

Minutes of the 102nd Annual Business Meeting

SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2024

PRESIDENT AND CHAIR: ROYDON FRASER, PhD, P.ENG., FEC

These minutes are prepared to align with PEO's By-Law No. 1, Section 15(7): "The record of all Council and committee meetings shall include only enough detail to summarize discussions and record motions and decisions made as a result of those discussions."

The 102nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO) was held on Saturday, April 20, 2024, in a hybrid setting with both in person and videoconference participation.

President Fraser called the meeting to order and welcomed PEO licence holders with a special welcome to the over 4000 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 Fraser then welcomed Ontario's attorney general, The Honourable Doug Downey, to the podium to address the 2024 AGM.

In his message, Downey expressed his gratitude to all those attending the AGM and PEO for holding this year's AGM in his home riding of Barrie-Springwater-Oro Medonte. Minister Downey thanked President Fraser for his service as PEO president over the past year and noted that he looks forward to working with President-elect Wowchuk in the coming year. Minister Downey also mentioned the late Roy McMurtry, LLB, former attorney general, who passed earlier this year, and remembered Minister McMurtry for his contributions to PEO.

He noted that the attorney general's office is currently working on reviewing Ontario's current *Construction Act* and invited PEO to be part of the discussion while the Ministry of the Attorney General is conducting its review of the current act.

On behalf of PEO and Council, President Fraser thanked Attorney General Downey for joining PEO's AGM. He then welcomed special guests from Engineers Canada and its constituent associations as well as invited organizations in Ontario's engineering community and allied professions.

President Fraser stated that PEO recognizes its work takes place on traditional Indigenous territories across the province and that this year's AGM in Barrie is being held on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg people, which includes the Wendat, Odawa, Ojibwe and Pottawatomi Nations. He noted that reconciliation is about building a renewed relationship with Indigenous Peoples and that there is a role for the engineering profession in this regard.

INTRODUCTION OF COUNCIL

President Fraser introduced the members of the 2023–2024 PEO Council:

President Roydon Fraser, PhD, P.Eng., FEC; Past President Nick Colucci, BAsc, MBA, P.Eng., FEC; President-elect Gregory P. Wowchuk, BAsc, Dipl.El.Tech., P.Eng., FEC; Vice President (elected) Christopher Chahine, P.Eng., PMO, SSBPP; Vice President (appointed) and Councillor-at-Large Leila Notash, PhD, P.Eng., FEC; Councillors-at-Large Vajahat Banday, P.Eng., MSEE, MSCE, PE (Michigan), FEC, and Glen Schjerning, P.Eng.; Eastern Region Councillors Tim Kirkby, P.Eng., FEC, and Michelle Liu, MAsc, P.Eng., JD, LEED-GA; East Central Region Councillors David Kiguel, P.Eng., FEC, and Nanda L. Lwin, BAsc, MEPP, P.Eng., FEC; Northern Region Councillors Luc Roberge, P.Eng., FEC, and Dana Montgomery, P.Eng.; Western Region Councillors Vicki Hilborn, P.Eng., and Susan MacFarlane, MSc, PhD, P.Eng.; West Central Region Councillors Pappur Shankar, P.Eng., FEC, and Ravinder Singh Panesar, P.Eng., FEC; and Lieutenant Governor-in-Council Appointees Arjan Arenja, MBA, P.Eng., Lorne Cutler, MBA, P.Eng., Andy Dryland, C.E.T., Paul Mandel, MBA, CPA, CA, CBV, CFF, George Nikolov, P.Eng., Scott Schelske, P.Eng., FEC; Sherlock Sung, BAsc; and Uditha Senaratne, P.Eng.

President Fraser thanked Council for all their hard work and service.

President Fraser also introduced PEO staff: Jennifer Quaglietta, CEO/registrar; Meg Feres, manager, Council operations; Chetan Mehta, director, finance; and Parliamentarian Justin Pappano.

IN MEMORIAM

President Fraser asked that all those present observe a moment of silence in remembrance of those PEO licence holders who passed away in 2023.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

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

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

President Fraser referred licence holders to the minutes of the 2023 AGM. It was moved by Past President Nick Colucci and seconded by Councillor Vicki Hilborn that the minutes of the 2023 AGM, as published in the Fall 2023 issue of *Engineering Dimensions* and as distributed at the meeting, be adopted as presented.

