

# MINUTES OF THE 100TH ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

**SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2022**  
**PRESIDENT AND CHAIR: CHRISTIAN BELLINI, P.ENG., FEC**

The 100th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Professional Engineers Ontario was held via videoconference on Saturday, April 30, 2022.

President Bellini called the meeting to order and welcomed PEO licence holders with a special welcome to the over 3000 new licensees joining PEO over the past year; engineering interns, students, and employers; stakeholders; members of the public; colleagues in the engineering community; PEO staff; distinguished guests; and friends.

President Bellini stated that PEO recognizes its work takes place on traditional Indigenous territories across the province, acknowledging that there are 46 treaties and other agreements that cover the territory now called Ontario. He further stated that we are thankful to be able to work and live in these territories; and we are thankful to the First Nations, Metis and Inuit people who have cared for these territories since time immemorial and who continue to contribute to the strength of Ontario and to all communities across the province.

President Bellini then welcomed Ontario's attorney general, the Honourable Doug Downey, LL.M., LL.B., along with his colleague, Nicko Vavassis, the attorney general's director of policy.

The Honourable Doug Downey discussed the important work of Ontario engineers in building the province and its economy. He stated that this is why the work of PEO Council is so important and that the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) is listening to the regulator's ongoing feedback to help ensure the highest standards are maintained. He further stated that MAG is pleased to work closely with PEO to ensure the regulator's upcoming mandatory continuing professional development program becomes a reality. He went on to say that through ongoing dialogue he better understands PEO Council and has learned a lot about how MAG can best support PEO with maintaining the highest standards for knowledge and skills in the profession.

President Bellini thanked Downey for joining PEO's AGM to learn more about how PEO has continued to protect the public. He stated that as PEO celebrates 100 years of regulating the engineering profession in Ontario, it recognizes the great privilege the Ontario government has entrusted to the organization to self-regulate on its behalf and values the role of public appointees on its board.

President Bellini then welcomed special guests from Engineers Canada and its constituent associations as well as invited organizations in Ontario's engineering community and allied professions.

## INTRODUCTION OF COUNCIL

President Bellini introduced the members of the 2021–2022 PEO Council:

President Christian Bellini; President-elect Nick Colucci, MBA, P.Eng., FEC; Past President Marisa Sterling, P.Eng., FEC; Elected Vice President Marilyn Spink, P.Eng., CSR-P; Appointed Vice President and Eastern Region Councillor Chantal Chiddle, P.Eng., FEC; Councillors-at-Large Michael Chan, P.Eng., FEC, Leila Notash, PhD, P.Eng., FEC, and Pat Quinn, PhD, P.Eng., FCAE; Eastern Region Councillor Randy Walker, P.Eng., FEC; East Central Region Councillor Christopher Chahine, P.Eng.; Northern Region Councillors Ramesh Subramanian, PhD, P.Eng., FEC, and Luc Roberge, P.Eng., FEC; Western Region Councillors Peter Broad, P.Eng., FEC, and Susan MacFarlane, MSc, PhD, P.Eng.; West Central Region Councillors Jim Chisholm, MEng, P.Eng., FEC, and Lisa MacCumber, P.Eng., FEC; and Lieutenant Governor-in-Council Appointees Arjan Arenja, MBA, P.Eng., Robert Brunet, MSc, P.Eng., Todd Bruyere, P.Eng. (who served until February 2022), Lorne Cutler, MBA, P.Eng., Andy Dryland, C.E.T., Qadira Jackson Kouakou, LLB (who served until March 2022), Paul Mandel, MBA, CPA, CA, CBV, CFF, George Nikolov, P.Eng., Scott Schelske, P.Eng., FEC, and Sherlock Sung.

President Bellini thanked PEO's directors to Engineers Canada for 2021–2022: Arjan Arenja; Danny Chui, P.Eng., FEC, who also served as Engineers Canada president; Nancy Hill, P.Eng., LLB, FEC, FCAE; Kelly Reid, P.Eng., IACCM CCMP, and Marisa Sterling.

President Bellini also introduced PEO staff: Johnny Zuccon, P.Eng., FEC, CEO/registrar; Meg Feres, supervisor, Council operations; Chetan Mehta, director, finance; and Michelle Wehrle, director, IT; as well as Parliamentarian Lori Lukinuk.

## IN MEMORIAM

President Bellini asked that all those present observe a moment of silence in remembrance of those PEO licence holders who passed away in 2021, including Council colleague Peter Cushman, P.Eng. He noted that Cushman served on PEO Council as an East Central Region councillor and was committed to defending professional self-regulation while preserving the public interest.

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

President Bellini reviewed the order of business and housekeeping items. A test of the voting system was conducted.

## ADOPTION OF MINUTES

President Bellini referred members to the minutes of the 2021 AGM. It was moved by Randy Walker and seconded by Lisa MacCumber that the minutes of the 2021 AGM, as published in the November/December 2021 issue of *Engineering Dimensions* and as distributed at the meeting, be adopted as presented.

*Motion carried*

*President Bellini recalled the meeting to order following a five-minute break.*

## FINANCIAL REPORT

President Bellini invited Councillor Lorne Cutler, chair of the 2021–2022 Audit and Finance Committee, to provide a report on PEO’s audited financial statements.

Cutler reviewed the financial information, noting that the 2021 audited financial statements were approved by Council at the April 2022 meeting. He stated that these statements are on the PEO AGM webpage and would be published in the May/June issue of *Engineering Dimensions*.

Cutler presented a graph showing a five-year trend of revenues, expenses and net income. He noted that net income in 2017 was at a deficit of \$26,000. In 2018, PEO had a modest surplus of \$123,000 due to aggressive cost-cutting measures. In 2019, there was a \$2.9 million surplus as the new fee schedule came into effect. And in 2020, there was a surplus of \$7.9 million due to the 2019 fee increase; COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, which led to most in-person events and meetings being moved online; and a drop in expenditures, as several 2020 initiatives were deferred to 2021. And in 2021, there was a \$6.5 million surplus, with Cutler noting that, although most COVID restrictions remained in place throughout 2021 and resulted in most activities remaining online, membership was not as negatively impacted by the pandemic as expected.

A slide was presented showing the key financial highlights as of December 31, 2021:

- Revenues of \$32.5 million (vs \$30.7 million in 2020);
- Expenses of \$26 million (vs \$22.8 million in 2020);
- A surplus or net excess of revenues over expenses of \$6.5 million (vs \$7.9 million in 2020);
- \$31.2 million in cash and marketable securities (vs \$23.3 million in 2020); and
- The lowest P.Eng. fees in Canada.

Cutler stated that PEO’s finances are healthy and are expected to remain so for the foreseeable future.

There were no questions brought up at this time.

## APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

It was moved by Lorne Cutler and seconded by Marilyn Spink that the firm of Deloitte LLP, chartered accountants, be appointed as PEO’s auditors for the association for the 2022 fiscal year or until their successor is appointed.

**Motion carried**

A licence holder asked how many auditing companies submitted proposals or bids for the call for new auditors and was advised that seven submissions were received to the Request for Proposal that was issued in early August 2021.

A licence holder asked why Deloitte LLP is continually renewed as auditor. Staff responded that it is not unusual for companies to continue using the same auditors because they are familiar with the organization. Furthermore, a new Deloitte partner oversaw the 2021 audit. The Audit and Finance Committee makes decisions that are consistent with best practices and to ensure PEO gets best value.

## CEO/REGISTRAR’S REPORT

CEO/Registrar Zuccon extended a warm welcome to everyone who was joining PEO’s third virtual AGM. He thanked all those who worked tirelessly to prepare for the meeting.

