the Board.

### **Other Items**

J. James suggested using a podcast as an engagement tool. B. Shukla agreed that it would fit within the current ENGtalks initiative being developed that would have members produce videos on topics of interest. R. Aimey suggested the topic of why sidewalk labs failed would be an interesting webinar topic.

### **Directors' Questions**

M. Frayne questioned what steps were needed to make OSPE membership mandatory for licensed engineers. V. Mueller noted it would be brought back to the BDSP Committee for further discussion. She added most membership bodies are not mandatory.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held virtually on Thursday, September 24, 2020.

### **In Camera**

The Board moved in camera and A. Wojtyla will act as secretary.