



## Society Board Meeting Report

**At the virtual meeting of the Board of Directors on March 11, 2021 the following decisions and reports were made:**

### **Report from the Chair**

The Chair gave a presentation on why members join OSPE and what should be important to members. She noted members join for the love of engineering, to advance within engineering, to make a better society and for a sense of belonging. She noted Halmyre has helped understand our membership base and identified personas to target our member acquisition and retention. OSPE has several programs, which support members such as Exchange Hubs, ENGtalks, Podcast, Career Centre, ENGage Forum, Academy, Voice magazine and email communications. She reviewed what topics should be important to members, such as social issues, mandatory continued professional development (CPD) and the labour market. Discussion ensued and the Board brainstormed ideas of what is important to members noting opportunities to network, a sense of belonging, financial value and pocketbook issues. It was noted that OSPE's focus is on the individual engineer, whereas Professional Engineers Ontario's (PEO) focus should be on the public. S. Tessier added that giving back is important, however, many do not know how they can do it.

### **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 that Luisa Ferreria has begun working with OSPE as a Membership Research Analyst. Maisha Ahmed, who began working with OSPE as a summer student, is now a full-time employee working as our Membership Coordinator. The Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) funding for October-December 2020 has been received. PEO and OSPE have worked together on a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the organization of the 2021 Ontario Professional Engineers Awards (OPEA). Moving forward there will be an emphasis on this being an OSPE event supported by PEO. He noted a slow trend of membership growth since September 2020, with a 50% increase in February 2021 over February 2020.

The CEO noted that a new campaign is in development to explain advocacy. He has met with Hon. Victor Fedeli regarding economic development and growth highlighting the need to support scaling up of start ups. He has also met with the Attorney Generals office and the Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria about the Professional Engineers Act and required changes to support PEO's governance and action plan. OSPE and the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies - Ontario (ACEC- Ontario) will be putting together their own recommendations for the act, including clarifying 2.4.4 To promote public awareness of the role of the Association and to change the wording of member to licensee. He noted PEO is starting to uncouple their events to separate their regulatory and governance events from their non regulatory events. He also noted there could be significant financial ramifications for PEO implementing CPD as the potential to lose non-practicing individuals is high. It was noted that the people leaving PEO should join OSPE. He believes CPD will be implemented in 12 months and therefore OSPE is planning to meet those needs.

Member engagement is happening on ENGtalks, ENGage Forum and Engineering the Future podcast. The podcast will launch its first four episodes next week. National Engineering Month and P.Eng. Day has had positive responses with over 400 individuals registering for the Lifelong Learning kick off event. The CEO reviewed the status of the operational plan, which was created based on the strategic plan. He noted items in green have been completed.

M. Frayne asked whether OSPE would be prepared to take over PEO's non regulatory initiatives such as the Chapters. The CEO noted there would need to be a reorganization and transition for it to happen.

### **Report from the Treasurer**

The Treasurer, R. Clifton reviewed the summary report as of December 31, 2020, which was provided in the meeting package. He noted we finished strong by cutting expenses and receiving CEWS funding. CEWS allowed the organization to avoid staff layoffs and keep core capabilities. He also noted that the CEWS funding for October – December 2020 was not received until February 2021 and is not reflected in the 2020 statements provided. He reviewed the statement of operations highlighting the revenue before government programs was nearly \$1,000,000 less than originally budgeted; however, ended with approximately \$70,000 more than the re-forecasted budget due to staff monitoring expenses. The re-forecasted budget showed a surplus of \$272,579 however, we ended better than expected because of CEWS funding, successful virtual events and an increase in affinity revenues.

The Treasurer noted that Mark Woodhouse will not likely return, and therefore V. Mueller and E. Giray have increased their responsibilities. BDO continues to provide bookkeeping services and V. Mueller has taken on Chief Financial Officer responsibilities.