Motion carried

FINANCIAL REPORT

President Fraser invited Councillor Tim Kirkby, chair of the 2023–2024 Audit and Finance Committee, to provide a report on PEO's audited financial statements.

Kirkby reviewed the financial information, noting that the 2023 audited financial statements were approved by Council at the April 2024 meeting. He stated that these statements are on the PEO AGM webpage and would be published in the May/June (Spring) issue of *Engineering Dimensions*.

Kirkby presented a graph showing a five-year trend of revenues, expenses and net income. He noted that in 2022, with the relaxation of most COVID-19-related restrictions, staff and volunteers were able to commence work on various initiatives and projects that had been either delayed or deferred during the pandemic. Due to this, there was an increase in expenses resulting in a lower surplus of \$2.1 million compared to a \$6.5 million surplus in 2021.

In 2023, PEO had higher revenues due to monies from our investments, the insurance affinity program with Engineers Canada and from membership, applications, registration and exam revenues. With restrictions related to the pandemic having been largely removed in 2023, work was started on several new initiatives and projects resulting in an increase in operating expenses and spend on various strategic plan projects. In 2023, PEO reported a surplus of \$4.3 million in 2023 in comparison to a surplus of \$2.1 million in 2022.

A slide was presented showing the key financial highlights as of December 31, 2023:

- Revenues of \$32.6 million (vs \$32.7 million in 2022);
- Expenses of \$33.3 million (vs \$30.6 million in 2022);
- A surplus or net excess of revenues over expenses of \$4.3 million (vs \$2.1 million in 2022);
- \$38.1 million in cash and marketable securities (vs \$34.7 million in 2022); and
- The lowest P.Eng. fees in Canada.

Kirkby 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

A question was asked to PEO's director, finance about Deloitte LLP's current contract with PEO, which will expire in 2026.

It was moved by Councillor Tim Kirkby and seconded by Councillor Lorne Cutler that the firm of Deloitte LLP, chartered accountants, be appointed as PEO's auditors for the association for the 2023 fiscal year or until their successor is appointed.

Motion carried

CEO/REGISTRAR'S REPORT

CEO/Registrar Quaglietta extended a warm welcome to everyone attending both virtually and in person. She opened her speech by acknowledging the hard work of the entire 2023–2024 Council and its commitment to the engineering profession and the public interest and thanking President Fraser on their collaboration over the past year in the evolution of PEO as a regulator.

Quaglietta provided an update on the introduction of the annual Operational Plan as part of the 2023–25 Strategic Plan approved by Council. The Operational Plan has four main goals: improving PEO's licensing processes without compromising public safety, optimizing PEO's organizational performance, implementing a continuous governance improvement program and refreshing PEO's vision to ensure all stakeholders see value and relevance in PEO.

Quaglietta reported that in 2023 PEO successfully completed all 23 deliverables laid out for the year and encouraged the membership to review PEO's progress by reading the CEO/Registrar's Reports on the PEO website.

Governance Scorecard

Quaglietta also presented the introduction of the Governance Scorecard, which tracks 12 quantitative indicators aligned with PEO's core functions of regulatory operations, policy, finance and strategy and organizational culture. The first scorecard was included in the CEO/Registrar's Report to Council in February 2024 and reported on PEO's achievements throughout 2023. Moving forward, the Governance Scorecard will be a regular feature of the CEO/Registrar's Report at Council meetings.

Strategic Stakeholder Advisory Group

Quaglietta mentioned the introduction of the Council-approved Strategic Stakeholder Advisory Group in November 2023. The advisory group replaces a number of other advisory and engagement forums and will promote consideration of diverse, expert perspectives on many issues and initiatives. The advisory group will begin work in the coming weeks.

Changes to FARPACTA

Quaglietta noted that as of May 15, 2023, PEO introduced a modified process to comply with recent amendments to the provincial *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act*, or FARPACTA. All professional regulators must meet certain FARPACTA performance requirements. Notably, PEO is required to make a licensing decision for 90 per cent of internationally trained applicants within 180 days. PEO can no longer specify Canadian professional experience as a licensing requirement. PEO's regulations were amended in 2023 to formally remove the Canadian experience requirement.