Zuccon stated: “When I was appointed CEO/registrar in February 2019, I was handed a mandate of delivering change unprecedented in PEO’s history. At that time, the regulatory landscape was already witnessing change. Calls for greater transparency and accountability of all regulators—from government,

the public and the media—were commonplace. It was no longer a threat for governments to intrude on the affairs of regulators—it was really becoming the new reality.”

Zuccon noted that PEO recognized the new pressures on regulators and the urgent need for risk mitigation strategies, so it voluntarily underwent an independent regulatory performance review to help determine if PEO was effectively doing the job set out for it under the *Professional Engineers Act*. The external review examined how well PEO was performing its regulatory functions against international regulatory best practices. The report concluded that “PEO does not fulfil its mandate with the steadfast focus on regulation in the public interest.

“Council accepted the report and committed to making the changes necessary to address the recommendations aimed at improving PEO’s regulatory performance.”

## Roadmap to Transformation

Zuccon went on to describe PEO’s multi-year, enterprise-wide transformation that it began in 2019 to address the external review recommendations while incorporating a more outward-focused public-interest perspective. He noted that the strategy for this transformation rests on three pillars—operational effectiveness, organizational alignment and governance renewal—and is summarized in the 2020–2022 Strategic Plan. These elements are rooted in the Council-approved Action Plan and Council’s two-year Governance Roadmap, the work of which began in 2020 and is helping to inform the next strategic plan.

Building on these pillars, Zuccon stated, is critical to achieving PEO’s change vision: “...to become a professional, modern regulator that delivers on its statutory mandate and is supported by a governance culture that consistently makes decisions that serve and protect the public interest.

“As we strive to achieve this vision, we are improving our ability to regulate by using principles of ‘right touch’ regulation, which requires that we understand the problem before jumping to the solution. These principles also help to ensure PEO’s regulations are proportionate to the level of the risk to the public.”

Zuccon then discussed key 2021 initiatives PEO has embarked on in support of this transformation.

## Key Initiatives—Mandatory CPD

“Key to any self-regulating profession is an unwavering level of public trust. From an external perspective, this requires a demonstrable commitment to continuing education. In this regard, PEO has taken a big step forward as earlier this month, both Council and the Ontario Cabinet approved a regulation under the *Professional Engineers Act* that requires all licence holders to participate in a continuing education and professional development program and complete the annual requirements as a condition of renewing their licence with PEO. This will begin in January 2023.

“To be clear, the program will be based on the current Practice Evaluation and Knowledge (aka PEAK) program that has been piloted on a voluntary basis for the past five years.

“The key elements of the annual mandatory program include:

- A Practice Evaluation consisting of a practice status declaration and a practice evaluation questionnaire, which helps determine personalized CPD targets for each licence holder;
- A Professional Practice Module for all licence holders that covers regulatory topics such as professional practice, engineering ethics and regulatory knowledge;
- A Continuing Professional Development Report that involves a reporting mechanism for licence holders to respond to personalized CPD targets; and
- Compliance audits and administrative sanctions, including licence suspension for any overdue elements of the program will be phased-in starting in 2024.

“Once implemented, the program will provide further assurance to the public that Ontario engineers are committed, and continue to be committed, to continuing education to enhance their practice.”

### Key Initiatives—Enhanced Licensing Process

Zuccon went on to discuss PEO’s work in reviewing, simplifying and modernizing the P.Eng. licensing process so it is timely, fair, consistent, transparent and free from any bias.

“This has been and continues to be a priority issue for us and is even more so now with the proclamation in December 2021 of the *Working for Workers Act*, which includes significant amendments to the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act* (or FARPACTA) and the recent filing of O. Reg. 261/22 under that legislation.

“The amendments provide PEO and other affected regulators with clarity on the specific change direction and expectations from government on issues related to:

- Canadian work experience;
- Licensing decision-making timeframes;
- Language proficiency tests; and
- Emergency registration planning.

“We need to step up and meet these requirements within the government-imposed timelines, and in support of this work we have committed to a digital transformation journey to enable greater automated processing, deeper business intelligence and overall greater efficiencies.

“As part of our transformative efforts, we are also committed to incorporating diversity, equity and inclusion best practices into all PEO systems and operations.”

### Key Initiatives—Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Zuccon then noted PEO’s efforts around equity, diversity and inclusion, including work by the regulator’s Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Exploratory Working Group.

“At its April 8th meeting, Council approved a code to help prevent issues of systemic racism and discrimination in all aspects of our work.

“We continue to support the 30 by 30 initiative of Engineers Canada. We are currently participating in an independent gender audit of PEO’s existing licensing process. The audit will investigate potential gender biases and any unintentional barriers that may be impeding women from seeking licensure. We look forward to sharing the results when available.”

### Outward-Facing Lens

Zuccon summed up his report, noting that PEO’s public interest mandate requires us to make decisions that primarily consider the perspective and interests of the public above all else, with an outward-facing lens being key to our modernization efforts.

“The past 12 months have certainly been eventful and ambitious for PEO at all levels of our organization. The transformation journey we’ve embarked on is designed to create a new foundation that is fully consistent with that of a modern, enlightened and responsive self-regulator.

“As a regulator, and especially as a self-regulatory body, our decisions must be based within the context of our regulatory and governance obligations as prescribed in the *Professional Engineers Act*, and our duty to uphold our public-interest mandate is paramount.

“The act, however, doesn’t define what the public interest is.

“For better clarity, our ability to protect the public interest stems from our key functions:

- Ensuring only competent and ethical professionals are licensed;
- Ensuring licence holders continue to maintain their competence and practise in a way that minimizes the risk to the public;
- Dealing with licence holders who fail to live up to the standards of the profession;
- Investigating all complaints brought to it about unlicensed, unprofessional, inadequate or incompetent engineering services;
- Preparing performance guidelines as benchmarks for quality of service in the engineering profession;
- Preparing performance standards in regulation; and
- Managing relations with stakeholders in such a way as to develop and maintain public confidence in our role of regulating the profession.

“In other words, our public-interest mandate requires us to make decisions that primarily consider the perspective and interests of the public above all else. This outward-facing lens is at the heart of our modernization efforts, and we need to stay the course. This will require us to constantly reflect on our public-interest role, measure our effectiveness and make course corrections where necessary. And our centennial in June will serve as a point of recommitment to these public-interest principles, although the related work will continue well beyond my retirement this year. The public expects and deserves no less. The stage has been set and the work must continue well beyond my retirement. I am excited to see what the next 100 years bring, and I hope you are too.”

Zuccon then shared a personal message as CEO/registrar and long-time PEO employee. He thanked all those for embracing PEO’s transformation and helping along the journey, and although he recognizes that not everyone will be on the same page with change, his wish was to nevertheless work collectively to achieve the goal to modernize PEO. He stated that we all need to be proud of our 100-year history and we should strive to set up the next generation for success; PEO’s long-term relevance depends on it. CEO/Registrar Zuccon concluded by saying it has been an absolute pleasure to lead the organization towards its modernization vision.

## PRESIDENT BELLINI'S OUTGOING REPORT

President Bellini thanked CEO/Registrar Zuccon for his outstanding efforts and those of his staff over the past year. He also stated that it has been an honour and privilege to serve as PEO's 102nd president, especially during PEO's centennial year, and thanked PEO licence holders for the opportunity to serve as president. He then began his outgoing president's report by stating that he wanted to share his thoughts on the business conducted by Council over the 2021–2022 term and reflections as PEO president. "I think our most significant achievement was wrapping up Council's two-year Governance Roadmap to review all aspects of PEO governance and incorporating the necessary changes to ensure Council serves as a governance board, providing strategic direction and high-level control to the regulator.

