

2020-2021 President's Report

Even though it moves in a predictable way, time seems to pass so quickly. I started this year not knowing what to expect with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. While we were not able to conduct our business in person, the Association continued to function without missing a beat, and we carried on our good work on Council. We settled into a reasonable routine of holding our Council meetings online, and worked hard, together, to continue forward. All of us, I am sure, have varying opinions around meeting remotely, but overall, it worked for us. I am personally looking forward to more frequent in-person sessions, as we begin to cautiously move toward more routine activities in our personal and professional lives.



This year made it challenging to do certain things that a President in a “normal” year would do. Provincial and Canadian association meetings were held remotely. While it was a good opportunity to meet and share with our constituent associations, and the broader country-wide organizations, the opportunity for those spontaneous interactions and unique discussions was missed. Nonetheless, Council continued to do its part in our key role – protecting the public of Manitoba, and carrying out the job of self-regulation, adhering to our Act. This year, we continued work to complete our By-law review, and concluded making the revisions proposed, and reviewed these during engagement sessions with our practitioners. An Act revision is proposed, and is in process.

As we do each year, we assure that the policies and self-checks we have in place are working. We routinely conduct structured reports on various elements of our operations, whether Executive Limitations (roles and responsibilities of our CEO), Governance Policy (how Council governs), and Council-Executive policies (how Council works with our CEO). In all these areas, we have seen that with the structure we have in place, our functions, are healthy as we continue to pursue our Ends. The finance committee continues to do excellent work in crafting our budget, which is brought to Council for review and approval each June. Our audit committee continues to work with our independent third-party auditor each year, and we have routinely received feedback that our process and record keeping is compliant on all fronts, and that we are in a financially healthy position.

Council is planning a governance review, with a third-party consultant, for 2021/2022. This was planned for the year prior, but Council felt that delaying it a year would allow for the full value of the sessions to be realized, as we will plan to do these in person. This will be a good exercise to ensure Council is appropriately composed and is operating in an effective and efficient way. Our aim is to ensure we are structured to allow for operations that are compliant on all fronts, but also are flexible in a way that we can plan for the needs and changes that will be inevitable in the future. Openness with our practitioners and owners is also important. This year, we were also able to take a forward-thinking approach and capitalize on some unused spending which arose from planned events that were not held during Covid. Asset creation in the form of scholarships and a dedicated mentorship space at the Association are not only aligned with our strategic plan, but also help fulfil our Ends, and importantly will help lead to the changes that continue to build our strong and healthy professions. We will continue to work very hard and ensure we are doing what we can to improve equity and representation in our professions, because a team that includes all of us is the best team.

Thank you to an objective and supportive Council. Thanks to Grant and Association staff who certainly helped me along the way at various times this past year. To those practitioners who volunteer on the various Association committees – the Association thrives due to the dedicated work of volunteers. I am very pleased to pass the reigns to Allan Silk, incoming President. There is no doubt that Allan's experience inside and outside of the Association, and his thoughtful demeanor will set the tone for an excellent and productive upcoming year. It has been an honor to serve as your President, and I have certainly learned much from the experience, and from all who I crossed paths with (virtually) this last year. I am grateful to have had the opportunity, and I look forward to a strong future for the Association and for all of us who are part of it.

Jason Mann, P.Geo., FGC
President