In 2023, PEO issued almost 4400 licences under both legacy and FARPACTA-compliant processes. PEO still has a sizable inventory of applications under the legacy requirement, although this number has decreased from approximately 34,000 in July to under 28,000 with a strategy to reduce the inventory by identifying approximately 3000 legacy applicants who could immediately benefit from the new licensing approach.

Quaglietta further noted that with the oversight of Council, the Regulatory Policy and Legislation Committee (RPLC) throughout last year worked to develop a streamlined FARPACTA-compliant licensing process that emulates PEO's existing standards and allows PEO to more quickly assess candidates' suitability to practise in Ontario while maintaining the educational component for PEO's licensing requirements. PEO will continuously and actively explore viable solutions to help recent graduates navigate their experience requirements for licensure as the new model will meet a key pillar of the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan, which aims to improve the licensing process without compromising public safety.

PEAK

Quaglietta noted the current status of PEO's mandatory continuing professional development program (CPD), administered through the Practice Evaluation and Knowledge (PEAK) program, which became mandatory for most licence holders on January 1, 2023.

PEAK consist of two online elements—the Professional Evaluation and the Professional Practice Module due every January 31—and a third element, the Continuing Professional Development Report, which is required of all practising licence holders and due by December 31 of every calendar year.

Quaglietta noted that in 2023 PEO's focus was on education to promote compliance with the PEAK obligation and reported that even without immediate threat of sanctions, more than three-quarters of licence holders fulfilled their PEAK obligations in 2023, and PEO expects an even higher rate of compliance in 2024.

Quaglietta also noted that in response to feedback and based on a risk assessment, Council has exempted licence holders on fee remission, most of whom are retired, from PEAK. Additionally, PEO has expanded the criteria for eligible CPD hours to include both core engineering learning and supplemental learning. PEO will continue to refine and improve the PEAK program to make it as meaningful and accessible as possible to licence holders.

Customer Service

Quaglietta also gave an update on the introduction of PEO's dedicated first-level customer service team. In 2023, PEO responded to over 18,000 inquiries.

Chapter Engagement

Quaglietta mentioned that PEO's new Chapter Events Engagement Model will ensure each of the province's five regions will receive at least two visits per year, and each chapter will receive a visit at least once every three years. PEO's initial chapter visits have been received very favourably by licence holders.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at PEO

Quaglietta stated that PEO's EDI activities are informed by its Anti-Racism and Equity Code, which was endorsed by Council in April 2022. The code's eight principles define PEO's obligations as a regulator, service provider, employer and organization. PEO is continuing to operationalize the work suggested by the code, including with respect to the participation of women and Indigenous communities in the engineering profession.

PEO's Digital Transformation

Quaglietta mentioned that throughout 2023, PEO continued its digital transformation journey as part of PEO's evolution as a modern regulator. PEO has focused on cybersecurity and compliance to protect PEO's systems and data. Additionally, licence holders will see the benefits of PEO's digital improvements firsthand.

Quaglietta also noted that in the summer of 2023, PEO introduced the digital licence for newly issued P.Engs, temporary and limited licences and limited technologists. PEO issued its 3000th digital licence last February and are working towards expanding the available digital options to existing licence holders, certificate of authorization holders and consulting engineers.

New Guidelines

Quaglietta noted that PEO's Knowledge Centre contains a wide range of resources available to our licence holders and the public. These include PEO's standards, to which all licence holders must adhere; guidelines, which are voluntary and make up the bulk of PEO's published advice; and bulletins, which provide professional advice on urgent matters and are often a precursor to new guidelines.

Licence holders can also engage with practice advisory services, where they can speak with a PEO staff member to better understand available resources. As PEO revises more of its older guidelines, Quaglietta encouraged licence holders and any other interested party to register for a PEO subscription at the Knowledge Centre webpage.

Closing Statements

Quaglietta recognized that the AGM is being held during National Volunteer Week and acknowledged PEO's 925 volunteers, thanking them for their continued service to the regulator. A thank-you video was presented, emphasizing the dedication and efforts volunteers have contributed to PEO over the years.

PRESIDENT FRASER'S OUTGOING REPORT

President Fraser began by sharing his thoughts on the business conducted by Council over the 2023–2024 term. President Fraser thanked the CEO/registrar for tackling a challenging operational year with positivity and dedication and expressed his gratitude to the current Council, chapters and committee volunteers for their hard work this past year.