"This governance overhaul was more than two years in the making, with important work completed over the Council terms of both past presidents Nancy Hill and Marisa Sterling. Governance experts were engaged to facilitate this work, but ultimately decisions to make changes were solely the responsibility of Council. The end result is a renewed and modernized governance structure that's fully consistent with that of an enlightened and responsive self-regulator.

### New Governance Committees

"At our kickoff meeting, we appointed councillors to our four new governance committees, which were formalized in the previous term to support our direction and control functions. These new committees include:

- Governance and Nominating Committee, which oversees effectiveness of corporate governance, Council, committees and Council members;
- Regulatory Policy and Legislation Committee, which focuses on developing and reviewing legislation, standards, guidelines and policies related to PEO's regulatory mandate;
- Human Resources and Compensation Committee, which oversees PEO's relationship with the CEO/ registrar and on HR policies and plans; and
- Audit and Finance Committee, which focuses on PEO's financial reporting and management, reviewing financial information and overseeing financial matters related to PEO's activities.

"All councillors were appointed to serve on at least one governance committee this year. Establishing the new committees was part of the Governance Roadmap and based on the governance directives related to committees approved by the previous Council. These new directives build on the previous ones, clarifying how PEO will use committees in its new governance system, including transitioning to a new model that focuses on regulatory and governance committees and a new method of appointing members.

"As decided in the approval of new governance tenets, as of this AGM, Council members will only serve on governance committees, so we are providing an extra level of independence to the regulatory committees to be able to do their work.

"As I have said before, it has been my strong belief that our outdated governance structure—the one that we are moving away from—has been an impediment to enhancing and modernizing our regulatory work. I am pleased to report that with the new governance work complete, we have new governance tools to really tackle modernization and regulatory change.

"Successes from this project include a renewed Council focus on high-level strategy, four new governance committees to back up that work and defined boundaries between Council's role providing strategic direction and the operational work of PEO staff. Armed with this new structure, the new Council will be well positioned to tackle the regulatory challenges ahead.

"Besides wrapping up Council's governance renewal, we also oversaw several other accomplishments, including operationalizing PEO's ongoing 30 by 30 work, continued progress on our anti-racism and anti-discrimination initiatives, the launch of PEO's mandatory continuing professional development program, and ongoing work on the Action Plan approved by Council to address the recommendations from the external regulatory review.

### Anti-Racism and Equity Code

"At our June meeting, we formally accepted the *Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination: A Bridge to PEO's More Successful Future* report created by independent consultants under the direction of PEO's Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Exploratory Working Group. The report is available on the PEO website and I encourage you to read it. It did reveal some vulnerabilities, including:

- Inadequate engagement with stakeholders, especially outside PEO;
- Our current 12-month 'Canadian experience' requirement; and
- The underrepresentation of Black and Indigenous people on PEO's Council, staff and committees and the profession.

"The working group was tasked with examining recommendations to address these gaps, including:

- Consulting with relevant stakeholders potentially affected by these issues;
- Recommendations on how Council should develop, review and approve its strategic directions, as seen through an anti-racism/discrimination lens;
- Publicly reporting PEO's progress on our anti-racism/discrimination mandate; and
- Periodic reassessments to ensure that recommendations are tracked and updated.

"The group was also asked to create a policy code to address systemic racism and equity issues that is consistent with Ontario's public policy direction and human rights laws. The Anti-Racism and Equity Code was developed in consultation with stakeholders and presented to Council at our last meeting and was subsequently approved. The code affirms our commitment to advance PEO's fairness, human rights and public-interest obligations under the law; and its eight principles serve as a foundation and framework to inform our strategies and actions going forward.

### Gender Audit

"Also, at our June meeting, we approved a gender audit of PEO's licensure process and internal operations. The audit is being conducted by experts from the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management. The study was initiated by PEO's 30 by 30 Task Force and will examine PEO's current licensure

process for potential gender bias and any barriers that may impede women from getting licensed. In 2021, the researchers began work with PEO staff under the oversight of PEO's EIT programs manager. The study involves reviewing licensing documents, assessing data and interviewing applicants, staff and volunteers involved in the licensing process. The project is expected to wrap up in August 2022.

### **Mandatory CPD Program**

"On April 8, Council approved amendments to Regulation 941 under the *Professional Engineers Act* to create a mandatory continuing professional development program based on the existing Practice Evaluation and Knowledge (PEAK) program. The amendments were subsequently approved by the Ontario Cabinet on April 19.

"The amendment—Ontario Regulation 353/22—provides the legal framework to implement a mandatory CPD program for licence holders, including consequences for non-compliance such as reversible administrative suspensions in certain circumstances. Beginning in January, all PEO-licensed engineers will be required to annually complete this new, mandatory component of licensure.

"A mandatory CPD program is an important part of upholding PEO's regulatory mandate and affirms to the profession, our stakeholders and the public that PEO is committed to establishing, maintaining and enhancing standards of engineering practice in Ontario. The program will also:

- Bring PEO in line with the best practices of other professional regulators;
- Foster public confidence in the profession;
- Conform with recent recommendations from several key government-related stakeholders; and
- Meet the regulatory expectations communicated by Attorney General of Ontario.

"Once implemented in January, the program will provide further assurance to the public that Ontario engineers will be accountable for meeting the standards of the profession.

### **2020–2022 Strategic Plan**

"At our November meeting, we affirmed the direction of PEO's 2020–2022 Strategic Plan, which summarizes our ongoing transformation project and includes a schedule for priority work. PEO's last strategic plan expired in 2020, and although there is a one-year overlap, the new plan does represent a big change in direction with our modernization and governance improvements based on PEO's Action Plan, Governance Roadmap and related decisions. The plan captures the work we have been focusing on since 2020 and serves as an official document to communicate our enterprise-wide transformation to stakeholders. It includes:

- Council's 2018 decision to commission an external review of its regulatory performance and formally accepting the review's final report;
- Council's approval of an Action Plan to address the report's recommendations, and an activity filter to help define our clarity of purpose;
- The CEO/registrar's initiative to address PEO's operations to ensure it has the capacity and agility to achieve regulatory and governance objectives;
- Council's approval of the two-year Governance Roadmap and accompanying tenets, direction and governance committees;
- Council's removal of any barriers to implementing mandatory continuing professional development; and
- Council's formation of an Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Exploratory Working Group.

"The plan also includes steps to transition to the next strategic plan. This work has begun, with Council defining its longer-term vision and goals.

### **Thank You, Johnny Zuccon**

"Before signing off, and on behalf of PEO Council, I extend a special thanks to CEO/Registrar Johnny Zuccon, the executive leadership team and the entire staff. After almost 30 years at PEO, including the last four years as CEO/registrar, Johnny has provided leadership over the greatest change this organization has seen in its 100-year history; Johnny is retiring.

"And on behalf of all of us, I wish him the very best. We have been extremely fortunate to have Johnny leading our organization. He has had a clear vision of where the organization needs to go, and Johnny was a huge support to me in my year as president and it has been a pleasure working with him.

"Johnny, the executive team and PEO staff have been an integral part of our modernization process, starting with creating and implementing the Action Plan that is critical to the success of this project. In addition, they have done an incredible job of maintaining PEO's regulatory obligations while adhering to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. We have asked them to embrace change and they're currently doing this and more. This includes all the considerable behind-the-scenes work necessary to host this virtual AGM.

"Finally, I wish incoming President Nick Colucci much success during his term. I look forward to working with Nick and Council to help usher in a new phase in PEO's history.