### **Budget Pivot Point Review**

V. Mueller reviewed the budget pivot point document provided in the meeting package noting that this was the second budget pivot point review, first one being in December 2020. She noted that the CEWS funding for October-December was received in February 2021 and is waiting to hear back from the Auditors as to whether that will be allocated to 2020 or 2021. The 2021 forecast is on track and includes the new hire, ENGtalks and Podcast expenses. This forecast does not include potential CEWS funding for 2021 which, based on 2020, could be approximately \$210,000. She concluded noting they are projecting to be between the recommended and best-case scenarios. R. Clifton added that we have met and exceeded the pivot point review.

### **Strategy Discussion**

The CEO gave a presentation prior to the strategic discussion to review OSPE's marketing work. He reviewed the member personas and value proposition and noted OSPE's focus on providing platforms for members, such as ENGtalks and the ENGage Forum. He also reviewed OSPE's advocacy focus on quality-based selection (QBS) and legislating whistleblower protection. He added that an overview of OSPE position statements can be found on the Board SharePoint site.

The CEO shared a new campaign called I Am An OSPE Member that highlights our members. Profiles will be collected to feature engineers, graduates and students and why they think it is important to be a member. This campaign will be shared across all platforms. Further member information will be researched following a 30/60/90-day plan.

The CEO noted new considerations which need to be made include the introduction of CPD, new governance roadmap of PEO and changes to the Professional Engineers Act. The introduction of CPD will likely drop the percentage of those maintaining their licence, resulting in a drop in PEO revenues. PEO will discontinue non-regulatory activities; the OPEA and NEM will be solely run by OSPE.

OSPE staff have brainstormed areas of commonality in order to target marketing segments. We have reached out to Alumni and Iron Ring groups. Iron Ring groups are not willing to collaborate; however, some alumni groups have started having conversations about including OSPE information or cohosting events. It was noted that there is still a lot of confusion in PEO Chapters as to what constitutes a regulatory activity.

The Board brainstormed what different categories of members are looking for from their member organization.

#### Young Professionals:

- Engineering work experience
- Financial savings – car insurance
- Health & Dental Insurance (when working on contracts, benefits aren't included)
- Travel/ new experiences
- Networking – personal connections
- How to transition
- Mentors (start ups/entrepreneurs)
- Information on specific industries/organizations in different regions
- Financial planning – RRSP – Wealthsimple/Questrade

#### Professional/Mid-Career:

- Socially aware, seeking political power
- Career – choosing a path between engineering and management
- Professional development – provide savings for members
- Mortgages
- Lack of time, limited time
- Targeted networking

Focus on the iron ring, engineering graduates, one tribe and use ethics wording and advocating for the profession. Research should be done on other professions and how they deal with nonpracticing individuals.

### **Advocacy Committees/Task Forces: Update Energy**

Emily Thorn Corthay, Chair of the Energy Task Force, joined the meeting to provide an update on the Energy Task Force. She reviewed their three initiatives noting that the clean thermal energy report is currently being reviewed by OSPE's communication team. It was noted that this topic is not a priority for government at this time and staff will determine the best strategy for moving forward. It was noted that it is OSPE's role to bring issues to the attention of government, even if it isn't on their agenda. She also noted the electricity pricing initiative is stalled as the government is not interested as they have already changed the rate structure due to COVID-19. The task forces last initiative regarding electrical and thermal energy storage was reviewed by a policy professor whose comments are currently being added to the report.

### **Infrastructure**

Oliver Xiao, Chair of the Infrastructure Task Force joined the meeting to provide an update on the Infrastructure Task Force. He noted that the task force has had some changes due to a loss of members; however, they are currently recruiting new volunteers. The groups focus has been on creating guidelines for developing sustainable infrastructure. This includes topics such as QBS, lifecycle costing and transparency. The task force will also be looking into environmental assessment and red tape reduction. S. Perruzza noted he has a connection to a working group on e-permitting and will connect with Oliver.