President Fraser highlighted that the engineering profession is currently at a crossroads and that it will be important for PEO to adapt to the rapidly changing profession while ensuring the profession is acting in the best interest of the public, to safeguard public health, safety and the environment.

Reflecting on the past, President Fraser presented the history of the engineering profession and the need to regulate the profession because of advancements in industry, public safety and the industrial revolutions stemming from the mid-19th century to the early 20th century. Fraser mentioned that the evolution of technology, including the advent of artificial intelligence, represents both opportunities and threats to the public; and society can either be proactive and agile in safely accommodating or become reactionary once threats become realized.

President Fraser noted that 92 per cent of current PEO applicants are confined to just 10 traditional and closely related engineering disciplines while only 8 per cent belong to the 22 other engineering disciplines identified by PEO and that today's engineering spans a wide range of disciplines, and new engineering disciplines will continue to emerge.

President Fraser then shared the current progress of PEO's visioning statement process and the high interest expressed by members in refreshing PEO's vision to ensure all stakeholders see relevance and value in PEO. By fall of 2023, 99 PEO volunteers participated in 10 Vision Advisory Groups.

President Fraser reminded members that a good vision statement is goal oriented, audacious, inspiring and widely accepted by an array of stakeholders and guides an organization to achieve its mission. He invited attendees to read his President's Message in the recent *Engineering Dimensions* for more details on the vision process and encouraged in-person attendees to join the vision statement interactive exercise later in the day.

President Fraser concluded his report by reminding members that the professional engineer designation represents the highest standards of engineering knowledge, experience and professionalism in the country. Being licensed demonstrates a commitment to safeguarding the public and to engineering excellence; it also demonstrates that the licence holder has the right skills, education and attitude with proven problem-solving abilities.

President Fraser encouraged the incoming councillors to focus on issues facing PEO, such as the value and relevancy of the P.Eng. designation, adaptation to globalization, increasing whistleblowing protections and improving the licensing and admissions process. He then recognized that councillors, PEO volunteers and staff members have always had the best interest of PEO at heart, encouraged further collaboration for greater relevancy and a greater ability to safeguard the public interest.

QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL

Licence holders were invited to submit written questions. President Fraser, the CEO/registrar or the director, finance responded to several questions related to topics such as application wait times and processes, how to get new engineering graduates to apply for licensure, the EIT rebate program, the current visioning exercise ongoing at PEO and how PEO's financial surplus is being used. It was noted that the responses to these questions and others not addressed during this meeting due to time constraints will be posted on the AGM page of PEO's website.

SUBMISSION #1—DO NO HARM TO HUMANS AND THE HUMAN CONDITION

A pre-recorded message from the mover, Prakash Bansod, P.Eng., was played. He stated that PEO's current Code of Ethics is either vague or uncommitted to public health, waste management, protection of the environment and the role of its engineers in the research, design, sales and distribution of weapon systems specifically directed at killing human beings, and malevolent cyber technology. The proposed changes to the Code of Ethics will remove any ambiguity in terms of the above-mentioned issues.

The AGM floor was open to questions and comments. The mover responded to several questions related to topics such as how the motion can be applied effectively, how the motion could be enforced, alternative ways on addressing the purpose of the motion and future outcomes if this motion is carried by the membership.

The president called for a vote on the motion.

Moved by Prakash Bansod, P.Eng., and seconded by Zeljko Sikic, P.Eng.

Be it resolved:

That the newly elected Council strike a committee of registered PEO engineers to study the proposed changes to the Code of Ethics of the PEO about the proposed "Do no harm to humans and the human condition" clause as described in the preamble. This committee should report back within nine months. The Code of Ethics Committee should consist of at least 41 per cent (50 per cent is equity, 40 per cent is aspirational, and 41 per cent is a step in the right direction!) of professional women engineers. This committee should consider the following:

- 1) The justification for the required changes to the Code of Ethics in terms of current concerns of the defence-related industries and global conflict, global warming, mounting waste management issues, blatant local and international threats to information technology infrastructure, and malevolent or irresponsible use of AI.
- 2) Communicate with membership/practising engineers regarding the proposed changes to the Code of Ethics. This could be achieved by posting surveys on the PEO website. As an incentive, accept two hours of professional development towards the member's annual professional development requirements for a completed survey.
- 3) Seek legal advice on the ramifications of enforcing the proposed Code of Ethics bylaw.