"Thank you."

### **QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL**

President Bellini invited licence holders to submit questions to the current Council.

A licence holder asked about best practices for organizations regarding reserve funds (i.e. Is it one times the operating budget?). Director of Finance Chetan Mehta stated that the answer to this question depends on the specifics of each organization, so there is no one answer. It would depend on the individual circumstances and what the plans of the organization are going forward.

A licence holder asked about the impact of the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act* amendments, and if the corresponding review and overhaul of the licensing processes will examine the emerging disciplines issue. CEO/Registrar Zuccon replied that the short answer is absolutely, it is a comprehensive overhaul; however, applications are not sorted at the front end in terms of whether the applicant is from an emerging discipline or not.

Regarding the president's outgoing report, President Bellini was asked to clarify what he meant by allowing the regulatory committees to independently do their work, and who they are to report to under the new governance model. President Bellini advised that the PEO regulatory committees and

their roles are typically defined in the legislation. It is a best practice to allow those committees to operate independently, rather than having councillors sit on those committees and affecting the outcomes of the work they do. There is not one particular reporting path they follow. Depending on the outputs they're providing, the committees report the outputs of the regulatory decisions either to the appropriate staff or to the Regulatory Policy and Legislation Committee.

A licence holder asked if PEO licence fees would be decreased considering the huge revenue. Audit and Finance Committee Chair Lorne Cutler replied that Council set the fees and that there were no plans to change the fees at this time, noting that PEO is looking at the longer range, not the immediate financial situation. He stated that fees had not been changed in 10 years, adding that when the fees were changed there was discussion about having automatic increases for inflation but that did not proceed, so fees are fixed where they are at this time. President Bellini added that the financial results from the past two years are atypical because PEO operations were affected by the pandemic and therefore it would be prudent to examine what PEO's financial performance looks like in years that are approaching normal operations to effectively make that decision.

A licence holder asked if PEO encourages chapters to support their members in the transition to mandatory CPD; and if so, what are some suggestions for chapters to do so. CEO/Registrar Zuccon stated that chapters are an integral part of the stakeholder relations exercise. They are a vehicle of PEO that represents the key stakeholders group and he would hope they are supportive of the program that Council has just enacted through legislation. The plans involve having a structured delivery vehicle such as a webinar. This will provide assistance for chapters to explain to licence holders how to comply with the new requirement.

A licence holder asked how the surplus is invested. Director of Finance Chetan Mehta advised that excess funds are passed on to PEO's fund manager in accordance with the board-approved investment policy on file.

A licence holder asked how PEO will ensure continuity on the newly formed governance committees, given that limited-time councillors serve on Council. President Bellini stated that the success of the new governance structure depends on having very effective performance at those committee levels. A series of criteria have been introduced when these committees are repopulated at the beginning of this Council year, a key one being continuity. The opening assumption would be that anyone still on Council would continue on the committee they were on the previous year; but they are not absolutely required to if they request to move to another one. However, the preference would be to maintain as much continuity on those committees as possible. This would be an extension of the corporate memory from year to year which is essential to committee effectiveness. He noted that even

under the previous structure, board committees were re-populated every year and there was less effort to ensure continuity, so he is hopeful under this new regime that this will be an improvement.

A licence holder asked what measures Council is taking to address anti-racism issues. CEO/Registrar Zuccon stated that in his report he said PEO should be proud of the work of PEO's Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Exploratory Working Group (AREWG), and that Council approved the Anti-Racism and Equity (ARE) code that sets in motion an opportunity for reviewing all of PEO operations. It will set PEO as a leader in this area and Council, and their next strategic plan will be addressing initiatives to move this forward. He further stated it is a large undertaking with much work to be done. President Bellini advised that, for probably the first time, this was tackled with the creation of a working group several years ago. It was motivated by the late Councillor Peter Cushman. The initial AREWG report, accepted by Council in June, outlines the vulnerabilities and risks to PEO. There has been much work done since, including the ARE Code passed by Council in April. President Bellini said this is a real step forward to addressing these issues, but noted this is the beginning, not the end. The fact that Council accepted that code does not mean we're done; it means we now have the tools to begin tackling these issues head on.

A licence holder asked about the mandatory CPD program and if there had been any consideration to grandfathering practising engineers who had been licensed for many years (i.e. 30+ years)—particularly those who own and operate an engineering practice. CEO/Registrar Zuccon stated that the mandatory CPD program is a requirement for all licence holders and that the current PEAK program is the basis for what is expected. It has the four components he outlined in his CEO/registrar's report, so the answer is no, there is no grandfathering provision, and it will apply to all licence holders as a condition of licence. The president encouraged people to take a look at the program to understand what the requirements are. He stated that he is a practising engineer who owns an engineering business and has had no issues.

A licence holder asked about consequences for failing to comply with mandatory professional development requirements. CEO/Registrar Zuccon replied that Council has authority in regulations for sanctions such as audits. The first one that would take effect would be an administrative suspension, which is really meant to provide the opportunity to comply with the requirements. PEO has the authority to suspend someone who is not complying with CPD requirements, and this will be phased in starting January 2024. Specific language in the regulation says there is a certain amount of latitude for the registrar. He stated that most engineers are maintaining their competence, and this is just a mechanism to demonstrate that. PEO's CPD program meets the requirements of self-guided professional development tailored to the individual and predicated strictly on a risk model.

A licence holder asked how many or what percentage of licence holders have voluntarily submitted under the PEAK program? CEO/Registrar Zuccon stated that he believes 14 to 15 per cent of licence holders are participating in the voluntary program which is remarkable considering the light approach PEO was instructed to take. He has noted for Council that the difficulty will be moving the current voluntary compliance level to close to 100 per cent. This will take some time.

A licence holder asked if mandatory CPD program will be applicable to retired licence holders. President Bellini advised that if you declare yourself as non-practising, you do not have to meet the continuing professional development requirements. A retired licence holder would still have to complete the ethics module, but that is the only applicable component.

A licence holder asked where licence holders can see where the surpluses are invested. Director of Finance Chetan Mehta stated that this information is

not published on the website, but for those wanting to see the market value of the actual investment portfolio this can be viewed on the balance sheet; it shows up as the item called marketable securities.

A licence holder, referring to the CEO/registrar's report, asked if the report presented by the governance process auditors indicated any biases in the licensing process and, if so, what were they and what was the severity?

CEO/Registrar Zuccon noted that in terms of the governance review, it wasn't quite a review but more of a governance baseline. Council elected at the time to ask, through an RFP, how PEO would ameliorate its current baseline measures and what came back was the Governance Roadmap. He did not believe this would have touched on any licensing issues that the question referred to. He did note that the external regulatory performance review examined how well PEO was doing in licensing. The review found that PEO's licensing process was overly complex and difficult to follow. Although it did not touch much on bias, it was noted that some of the face-to-face interviews may present as subjective.

*President Bellini recalled the meeting to order following a short break.*

### **LICENCE HOLDER SUBMISSIONS**

President Bellini stated that each year, in accordance with section 17 of By-Law No. 1, submissions from licence holders are welcomed as a way for them to express their views on matters relating to PEO affairs. He advised that submissions were due at end of day on Wednesday, April 20, and a guidance document to assist licence holders in making submissions was posted on PEO's website.

President Bellini advised that 12 submissions were received, and the complete submissions—which in some cases contain preamble and background information—were available on PEO's website. He then discussed how the licence holder submissions, which have long been a feature of the AGM, would be handled.