### **Research and Innovation**

N. Burgwin provided an update on the four initiatives of the Research and Innovation Task Force. The Aerospace Track is ending as the report has been finalized, but he hopes the individuals will create and ENGtalks on the topic. The Data subgroup has prepared a presentation and will begin refining their scope further. The 5G initiative has great experienced members, however they are researching what areas to investigate. A funding initiative will create a roadmap of what funding exists and will produce an ENGtalks series of interviews with funding providers.

## **Diversity and Inclusion**

A. Wojtyla provided an update on the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Task Force highlighting their Leadership Series, which launches at the end of the month. She noted this series is intended to provide early to mid-career professionals from underrepresented groups with tips and strategies on a variety of leadership-related topics. Videos will be posted on ENGtalks and available to all members. It will also integrate networking and discussion through zoom meetings and breakout sessions for a limited number of registrants. The task force is also involved in awards, developing a new D&I award and using the award survey to submit nominations to other awards. She noted that the next focus will be on training and developing new lessons for the DiversifySTEM app. S. Tessier suggested doing something related to how to get on Boards.

## **Environment**

D. Carnegie noted that the task force has three subgroups focused on climate change, water resources and circular economy. The climate change group is focusing on deep energy retrofits, freight transportation and using electric vehicles as a means to store energy that can be fed back into the grid. The water resources subgroup has made a submission regarding the Canada Clean Water Agency and will be pivoting to a provincial aspect including flooding. He added that the circular economy is struggling due to a lack of expertise and will be doing volunteer recruitment. S. Perruzza noted he has allowed Carl Bodimeade to represent OSPE on an Ontario Coalition for Sustainable Infrastructure procurement table.

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

B. Shukla reviewed the membership report, which was provided in the meeting package. He noted outreach has been conducted to 16 alumni groups and all Iron Ring Camps. Camps are not interested in partnering; however, four schools have agreed to virtual meetings. Join messages are now included on email communication to non-members, and a refer a member message has been added to member emails. In order to meet the 10% growth target, we need approximately 67 new members each month. Typically, OSPE's growth has been between 0.5% and 1.5%, however so far this year has seen an increase to approximately 5%. He also reviewed a membership acquisition campaign that took place on LinkedIn. The campaign started with three messages regarding pride in the profession, engineering the future and iron rings belonging. Currently, the iron rings messaging is performing the best by directing the most amount of traffic to our website. He reviewed the charts provided in the meeting package noting it is difficult to plot trends on only January data. It was noted that the cost of member acquisition varies, and that social media is the cheapest option. We currently do not advertise to existing members; however, we will consider referral advertising. There will be a study completed with new members to discover why they joined. LinkedIn has been used for its capability to target specific groups. It was suggested that OSPE create templated posts that the Board Directors could share with their networks.

B. Shukla also noted a focus on retention aimed at individuals who have not renewed their membership. A new onboarding plan is in development to span a 24-month period. R. Clifton suggested doing targeted regional advertising in publications such as the Ottawa Business Journal, to increase brand awareness.

## **Membership Growth Plan**

B. Shukla reviewed the membership growth plan, which was provided in the meeting package. He noted 5-years worth of data had been included in order to show the trends before COVID. The plan's strategies include lunch and learns, corporate courses, membership marketing and segmentation research. To date, 12 lunch and learns have been scheduled, and outreach will continue through the year. He reviewed the key performance indicators (KPI) for membership, revenue and lunch and learns. The 30-60-90-day membership research plan was included in the meeting package. R. Clifton suggested adding Board interviews to the plan in order to gain insights.

B. Shukla noted the full member survey results report is available on the Board SharePoint site. A summary was also included in the meeting package.

## **Board Development and Strategic Planning Committee In-Camera and Double In-Camera Guidelines**

V. Mueller noted the guidelines have been updated as requested at the December 2020 Board meeting to include a storage solution. The Board discussed the options to store in camera notes and agreed to have the secretary hold physical notes until they pass them off to the next secretary after each AGM. V. Mueller will update the document and will create a log to ensure accountability.