Motion defeated

PRESENTATION TO OUTGOING COUNCILLORS

President Fraser congratulated retiring licence holders of the 2023–2024 Council who had worked diligently to move the profession forward and expressed his personal appreciation to all for their collaboration, support and encouragement throughout the 2023–2024 term. He stated that it has been a pleasure serving as president and chair.

President Fraser advised that the outgoing councillors had received a token of appreciation in recognition of their service to the profession. He thanked and recognized the following outgoing members of Council: Arjan Arenja, lieutenant governor-in-council appointee; Vajahat Banday, councillor-at-large; Christopher Chahine, vice president; Nick Colucci, past president; David Kiguel, East Central Region councillor; Tim Kirkby, Eastern Region councillor; and Dana Montgomery, Northern Region councillor.

INSTALLATION OF NEW PRESIDENT

Gregory P. Wowchuk took the oath of office as the 105th president for the 2024–2025 term. Past President Fraser presented him with the chain of office.

PRESENTATION TO PAST PRESIDENT FRASER

President Wowchuk, on behalf of Council, thanked Past President Fraser and expressed sincere appreciation for all his work and efforts to both PEO and the profession. President Wowchuk recognized Past President Fraser's 30+ years serving on Council, chapters and on numerous PEO committees. He

presented Past President Fraser with tokens of appreciation, including an amethyst inukshuk, a framed copper embossed art card, a certificate of appreciation, a Past President's lapel pin, PEO's outgoing President's Award and a Lifetime PEO Membership Certificate.

CLOSING REMARKS BY PRESIDENT GREGORY P. WOWCHUK

President Wowchuk welcomed all members who are participating in the AGM and thanked Council and staff on working very hard to hold the event in a hybrid format, including the first opportunity for in-person attendance since 2019. President Wowchuk invited all members to participate in a dialogue session in the afternoon so members can have direct access to councillors and peers.

President Wowchuk thanked Past President Fraser on his unwavering commitment to PEO and the personal friendship and his service over the past three decades at PEO. He also recognized the hard work and dedication of the many unpaid volunteers who contribute to PEO's success.

President Wowchuk commented that there needs to be more member participation in PEO's electoral process as about 11 per cent of PEO members participate in annual elections, and there must be further re-engagement with the approximately 90,000 PEO members. He also emphasized PEO's commitment to equality and diversity and that the profession is a "big tent" where all qualified practitioners are welcome and no one is entitled to special treatment or access.

President Wowchuk mentioned that he believes the membership should re-focus efforts on the core functions of professional regulation: licencing, enforcement and discipline.

Reflecting on the ever-changing world, President Wowchuk noted that technology is creating new disciplines and organizations like PEO must become more nimble and less bureaucratic, noting that this can only be achieved when engineers are front and centre in the process.

President Wowchuk noted that he is looking forward to a productive year as PEO's 105th president with Council's time and energy focused on governing the fundamentals of professional regulation. He also mentioned that he is looking forward to working with the incoming Council and chapter members, noting that the whole country benefits when Ontario has a vibrant and visionary engineering profession.

INTRODUCTION OF INCOMING MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

President Wowchuk introduced the 2024–2025 members of Council:

President Gregory P. Wowchuk; Past President Roydon Fraser; President-elect Fred Saghezchi, P.Eng.; Vice President Guy Boone, P.Eng.; Councillors-at-Large Glen Schjerning, Leila Notash and Randy Walker, P.Eng., FEC; Eastern Region Councillors Michelle Liu and Chantal Chiddle, P.Eng., FEC; East Central Region Councillors Nanda Lwin and Shahandeh Hannah Ehtemam, P.Eng., PMP; Northern Region Councillors Luc Roberge and Ahmed Elshaer, PhD, P.Eng.; Western Region Councillors Susan MacFarlane and Vicki Hilborn; West Central Region Councillors Ravinder Singh Panesar and Pappur Shankar; and Lieutenant Governor-in-Council Appointees Lorne Cutler, Andy Dryland, Paul Mandel, George Nikolov, Scott Schelske, Sherlock Sung and Uditha Senaratne.

CONCLUSION

President Wowchuk then declared the 102nd AGM of the Association of Professional Engineers of Ontario concluded and reminded in-person attendees to take note of the information on the screen outlining the events scheduled for the rest of the day.