

Society Board Meeting Report

At the virtual meeting of the Board of Directors on December 3, 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 that OSPE's Strategic plan of Lead, Care and Unite has positioned us well for the pandemic. To be successful we need to anticipate the insights of engineering graduates and be flexible to pivot in order to meet the needs of our membership.

She emphasized that OSPE is a member services, advocacy and event management organization. Membership involves both member acquisition and member engagement, but they have a different set of targeted activities.

She reported that at the last meeting of the Joint Relations Committee (JRC), Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO) did not indicate any forward movement regarding implementing continued professional development (CPD). She reviewed her five main reasons why mandatory CPD is relevant:

1. To keep up with professional standards
2. To ensure thriving talent in Ontario
3. To comply with the Elliot Lake report and Cayton review
4. To allow Canada to continue participating internationally
5. Other occupations who have implemented CPD may seek practice rights

Next steps will be discussed during the strategy session of the Board meeting.

She concluded her report noting that the Nominations and Elections package will be mailed to members with the December issue of The Voice magazine.

Report from the CEO

The CEO, S. Perruzza, provided a written report that was included in the board package, highlighting operational, membership and advocacy updates. He noted the physical office remains closed and will likely remain closed until the Spring. Carolyn Skinner, Manager of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs will be returning from her maternity leave on January 4, 2021.

He reviewed the recent membership numbers noting a decline in paid membership by 3.7%. The Canadian Society of Association Executives (CSAE) has released data stating that the average for association membership loss is currently 7-10%. A significant loss for student memberships as there hasn't been any in person engagement.

Advocacy will be separated into two agendas: government relations (GR) advocacy and member advocacy. GR will focus on engineers' impact on the economy, employment/reskilling, and innovation. Member advocacy will be focused on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), the importance of CPD, the relevancy/value of a P.Eng. licence, salary pressures, and the engineering curriculum.

He noted that despite lower engagement with Hubs due to Covid-19, they have 42 current ambassadors and have held 18 events. He suspects that schools will return to normal operation in

September 2021 and the program plans to grow by 5-8 schools in 2022. He added that the ENGtalk program will launch in December and continue to release new videos regularly.

He presented an updated operational plan, which is based on the strategic plan, highlighting what has been accomplished. Items that are crossed out indicate objectives have been completed, red indicates they have been delayed/revised. As the budget is revised, more items will be added. D. Carnegie asked to include key performance indicators (KPI) instead of only striking off the accomplishments. The CEO noted a lot of the plan focuses on engagement, which is hard to measure. He noted they expect it to link to membership growth in Year 3 as people will join after they experience OSPE activities. Halmyre is currently working on the messaging for the right value proposition.

The CEO added that he has spoken to the Attorney General following the Attorney General's meeting with PEO. He expressed disappointment in the Attorney General's light approach and provided information from the PEO Council package indicating a \$3.5 million surplus next year as well as \$900,000 allocated to Chapters. The Attorney General will be meeting with PEO again in January, and S. Perruzza is preparing a briefing note for him. He noted that he has ongoing conversations with J. Zuccon, PEO Registrar, where he expresses OSPE's priorities for PEO. Those priorities include CPD, PEO's withdrawal from the Ontario Professional Engineers Awards (OPEA), ending the Government Liaison Program (GLP), and initiating discussion regarding the Chapters. R. Aimey added that these items have been an ongoing discussion over the last two years.

The CEO met with the new CEO of the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists (OACETT), Cheryl Farrow. She is currently meeting with key stakeholders. The organization is doing research into remaining a certifying body versus seeking practice rights to be a regulatory body. OSPE works with OACETT on Engineering Employment Events (E3) and National Engineering Month (NEM).

A. Wojtyla asked how government funded programs are evaluated prior to application. The CEO noted OSPE's Senior Research Officer, Lee Weissling, reviews funding opportunities to determine if they relate to the work that is being done by the OSPE Task Forces. OSPE also has good partnerships with Universities who reach out for us to collaborate with them. OSPE will also apply for funding if the work benefits or interests its members, such as the labour market reports. Revenue is not generated by government funded projects; however, some administrative costs are offset. Some programs are required to be self-sufficient or funded by OSPE following the funding, such as the DiversifySTEM app. By continuing to run programs after the funding has ended, OSPE is more likely to receive future funding.

Report from the Treasurer

The Treasurer, R. Clifton reviewed the summary report as of September 30, 2020, which was provided in the meeting package. The healthy balance sheet shows a movement of cash to the investment account. The Audit and Finance Committee has added additional columns to the reports in order to review month-to-month changes. The Treasurer reviewed the statement of operations noting the year-to-date actuals versus forecast. He also reviewed the annual forecast noting that the forecasted deficit is less than what was reported as of September 30 due to the EDI event. The Treasurer acknowledged the staff for their discipline in controlling expenses and executing in difficult times.