## **Strategic Planning Review**

V. Mueller noted that the strategic plan will end at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in 2022, therefore planning for the next plan will begin this year. The 2021 General Assembly will be taking place during the October Conference, where a facilitator will engage members and stakeholders to obtain feedback for the new strategic plan. The facilitator, Jack Shand, will use the feedback to create a report for review and discussion at a December Board retreat. A draft strategic plan will be reviewed by the Board at their first meeting in 2022 and a final plan will be delivered to the membership at the 2022 AGM.

## **Board Meeting Agenda Format**

V. Mueller noted that the Board Development and Strategic Planning Committee reviewed feedback from the last Board meeting and has suggested reformatting the agenda to align to the strategic plan and core values. The revised agenda will be in place for the June 2021 meeting.

## **To Discuss an OSPE Activity Filter**

M. Frayne presented a potential activity filter to clearly define OSPE activities as either advocacy or governance. He suggested using a filter to ensure OSPE activities and the activities of the committees and task forces remain relevant. S. Perruzza noted this is already informally done operationally; however, agreed that it would help focus the committees.

## **Nominations Committee – 2021 Slate of Candidates: Approval**

V. Mueller reviewed the candidates that the Nominations Committee has put forward for approval. There were four nominations from members-at-large, two for each of the 3-year and 1-year term positions. The committee identified five additional candidates for the 3-year term and two additional candidates for the 1-year term. She also noted there would be two Virtual Town Halls for members to ask questions to the candidates. She thanked the Nominations Committee for their time and commitment.

## **OSPE Awards: Approval Presidents Awards**

B. Shukla noted the Membership Advisory Committee used an evaluation rubric to review each of the nominations and the scoring was provided in the meeting package. The Board discussed and agreed to approve two awards in the Professional category, to Emanuel Corthay and Emily Thorn Corthay, and one award in the Young Professional category to Vanessa Raponi.

## **OSPE AGM/General Assembly**

V. Mueller noted that the General Assembly typically occurs every two years and will take place during the 2021 Conference. The AGM will be taking place via GoToWebinar on Saturday, May 8 at 8:30am. A Board meeting will take place immediately following the AGM to appoint officers.

## **Other Items**

Discussion ensued with respect to a member complaint about his research being shared with the OSPE membership. S. Tessier suggested using caution when responding to upset members and highlighted the opportunity to allow members to be heard. S. Perruzza noted he has personally responded to this particular member directly and has offered alternative opportunities and provided a rationale. M. Frayne suggested clarification regarding which platforms are for OSPE and which are for members' opinions. R. Aimey also reminded Directors to ensure all communication preferences are allowed in their member profile.

## **Directors' Questions**

M. Frayne suggested connecting with PEO Chapters' Mentorship programs to identify synergies as he was concerned about duplicating efforts. B. Shukla noted OSPE recently relaunched its Mentorship program using a new platform and added that OSPE's program encompasses all topics whereas PEO's is supposed to only be about the licencing process. He stated OSPE has not been engaging PEO Chapters when they are conducting non-regulatory programs. The Chair noted PEO's Activity Filter would declare these types of Chapter programs as non-regulatory and therefore they may not exist in the long term. The CEO added that OSPE's messaging has been for PEO to stop non-regulatory activities, and suggested that collaborating on programs like mentorship would be sending mixed messages.

The Board discussed the cost of professional development (PD) for members. OSPE partners with other organizations to provide content that we are unable to develop ourselves. B. Shukla added that he is reviewing how many hours worth of PD OSPE can provide with its membership; however, we need to wait to see what PEO determines to be the definition and requirements of PD.

M. Frayne will ask PEO what their plan is for the Chapters at the next Joint Relations Committee meeting.

It was suggested that staff consider moving the start time of the AGM start time from 8:30am to 9:30am as it is a Saturday morning.

It was suggested that OSPE staff explore and research what other professions CPD programs look like, in order to advocate appropriately to PEO.