

Notes of the Special Meeting held on Thursday, September 17, 2020 at 870 Pembina Hwy,  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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Present: Jitendra Paliwal, presiding; Carolyn Geddert; Allan Silk

Present via GotoWebinar: Vaibhav Banthia; Cheryl Lashek; Jason Mann; Christina McDonald;  
Linda Murphy; Ian Smallwood; Efrem Teklemariam; Izabela Witkowska

Also Present: Mike Gregoire; Fiona Hillier; Gemma Keatch; Grant Koropatnick; Angela Moore;  
Danielle Unett

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At 7:00 p.m. President Paliwal began the meeting. As specified in the notice the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the two by-law proposals in preparation for the upcoming voting period. He then reminded everyone that no motions to modify proposals would be considered.

President Paliwal introduced the councillors in attendance and provided instructions for the online meeting. He then informed the attendees that the meeting would be recorded for administrative purposes only.

President Paliwal invited Mr. Ed Wright to provide his presentation on the member proposed by-law change.

Mr. Wright thanked Council for the opportunity to present the proposal.

He explained that the motivation behind the by-law proposal came from the member due increase approved last year. He spoke of the comparison of our Association's dues to those across Canada and noted that we were ranked second highest. He also spoke of the concerns raised by the increase, which included unclear justification for the increase, lack of reporting where the money was spent, whether social causes should be a part of the mandate for Engineers Geoscience Manitoba, and if cost restraint or alternate sources of funding were considered.

Mr. Wright commented that while the 30 by 30 initiative was the backdrop to the issues raised by the increase, the by-law proposal was not challenging the initiative itself. The purpose of the proposal was to shift the decision for future extraordinary dues increases, if required, from Council to the membership.

He suggested that going forward Council make an effort to contain costs and reduce fees, to track where the \$100 increase was spent and report on it's effectiveness, to look at alternate sources of funding for the 30 by 30 initiative and to communicate current and proposed programs dealing with non-regulatory matters, including advocacy and education initiatives, to the members.

President Paliwal thanked Mr. Wright for his presentation.

Before opening the floor to questions, President Paliwal addressed some of the points made in the presentation. While comparing dues to other regulated professions in the province can seem like

comparing apples to oranges, so can a cross country comparison with other associations. All factors that determine dues should be considered (i.e. economies of scale, number of members, other sources of revenue).

He remarked that the purpose and funding of the 30 by 30 initiative had been communicated to the members. He further pointed out that social causes, like the 30 by 30 initiative, fit within Section 3 of the Engineering Geoscientific Professions Act and were also in the Ends.

President Paliwal opened the floor to questions and comments.

- Discussion on whether social causes should be a part of Engineers Geoscience Manitoba's mandate took place. Some comments suggested that the members be allowed to vote on the funding of social causes or have the option to opt in. Other comments noted that ensuring equity and diversity in the profession should not be viewed as an optional social cause, but a priority.
- Were the yearly audit reports available on the website? President Paliwal remarked that they were available with the annual reports.
- Questions on how the dues increase was approved were raised. It was explained that Council approved the dues and fees annually and they were presented to the members at the following Annual General Meeting.

Hearing no further comments or questions President Paliwal closed the discussion on this topic.

At 7:43 p.m. President Paliwal announced there would be a ten-minute break.

At 7:53 p.m. he welcomed everyone back to the meeting.

President Paliwal introduced the Council proposed by-law change. He noted that the Council of Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba had been advised by legal counsel that the non-practising status for the "Retired Members" category was inconsistent with the Act.

He introduced a video, available on the website, which explained the inconsistency. The Act defined members as a person who holds a valid and subsisting certificate of registration, entitling them to practice professional engineering or professional geoscience within the province. However, current by-laws had categories of membership that prevented certain classes from practicing (i.e. the "Retired Member" category).

The resulting by-law proposal would eliminate the Retired Members category and create the new Senior Member category. This new category of membership would serve to recognize long-standing members and their valued input to the Association. It would fulfill the duty the Association had to protect the public by ensuring that those practicing were current in their knowledge, while acknowledging that Senior Members were retired (and no longer practicing) or still practicing but working fewer hours.

President Paliwal invited Councillor Geddert of the By-law Review Committee, to speak to the Council proposed by-law.

She referred to the Proposed Transition of Compliance slide which outlined the current categories of membership and the transition steps to the new categories. She explained that the intent was to make the transition simple while making the by-law consistent with the Act.

President Paliwal opened the floor to questions and comments.

- The question for setting the required number of years to 30 was raised. The comment that Professional Geoscientists would not be eligible for this category for another nine years since P.Geo. were first registered with the Association in 1998 was also made. It was explained that number of years was based on the requirement in the Retired Member category and it was 30 years of practice not 30 years registered with Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba.
- Questions on Council seeking an Act change to allow for a non-practicing membership category were raised. It was explained that an Act change was discussed but the process takes a long time and is subject to the will of the government. In the meantime, Council and the Association would be knowingly operating with by-laws that were inconsistent with the Act which could leave the Association open to risks.
- Who was legal counsel which provided the opinion? There were three: Wells Peever, Ted Bock and Brent Ross and they all came to a similar conclusion.
- The professional development targets for a Senior Member were discussed. It was explained that targets were substantially less than practicing members, that they would be assessed individually and that each Senior Member would be eligible to apply for abatement.

Hearing no further comments or questions President Paliwal closed the discussion on this topic and thanked everyone for their attendance and participation.

The meeting ended at 8:31 p.m.

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Jitendra Paliwal, P.Eng., FEC  
President

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Grant Koropatnick, P.Eng. FEC  
CEO & Registrar

*The Special meeting of September 17, 2020 was attended virtually by 84 individuals consisting of 51 professional members and included Interns, Assessment candidates and staff.*