The guidelines that Council passed in 2020 permit each submission to be put to a vote, just as once happened in person, as a way of gauging the support of submissions from those attending the AGM. The vote does not, of course, reveal the support of licence holders generally. It is also not binding on Council. According to the guidelines, it does not even preclude Council from considering submissions that do not receive majority support at the AGM. What was not fully anticipated back in 2020 was the impact that virtual AGMs would have on licence holder participation, and on the volume and variety of submissions that would be received, even in comparison to live and in-person AGMs.

President Bellini stated that the 12 submissions have champions, most of whom recorded brief remarks. These remarks will be listened to carefully by Council, to whom the submissions are directed and considered together with the written content of each submission. He noted that if time were taken to vote on each submission the real point would be overlooked, which is to find out what people have to say to Council about matters that are important to them, not about how many votes they get online.

President Bellini, as chair, decided to dispense with voting on submissions and declared, with some confidence based on past experience at other AGMs, that each submission has the support necessary for Council to consider it. Staff will review all submissions and prepare a report for Council in September. This will enable Council to decide what, if any, action to take respecting each submission.

Licence holders were invited to submit comments and questions for the submission mover to consider, by sending an email to [agmsubmissions@peo.on.ca](mailto:agmsubmissions@peo.on.ca) before May 31, 2022. President Bellini advised that comments on particular submissions received during and after the AGM would be shared with the movers, and they would have two weeks to make additional com-

ments based on what they've read from their fellow licence holders. There will be a preliminary staff review of the submissions and the comments together with any recommendations for follow-up that seem appropriate. A note regarding this will be posted on PEO's website adjacent to the written submissions themselves.

Submission videos were shared with the audience, with the exception of submission #1, for which no video was provided.

### **SUBMISSION #1—Central Election and Search Committee Restructure**

It is generally accepted that officials running an election (e.g. Elections Canada) must remain neutral during the election period with respect to all candidates and show no favouritism to any of them.

It is important that election officials (specifically the Central Election and Search Committee (CESC)) have no affiliation with existing members of Council that could potentially create a bias towards supporting sitting members.

Present CESC structures and procedures do not comply with the above.

Moved by Peter DeVita, P.Eng., and seconded by Roger Jones, P.Eng.

Be it resolved that,

1. No member of the CESC shall be a member of the existing Council;
2. No member of the CESC shall be permitted to be a candidate in the year of their term on CESC;
3. This and future PEO AGMs be authorized to choose by election at the AGM (including virtual voters) three members to sit for a period of three years as members of the CESC; and
4. Council move at its earliest opportunity, but no later than 12 months, to have these changes to the CESC incorporated into the PEO Regulation, Section 12 of O. Reg. 941, to make these changes permanent.

### **SUBMISSION #2—Consequences for Violation of Election Rules by Councillors**

A pre-recorded message from the mover, Peter Devita, P.Eng., was played. He stated that the motion being presented was to seek election fairness by enforcing the rule that no one from Council can influence the election by promoting a specific candidate. The existing election rule that forbids sitting councillors to endorse or otherwise publicly support any candidate for election to Council has no consequences if the rule is violated.

Moved by Peter Devita, P.Eng., and seconded by Roger Jones, P.Eng.

Be it resolved that,

Councillors who do not comply, or do not wish to comply, with election rules shall be censured by Council.

### **SUBMISSION #3—PEO’s Role to Address the Climate Crisis**

A pre-recorded message from the mover, David Lapp, P.Eng., was played. He stated that currently PEO has no policies that would mandate licence holders to reduce the public risk of climate change, yet many of the other engineering regulators in Canada are defining their regulatory role and addressing climate change and proceeding with concrete actions to fulfill their responsibilities. PEO’s mandate to protect the public interest cannot now, or in the future, be achieved without considering continuous climate change. PEO must ensure engineering licence holders practise engineering competently and conduct themselves professionally with due consideration to climate change. Lack of consideration may lead to professional liability of the licence holder and potentially PEO as the regulator.

The motion was presented as a call to action for PEO to become meaningfully engaged in the climate change issue. This is an opportunity for PEO Council to become engaged in the climate crisis through PEO’s upcoming 2023–2025 Strategic Plan.

Moved by David Lapp, P.Eng., and seconded by Jim Chisholm, P.Eng.

Be it resolved that,

PEO Council adopts the climate crisis as one of the pillars of the PEO 2023–2025 Strategic Plan and that PEO Council undertakes the following actions:

- a) Adopts a formal public position on the changing climate in Ontario and its impact (or consequences) to public safety and welfare;
- b) Develops and adopts policies or positions on climate change adaptation and mitigation that inform the public on the evolving roles and responsibilities, specifically of how our licence holders will address current and future effects of climate change;
- c) Provide strategic direction on how PEO will support its licence holders in their daily professional practice of addressing climate change in order to assure public safety and welfare;
- d) Take into consideration the suggested basic elements outlined in the Appendix A to this motion;
- e) Authorize the necessary resources in the current and forthcoming annual budgets to enable the development and implementation of a multi-year comprehensive action plan to increase awareness among licence holders on their obligation to practise engineering in consideration of directives that address the impacts of climate change within the engineer’s role and duties;
- f) Establish a task force called the “Climate Change Action Plan Task Force” consisting of PEO members, support staff and any needed consulting services to develop a draft Climate Change Action Plan for the consideration of PEO Council; and

- g) Authorize activities that allow PEO Council to respond to current and future climate change issues that impact the public interest proactively rather than reactively.

### **SUBMISSION #4—Openness and Transparency**

A pre-recorded message from the mover, George Comrie, P.Eng., was played. He referred to several procedural changes that have reversed PEO’s longstanding policy of openness and transparency with respect to operations of Council and its committees. For example, non-Council and non-committee members, as the case may be, are being denied access to non-confidential meetings and briefing materials, and audio transcripts of Council meetings are no longer being posted on PEO’s website. Matters that are not legitimately confidential are being dealt with in-camera to avoid scrutiny by members of the profession and the public. Changes such as these are contrary to the principles of good governance by any standard and especially so for a self-regulating professional body that is acting as a delegated authority in the public interest. His resolution seeks to restore openness and transparency by ensuring members of the profession and the public have full access to Council and committee meetings, agenda materials and proceedings unless the subject matter falls within a narrowly defined set of exclusions.

Moved by George Comrie, P.Eng., and seconded by Thomas Chong, P.Eng.  
Be it resolved that,

1. All meetings of PEO Council, committees and task forces be open to the public except for meetings or portions thereof where the matter being considered is one of the following exceptions:
  - a) The security of PEO property;
  - b) Personal matters about an identifiable individual;
  - c) A proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of real property;
  - d) Labour relations or employee negotiations;
  - e) Litigation or potential litigation, including matters before courts of justice or administrative tribunals;
  - f) Advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;
  - g) A matter in respect of which the Council or committee is required to hold a closed meeting under the *Professional Engineers Act* or other legislation;
  - h) Information explicitly supplied in confidence to PEO by Canada, a province or territory, or a crown agency of any of them; or
  - i) A trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information, supplied in confidence to PEO which, if disclosed, could reasonably be expected to prejudice significantly the competitive position or interfere significantly with the contractual or other negotiations of a person, group of persons, or organizations.
2. Council reinstate immediately the posting on PEO’s website of recordings of Council meetings with both audio and video where available.
3. Council direct staff that notices and complete agenda materials of all open Council and committee meetings are to be made available to PEO licence holders and the public upon request.