2021 Budget Pivot Review

The Treasurer reviewed the Budget Pivot provided in the meeting package noting we have exceeded and passed expectations. Affinity revenue, EDI Advantage revenue and membership revenue have all increased. In October, the forecast was a deficit of \$190,000, but is now expected to come in at \$70,000.

The reported numbers do not include funds received from the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) program. OSPE is also applying for additional funding for the balance of the year. The Treasurer encouraged the Board to consider investing aggressively in order to rebound quickly in the New Year.

Strategy Discussion

Halmyre & DIG Insights: Next Steps

The DIG Insights report was included in the meeting package and includes previous feedback through surveys from members and non-members. D. Carnegie noted that the report discovers what members want; however, questioned whether OSPE is able to meet those needs. The CEO added that OSPE wants to create a space for members to solve problems themselves by creating engagement opportunities and platforms. N. Burgwin noted that we are very tied to the P.Eng. designation, however professionals are the largest declining segment. He added we have seen the greatest increase in associate members, those who have graduated with an engineering degree. He suggested our connection to the designation could be a deterrent for some. The Chair suggested the loss of Professionals could be due to a lack of offerings for them as a lot of our offerings are aimed at attaining your licence. S. Tessier noted that more inspiring communication to elevate the profession could be used. R. Clifton suggested looking into the messaging and themes from the iron ring ceremonies. It was suggested that a bigger sample size is needed, and to connect to more engineering graduates. The Chair noted previous attempts to collaborate with the Iron Ring ceremonies have been rejected and suggested brainstorming areas of commonality in engineering that could be used to get the engineering community together.

Member/Non-Member Communication

The meeting package included a key messages document, which is a living document updated annually. It was clarified that STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) is used as an industry standard. N. Burgwin noted that there will be different value propositions per target group in order to be clear and specific.

S. Tessier added the importance of being timely and reacting to current media demands in order to show how engineers are a part of solution. The CEO agreed noting the need to have the right subject matter experts on the committees with solutions. It was suggested that OSPE create a document, which will list all our position statements and whitepapers. This list would be reviewed at the March Board meeting and will also include a discussion on what other topics should be addressed. Task forces can also provide position statements to be proactive, which would be reviewed by the Board in the Committee/Task Force Updates. It was also noted that the ENGage Forum can be used to give members an opportunity to comment on draft reports.

PEO/Mandatory CPD

The CEO reviewed the presentation provided in the meeting package outlining options to move forward regarding advocating for CPD. He suggested option 3, which combines advocating to PEO and the government as well as including a public media awareness plan.

D. Carnegie suggested using a carrot approach to educate people on the better outcomes and questioned if it was worth investing OSPE's resources. The CEO agreed that priorities need to be determined. M. Frayne noted a lack of transparency by PEO at the JRC and suggested offering to help them reach their goals. The CEO noted he has also asked PEO what they need from us and is waiting for a response. R. Clifton added that those who are not practicing will not want CPD because they might not renew their licence. The CEO has suggested a tiered licence, similar to what other organizations use for practicing versus non-practicing members. N. Burgwin suggested a fourth option could be to do nothing since we do not have control over it. It was agreed that since every other province, and many other professions benefit from CPD, that yes, it is important to continue to push. D. Carnegie suggested an education piece to educate members on CPD.

Advocacy Committees/Task Forces: Update

Energy

Steve Pepper, Associate Chair of the Energy Task Force joined the meeting to provide an update on behalf of the Chair, Emily Thorn-Corthay. He noted that the electricity pricing reform has been an ongoing initiative for a few years, and recently the data has been updated. The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) offered an option of either time of use or tiered pricing; however, the implication is that peak rates have never been higher. The task force will monitor reactions to bills. The task force is also creating a clean thermal energy paper and focusing on what OSPE's objective is for producing it beyond education. Another initiative is the Electrical and Thermal Storage paper and is being revised to redefine the problem statement to stay current and up to date. He noted there has been no political engagement regarding the electricity pricing reform and the issue is getting worse. The task force is finding it has become a political issue and not a technical issue as the system is broken. It was suggested that 2-page summary be created for a public audience to show the value of engineers' solutions. He concluded noting that he would be making a connection with the Environment Task Force's Climate Change subgroup as there may be an overlap in topics.

Research and Innovation

N. Burgwin noted the Research and Innovation Task Force currently has four initiatives: Aerospace, Data, 5G and Funding. An updated report regarding commercial drone industry has been released, however no marketing has taken place. The 5G subgroup has published some articles for the magazine and blog, they also expect to produce an ENGtalk.

Infrastructure

M. Frayne noted he has stepped down as Chair of the Infrastructure Task Force, and committee member Oliver Xiao will be the new Chair. The task force is working on creating a guideline for sustainable infrastructure.

Environment

D. Carnegie noted the task force has initiated three subgroups: climate change mitigation, water resources and circular economy. They are using the initiative template provided by staff and expect to produce white papers.

Report from the Membership Advisory Committee

B. Shukla reviewed the membership report, which was provided in the meeting package. He noted there has been a slight increase in memberships since August, and that the November numbers are higher than the previous year.