### **SUBMISSION #5—Anti-Racism and Equity Code**

A pre-recorded message from the seconder, Vanessa Raponi, P.Eng., on behalf of the mover Val Davidson, P.Eng., and herself was played. She stated that whereas PEO has engaged in a number of activities aimed at reaching

Engineers Canada's 30 by 30 goal of having 30 per cent of newly licensed engineers be women by 2030, including a current research study to examine PEO's existing licensure process for potential gender biases and unintentional biases that impede women from obtaining licences, the findings should be considered in planning actions to address inequities related to race to consider the potential for unintended consequences for women (in general, as well as different racial groups). Through the creation of the Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Exploratory Working Group (AREWG) that has already been established, it is important to create policies and strategies that impact not only the inner working of PEO but also the individual licensee.

Moved by Val Davidson, P.Eng., and seconded by Vanessa Raponi, P.Eng.

Be it resolved that,

The AREWG develop an Anti-Racism & Equity Code for PEO that pertains to both the inner workings of PEO and the individual licensee.

#### **SUBMISSION #6—Council Member Succession Planning**

A pre-recorded message from the mover, Rob Willson, P.Eng., was played. He stated that his motion requests that PEO complete the process that it initiated in 2016 to update the selection system to conform to the approach recommended by modern governance specialists. The Council Term Limits Task Force and the subsequent Succession Planning Task Force recommended that PEO implement term limits for councillors and in parallel establish a succession planning process to ensure properly qualified candidates for its elections. In 2020, Council accepted this and directed the Executive Committee to develop an action plan to implement the recommendations. Implementation of succession planning was delayed until other changes to Council governance were implemented, which has now essentially been completed. Proper functioning of not-for-profit board elections requires that both term limits and succession planning be implemented together. Term limits, without succession planning, can lead to a board with insufficient experience and capability to deal with the mandates of the organization.

PEO has a deep base of experienced volunteers and an extensive membership who can bring their knowledge and expertise to bear in running a professional regulator; however, there is no system in place to find and motivate licence holders to run for Council.

Moved by Rob Willson, P.Eng., and seconded by Paul Ballantyne, P.Eng.

Be it resolved that,

By the next election cycle Council implements both the short-term recommendations of the Succession Planning Task Force and takes steps to update its election procedures to include a competency selection process to

ensure competent licence holders of the association are elected to represent the interests of the public.

#### **SUBMISSION #7—Practice Guidelines**

A pre-recorded message from the mover, Nancy Hill, P.Eng., was played. She advised that her motion supported the regulatory and governance changes PEO has been undertaking for the last few years. There have been a number of improvements over those years but felt there is a need to continue to support these improvements and changes, with a specific focus on the practice guidelines. PEO currently has 31 guidelines, 70 per cent of which are over five years old, 50 per cent are over 10 years old and 30 per cent are more than 20 years old. There is a clear need to change PEO's processes and change how these guidelines are developed to be more responsive to the needs of the province of Ontario and to transition to become a modern regulator.

Moved by Nancy Hill, P.Eng., and seconded by Peter Frise, P.Eng.

Be it resolved that,

PEO operationalize within PEO staff the development and review of practice guidelines with clear KPIs and a robust stakeholder consultation.

#### **SUBMISSION #8—Regulatory Policy Committee Structure and Composition**

A pre-recorded message from the mover, George Comrie, P.Eng., was played. He stated that as a member of PEO's Licensing Committee since its inception, he and his committee colleagues have been frustrated for the past couple of years with their inability to get Council and staff to take seriously the work they have been engaged in to try and improve PEO's licensing criteria and processes and address some long-standing related concerns. It seems that Council is refusing to listen to those volunteers who have the most knowledge and experience in the critical areas of regulatory policy. Recent changes to PEO's committee structure, made up solely of councillors, have only exacerbated this problem. The new Regulatory Policy and Legislation Committee (RPLC) has spent the entire past year trying to acquire the necessary domain knowledge to discharge its mandate while critical issues of regulatory policy remain unaddressed. As of the 2022 Annual General Meeting, the composition of this committee will materially change, and the learning process will start over again with no ability for non-councillors to participate in RPLC and no ability for councillors to participate otherwise in regulatory policy work. This unsustainable organization structure needs to be rethought in order for PEO to discharge its responsibilities to regulate professional engineering effectiveness in the public interest.

Moved by George Comrie, P.Eng., and seconded by Thomas Chong, P.Eng.

Be it resolved that,

In order to ensure that Council and its committees can work together effectively to advance PEO's regulatory agenda,

- 1) Council immediately suspend the resolution(s) creating the above unsustainable regulatory policy committee structure and composition; and
- 2) Reinstate the previously existing committee structure and composition and ensure that all operational and policy committees have councillors among their membership or appointed Council liaisons.

### **SUBMISSION #9—Commit to Fundamental Principles of Good “Self-Regulation” Governance**

A pre-recorded message from the mover, Roydon Fraser, P.Eng., was played. He stated the PEO 2022 AGM motion Commit to Action on PEO 2021 AGM motion entitled “Commit to Fundamental Principles of Good ‘Self-Regulation’ Governance” is fundamentally about addressing a flaw in how PEO handles licence holder AGM motions. The 2021 AGM motion “Commit to Fundamental Principles of Good ‘Self-Regulation’ Governance” was passed by an overwhelming majority (largest margin of all 2021 AGM motions) yet Council failed to act on it because specific actions were not identified. This motion rectifies this shortcoming by providing a list of specific actions for Council to consider improving peer review, improve knowledge-based decision making, improve transparency, improve communication and remove barriers to licence holder input.

Moved by Roydon Fraser, P.Eng., and seconded by Leila Notash, P.Eng.

Be it resolved and moved that,

Council commits to considering, discussing and deciding upon the following specific actions:

- (a) For peer review:
  - (i) separately identify staff review as distinct from peer review in briefing notes (i.e. recently staff reviews have replaced peer reviews);
  - (ii) enforce the previously passed Council motion that all significant motions must have peer review (e.g. recent regulation changes failed at this); and
  - (iii) councillors vote separately on, or do not vote on, AGM motions.
- (b) For knowledge-based decision making:
  - (i) ensure unfiltered peer review information is able to reach Council, and in particular ensure dissenting views and reasons are not filtered out;
  - (ii) support having the problem clearly identified and agreed to before jumping to a solution; and
  - (iii) do not prevent councillors from sitting on committees.
- (c) For transparency:
  - (i) make publicly available all non-in-camera Council agenda material two weeks prior to all Council meetings;
  - (ii) clearly state specific reasons for going in-camera when Council goes in-camera;
  - (iii) no secret or super-confidential meetings of Council (used to be called strategic meetings);
  - (iv) have all councillors publicly state and have recorded their vision for PEO;
  - (v) use technology so all Council votes are recorded votes; and
  - (vi) provide reports from member-populated committees at AGM.
- (d) For communication:
  - (i) actually obtain metrics on the degree to which *Engineering Dimensions* is read when in electronic form versus paper form;
  - (ii) adopt the Caretaker Convention for elections (see 2022 AGM motion that explains this further); and
  - (iii) establish a regulatory communications purpose for chapters which are currently not part of any of the six regulatory functions currently recognized by Council.

- (e) For removal of barriers to hearing and respecting diverse views:
  - (i) record, if requested, dissenting views and reasons in minutes if requested by a councillor; and
  - (ii) enable alternative views in *Engineering Dimensions*, perhaps via an editorial page.
- (f) Engage processes of continual improvement in all five areas identified in items (a) to (e).

### **SUBMISSION #10—PEO to Adopt the Election Caretaker Convention**

A pre-recorded message from the mover, Roydon Fraser, P.Eng., was played. He stated that the motion “PEO to adopt the Election Caretaker Convention” is about PEO election integrity. This year’s PEO election saw a complaint concerning the well-established Canadian democratic election principle of the Caretaker Convention that went so far as to illicit a legal opinion by PEO. In brief, PEO adopted long ago the Caretaker Convention (simple interpretation being non-interference in the election) for councillors, while the complaint alleged that the Caretaker Convention was violated by PEO headquarters. In the end, a legal opinion obtained concluded that PEO does not have to follow the Caretaker Convention and hence the complaint was judged as moot, there being no restriction on what PEO headquarters can do during an election even if it is to effectively mount a counter-campaign against one or more of the candidates. The legal opinion did not say PEO cannot follow the Caretaker Convention. Therefore, the purpose of this motion is to uphold the integrity of PEO’s elections by having PEO adopt the Caretaker Convention for not only councillors, as it has already done, but for PEO headquarters as well.

Moved by Roydon Fraser, P.Eng., and seconded by Keivan Torabi, P.Eng.

Be it resolved and moved that,

Council explicitly adopt the Election Caretaker Convention for staff in addition to its current adoption for councillors.

### **SUBMISSION #11—Reduce PEO Fee(s) to Reduce Large Budget Surplus**

A pre-recorded message from the mover, Roydon Fraser, P.Eng., was played. He stated that PEO has recently amassed a large surplus over the COVID-19 period. There is a high potential, due to human nature, that PEO will spend this surplus on new, ongoing expenditures that will lead to ongoing increased fees with no input from licence holders and with no demonstrated added value. Given PEO has the ability to raise fees at will without licence holder input, PEO should reduce the surplus by reducing licence holder fees until the surplus is reduced to a nominal value. If PEO requires more money for future ongoing initiatives, these future initiatives can be used to justify future fee increases. This motion is really about accountability with licence holders’ money.

Moved by Roydon Fraser, P.Eng., and seconded by Vajahat Banday, P.Eng.

Be it resolved and moved that,

Council reduce PEO's budget surplus by reducing future fees (also known as a fee holiday in pension plans), or establish a clear plan for the budget surplus that may involve one-time, peer-reviewed expenditures but no ongoing expenditures (i.e. cannot be used to run mandatory PEAK program; mandatory PEAK program costs must be a separate line item outside the budget surplus).

### **SUBMISSION #12—Updates to the *Professional Engineers Act* to Reflect Governance Changes**

A pre-recorded message from the mover, Christina Visser, P.Eng., was played. She stated that, given the recent governance changes and the establishment of new governance committees, PEO is no longer in compliance with the *Professional Engineers Act*. Thus, Council should request changes to this act to reflect the regulatory transformation and governance structure changes and to enable ongoing modernization of the process. PEO's external regulatory performance review conducted in 2019 recommended that:

1. PEO should review all its committees, subcommittees and working groups to ensure they are both necessary and fit for a regulatory purpose; and
2. That PEO should work with the attorney general's office to seek changes to its statute to modernize its organization and regulatory powers.

Moved by Christina Visser, P.Eng., and seconded by Mark Frayne, P.Eng.

Be it resolved that,

Council directs the CEO/registrar to request changes to the *Professional Engineers Act* to reflect the regulatory transformation and governance structure changes and to allow for ongoing modernization of the licensing process and reflect the principles of right-touch regulation.

These changes should include the establishment of the following committees under section 10 of the *Professional Engineers Act*:

- Audit and Finance Committee;
- Governance and Nominating Committee;
- Human Resources and Compensation Committee; and
- Regulatory Policy and Legislation Committee.

President Bellini thanked all those who brought forward their submissions.

### **PRESENTATION TO OUTGOING COUNCILLORS**

President Bellini congratulated retiring licence holders of the 2021–2022 Council who had worked diligently to move the profession forward. President Bellini expressed his personal appreciation to all for their collaboration, support and encouragement throughout the 2021–2022 year. He stated that it has been a pleasure serving as president and chair.

President Bellini advised that the outgoing councillors had received a certificate of appreciation in recognition of their service to the profession. President Bellini thanked and recognized the following outgoing members of Council: Marisa Sterling, past president; Marilyn Spink, elected vice president; Chantal Chiddle, Eastern Region councillor and appointed vice president; Peter Broad, Western Region councillor; Todd Bruyere, lieutenant governor-in-council appointee; Michael Chan, councillor-at-large; Qadira Jackson Kouakou, lieutenant governor-in-council appointee; Lisa MacCumber, West Central Region councillor; Patrick Quinn, councillor-at-large; Luc Roberge and Ramesh Subramanian, Northern Region councillors.

### **INSTALLATION OF NEW PRESIDENT**

Past President Bellini administered the oath of office to Nick Colucci as the 103rd president for the 2022–2023 term.

### **PRESENTATION TO PAST PRESIDENT BELLINI**

President Colucci made a special presentation to Past President Bellini to acknowledge his just-completed term of office as PEO president. On behalf of Council, he thanked Past President Bellini and expressed sincere appreciation for all his work and efforts to both PEO and the profession and presented him with tokens of appreciation, including an amethyst inukshuk, a framed copper embossed art card, a certificate of appreciation, a past president's lapel pin and PEO's outgoing President's Award.

### **CLOSING REMARKS BY PRESIDENT COLUCCI**

President Colucci provided the following remarks:

"Hello everyone, fellow engineers and honoured guests. I am honoured to address you today as my first act as PEO's 103rd president during this, our regulator's 100th annual meeting in our centennial year. Thank you for entrusting me to lead Council over the coming term. I undertake this new role with a deep sense of responsibility to both the people of Ontario, whom we are mandated to protect, and to our self-regulated profession.

"June will mark 100 years since the passage of the *Professional Engineers Act* and we have been regulating the profession proudly over all that time, and we are wrapping up a grand modernization project that will ensure we continue this important regulatory work effectively into the future. I would like to thank this year's Council and staff for all their hard work and efforts over the past year which we heard about over the course of this meeting. And I give thanks and best wishes to CEO/Registrar Johnny Zuccon, who recently announced his retirement after almost 30 years serving PEO. Johnny's work, especially over the past four years leading PEO, leaves us in excellent shape to continue our work as a modern regulator that delivers on its statutory mandate and is supported by a governance culture that consistently makes decisions that serve and protect the public interest. He will be greatly missed, and we wish him well in his retirement.

"I would also like to thank Ontario's attorney general, the Honourable Doug Downey, for his kind and supportive words today.

"Before I lay out our priorities for the coming Council term, I would like to tell you a bit about myself and how I find myself here today as president, following more than 35 years as a PEO volunteer. While I'm currently director of infrastructure services with the Town of Erin during the day, I have also consistently volunteered my time with many organizations, including PEO. I began volunteering with PEO after graduating from the University of Waterloo in 1987. I started on the chapter executive of the Lake Ontario Chapter, moving through the ranks and ultimately serving as chapter chair. I then relocated to the Peterborough Chapter, where I served on the chapter executive until I was convinced by colleagues to run for PEO Council.

“I ran and lost but tried again the next term and was successful. After two terms as Eastern Region councillor, I relocated to the East Central Region and ran for Council again, becoming East Central Region councillor after a successful election. At the PEO AGM that concluded my second term as East Central Region councillor, I was discussing plans for the coming year as a retired councillor when my phone rang. It was my father with some terrible news: My mother was in the hospital and needed emergency surgery. This led to my mother spending several months in an ICU bed, followed by several more months of recovery. This experience had a profound effect on myself and my family. I never gave up and advocated for my mom every day she was in the hospital. After my mom was safely home, I decided to run for PEO vice president. I lost. This was followed by three more campaigns for PEO president, and in 2021 I was successfully elected as PEO president-elect, making me president during PEO’s centennial year.