He reviewed a membership growth plan, which was developed with R. Clifton and N. Burgwin. He noted that the 2017 BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal) initiative aimed at increasing memberships did not achieve its targets; however, has increased revenue. Its focus was on corporate sales, where companies would purchase group memberships. The new membership initiative is being proposed to grow membership revenue from \$4,000,000 to \$6,000,000 in 3 years. The initiative is requesting \$250,000 to hire two staff, one salesperson and one research analyst. OSPE will contact companies to get access to talk to their engineers. D. Carnegie suggested this plan be piloted with current staff before investing in new staff to ensure the concept would work. The Board was reluctant to approve a budget without seeing a plan first. It was agreed that hiring a member research analyst could proceed to develop a plan including key performance indicators (KPI) and budget for presentation at the March Board meeting.

B. Shukla reviewed the community engagement update, which was provided in the meeting package. He noted that the Exchange Hubs governance structure has been developed and will be put into place with the cooperation of current volunteers. There is a chance that two Hubs may be added in 2021 in the Northern and Ottawa regions. He emphasized the need to focus on the area, and not the University. ENGtalks, a video library, will be launching in December with an initial six videos and the goal is to have two videos released per month. He encouraged task forces to

provide technical videos. He also noted that the ENGtalk Podcast will launch in 2021 with J. James as host, which should engage a larger audience. He expects to release 2 podcasts a month on topical and newsworthy human stories.

Ontario Engineering Academy Steering Committee

John Da Silva, Manager, Learning Solutions, joined the meeting to provide an update regarding the academy. He noted the business case document included in the meeting package was a living document created before the pandemic and updated to pivot during COVID. He noted the piloted topics may lead to more advanced course catering to members in the future. The focus moving forward will be to continue to provide courses to members and grow the corporate training program. D. Carnegie questioned what price individuals would pay for our courses as the free ones offered seemed to be well received. J. Da Silva noted follow up surveys have been sent to all course attendees including inquiries regarding pricing. He will share and discuss survey results with the Steering Committee. He also noted workshops such as the electrification of rail systems have increased brand awareness and credibility.

Board Development and Strategic Planning Committee Board of Directors Operating Principles

M. Frayne reviewed the operating principles developed by the BDSP Committee. He noted changes had been made to the draft that Jack Shand provided, including in the accountability section to align with the new Directors' Oath.

In-Camera and Double In-Camera Guidelines

M. Frayne noted guidelines have been developed to clarify the process of in-camera sessions. He reviewed the guidelines, which were provided in the meeting package. D. Carnegie suggested adding topics to the agenda under the in-camera item. The Chair requested more structure for the storage of in-camera minutes. It was also suggested to have a second signatory on in-camera minutes in case it is requested by the auditors.

The proposed motion was tabled in order to clarify the storage procedure and be discussed for approval at the March Board meeting.

Board Meeting and Annual Board Evaluation Surveys

M. Frayne noted that Board meeting and annual evaluation surveys have been updated. He reviewed the tracked changes, which were included in the meeting package.

External Appointments

CNEA Appointment

V. Mueller noted OSPE is a member of the Canadian National Exhibition Association (CNEA) and is required to appoint a representative. R. Aimey volunteered for this position.

PEO AWC

V. Mueller noted that this vacant position was first brought to the Board in September. As per the direction of the Board, staff asked members of OSPE task forces if anyone would be interested in participating. Oliver Xiao has volunteered for the position; his cover letter and resume were included in the meeting package. The Board approved the appointment of Oliver Xiao.

Consent Agenda

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

Other Items

R. Clifton encouraged the Board to use this window of opportunity, with the funds received from CEWS to invest in the growth of OSPE.

M. Frayne noted that the Infrastructure Task Force was recruiting young professionals and suggested that the Board also include a youth representative to sit on the Board as a special Director. It was noted that at the AGM in 2017 members voted to allow Associate members to run for the Board; however, none have been voted onto the Board as yet. Adding a separate young professional position to the Board would require a bylaw change.

M. Frayne suggested having an orientation session for Task Force Chairs, similar to the Board Orientation. It was noted that D. Thomson conducts orientation sessions for all new volunteers.

M. Frayne noted that the sampling done by DIG Insights was very limited and may not capture the nuances of different regions. He suggested if there is funding available that we could invest in broadening the research. R. Clifton noted he hoped this work could be done by the new Membership Research Analyst.

The Chair has noticed a trend where the VP of Engineering and Director of Engineering positions in non-traditional or emerging disciplines have a preference for hiring college graduates instead of engineers. She assumes this is due to companies looking for value for money and the skill level of engineers not being practical enough.

Directors' Questions

D. Carnegie noted that OSPE's research partner institutions are often Toronto centric. It was noted that OSPE has good relationships with York and Ryerson and currently has a project with a Professor at Queen's. It was noted that this largely depends on who reaches out to us. The CEO spoke at the recent Engineering Deans of Ontario meeting noting OSPE is open to partnering with more institutions.