“On June 14, 2022, Professional Engineers Ontario will turn 100. Not only is it PEO’s 100th anniversary, 2022 is also a critical year in PEO’s transformation to a modern, future-ready regulator. We have completed the Governance Roadmap; and over our Council term, we will be overseeing some very important initiatives that will continue PEO’s transformation.

### Licence Renewal and FARPACTA

“As you know, in December the Ontario legislature proclaimed the *Working for Workers Act*, which includes big amendments to the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act*, to which PEO is accountable. These amendments will require significant changes for PEO and several other regulators on how we implement licensing and registration practices for internationally trained applicants. They include:

- Canadian Experience—Removing specific Canadian experience requirements to obtain a licence, providing alternatives that do not include a Canadian experience component or applying for an exemption to the prohibition. All regulators governed by FARPACTA, which includes PEO, will be required to fully comply by December 2, 2023. To comply with these new requirements, we will examine our 12-month Canadian engineering experience requirement for licensure. We are exploring the basis for the requirement, how it protects the public and how it might be modified to balance the interests of licence applicants—including internationally trained—and public safety.
- Decision-Making Timeframes—We will be required to improve our licence and registration processing and response times, including acknowledging receipt of application within 10 days, making registration decisions within six months of the application date and publicly reporting our registration timeline compliance.

- And an Emergency Plan—We also need to create an emergency plan to ensure continuity of operations and processes to expedite renewals and new registrations in the event of public emergencies like another pandemic or natural disaster.

### 2020–2022 Strategic Plan

“We must also continue and complete the remaining elements of the 2020–2022 Strategic Plan, which Council reaffirmed last November. The plan articulates the transformation work PEO has been focusing on since we received the recommendations from the external regulatory performance review in 2019. The plan, and ongoing transformation work, covers three pillars: operational effectiveness, organizational alignment and governance renewal. And it’s necessary work to meet both the external review recommendations and realize our ultimate goal of becoming a professional, modern regulator.

“Much of this work has been achieved by the hard work of PEO staff and previous Councils, but it will be up to this Council to oversee the plan’s wrap-up and usher in the new strategic plan. The remaining work we will need to direct during this term includes:

- Implementing a mandatory continuing professional development program, which is scheduled to go live in January 2023;
- Continuing to modernize our licensing and registration processes, including fully online licence applications;
- Continuing our equity, diversity and inclusion work, and examining any recommendations that will come from the gender audit that is currently exploring potential gender biases and any barriers to women getting licensed; and
- Wrapping up some remaining elements from the two-year Governance Roadmap. In February, Council approved a motion related to Phase 4 of the roadmap workplan that will see PEO chapters continue as currently referenced in our regulations and bylaws. The Governance and Nominating Committee has directed the Regional Councillors Committee to oversee a risk assessment, in consultation with chapters, to eliminate ‘high risk’ activities and operationalize others so we maintain volunteer engagement.

“We want to operationalize chapters to ensure the risk to the organization is reduced while continuing the amazing work chapters do to benefit our licence holders. We will continue work on the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan. At the January strategic planning kick-off meeting, Council made it clear that the licensure process must be a key focus of the upcoming plan: exploring the future of licensing and whether current licensure requirements are an obstacle to ensuring public protection. Work is currently underway with stakeholder consultations with both licence holders and external partners, as well as an internal capacity analysis and a public focus group. We’re also undertaking an environmental scan, examining priorities among other regulators and potential future regulatory demands.

“In May, Council will convene a two-day workshop to review the consultations information and affirm strategic plan goals in keeping with our mandate. By November, we will have an approved strategic plan for the next few years.

### Council Remuneration

“On a related matter, this term we will also review Council compensation—exploring the creation of a remuneration policy that recognizes the significant time commitment associated with service on Council and the need to continue to attract qualified councillor candidates.

Remuneration is also considered important from an equity perspective; while some firms may compensate employees for time taken to participate on Council, other individuals may not have access to the same benefits. Remuneration allows individuals who do not have the opportunity to participate through their employer to be compensated for their time.

### Stakeholder Engagement

"This term we will begin developing a more strategic approach to stakeholder relations where regular, coordinated and purposeful engagement is maintained with government, co-regulatory bodies and other relevant stakeholders to inform PEO policy, practices and strategic initiatives. We have begun this shift in approach with the creation of a new external relations staff position to ensure we deliver well-considered and credible regulatory outcomes by gathering and communicating appropriate input and feedback from all relevant stakeholders. One of our first engagement tasks will be revisiting PEO's participation in Engineers Canada's affinity program with TD Insurance Meloche Monnex.

### CEO/Registrar Search

"And finally, we must successfully complete the search for a new CEO/registrar to replace our outgoing and hard-working CEO/registrar, Johnny Zuccon, who is taking a well-deserved retirement in June. It is a full slate that will keep us busy over the coming term, and we are undertaking this work amid PEO's centennial.

"Much has changed since 1922, including the expectations of professional regulators by the public. Today, we are transforming to meet these evolving expectations while continuing to hold our licence and certificate holders accountable to all Ontarians. Our centennial provides the perfect opportunity to reaffirm and clearly define its role with stakeholders, including the public, licence holders and government.

"As our centennial milestone approaches, we will be sharing an evolution of PEO's corporate identity that aims to move away from current perceptions of PEO as a member association, to a modern, forward-looking regulator intent on building a better, safer Ontario by ensuring each professional engineer is accountable and working to the highest standards. So stay tuned and watch for some exciting announcements from PEO.

"Before I close, I would like to affirm that this Council will continue operating as a direction and control board, providing strategic direction and high-level control while leaving operations to PEO staff. We will maintain our role as an effective, focused regulatory governance board as set out in the Governance Roadmap and Council's approval of governance tenets and directions.

"I would like to thank Past President Christian Bellini and previous Councils for working through the Governance Roadmap steps and milestones, which have brought us

here to a regulatory governance model that is fully consistent with that of a modern, enlightened and responsive self-regulator.

"Thank you."

### INTRODUCTION OF INCOMING MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

President Colucci introduced the 2022–2023 members of Council:

Past President Christian Bellini; President Nicholas Colucci; President-Elect Roydon Fraser, PhD, P.Eng., FEC; Vice President Gregory Wowchuk, P.Eng.; Councillors-at-Large Vajahat Banday, P.Eng., MSEE, MSCE, PE (Michigan), FEC, and Leila Notash; Eastern Region Councillors Tim Kirkby, P.Eng., FEC, and Randy Walker; East Central Region Councillors Christopher Chahine and David Kiguel, P.Eng., FEC; Northern Region Councillor Dana Montgomery, P.Eng.; Western Region Councillors Vicki Hilborn, P.Eng., and Susan McFarlane; West Central Region Councillors Jim Chisholm and Pappur Shankar, P.Eng., FEC; and Lieutenant Governor-in-Council Appointees Arjan Arenja, Robert Brunet, Lorne Cutler, Andy Dryland, Paul Mandel, George Nikolov, Scott Schelske and Sherlock Sung.

President Colucci also introduced the 2022–2023 PEO directors on the board of Engineers Canada: Arjan Arenja, Christian Bellini, Danny Chui, Nancy Hill and Marisa Sterling. He noted that Christian Bellini, newly elected PEO director on the board of Engineers Canada, would formally assume his role at the Engineers Canada 2022 Annual Meeting of Members in May.

There was a virtual round of applause to welcome the new councillors and directors.

### CONCLUSION

President Colucci then declared the 100th AGM of the Association of Professional Engineers Ontario concluded.

### Johnny Zuccon, P.Eng., FEC CEO/Registrar