

**Alberta Shorthand Reporters Association
Minutes of Annual General Meeting
Sunday, October 6, 2024**

Council Members Present: Kristen Di Rocco, Sandie Murphy, Angela Porco, Dakota Chartrand, Sheralee Morrison, Amber Tudor, Michelle Gulka, Deanna DiPaolo, Aaron Schoengut, Ferdose Mohamed

1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

- a. Kristen Di Rocco calls the meeting to order at 8:37 AM
- b. Kristen Di Rocco welcomed the membership and introduced Parliamentarian Jason Gariepy and council members.
- c. Jason Gariepy asks about quorum. Quorum achieved.
- d. A copy of the agenda, financial report, and minutes from September 24, 2023, are shared on each table.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

- a. Kristen Di Rocco asks for amendments to agenda.
- b. Kristen Di Rocco amends to add an update from Joanne McKenzie on NAIT under reports
- c. Kristen Di Rocco amends to add honorary membership application under New Business.
- d. Kristen Di Rocco amends to add the results of the 2024 speed contest under New Business.
- e. Motion to approve agenda as amended made by Elise Eichmuller. **MOTION CARRIED.**

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

- a. The minutes of the Annual General Meeting of September 24, 2023, were reviewed by the membership at the meeting. No changes or amendments.
- b. Ashley Lay moved to approve the minutes. **MOTION CARRIED.**

4. OFFICER REPORTS

a. PRESIDENT'S REPORT – KRISTEN DI ROCCO

- a. Identified the hard work put in by professionals in the industry to create connections and goodwill for our profession.
- b. Updated the association on the court contracts/TMS letter that was a central focus of last year – being able to cash in the goodwill of the past and the connections made by reporters over their careers, including the relationship of the ASRA with Jason Gariepy, allowed us to bring our concerns to the Chief of Staff of the Minister of Justice and have him really hear us. We are

currently in another six-month waiting period with the current triage in place, but the Court Services people have told us that no trials have gone uncovered since this was brought to our attention last year. Many thanks to the membership for stepping up and supporting their colleagues who do court work, and many thanks to the people who do court work for stepping up and working together to find solutions.

- c. We are a strong and vibrant association with reporters with all levels of experience, including the 15 students who made it to conference this year.
- d. Council had a busy year tying up projects such as the website, getting started on a new set of bylaws for when POARA moves to the PGA, and the ASRA had an attendee at NCRA Bootcamp this year. Being part of an association only matters if we make it matter. It needs to matter to us all.
- e. We had two student members this year, and both of their terms are up at the end of the AGM. Ferdose Mohamed was the student representative for the in-person cohort. Aaron Schoengut was the student representative for the online cohort. They both took on big projects this year, and council learned a lot from them. We wish them the best in their careers.
- f. Terms are up for council members Angela Porco, Deanna DiPaolo, and Michelle Gulka. Deanna DiPaolo and Michelle Gulka have indicated a desire to stay on for another term and as such will seek nominations during the election. Angela Porco vacates her position.
- g. Appreciation to the membership for showing up, answering callouts, and volunteering their time.
- h. Appreciation to all the sponsors who made the 2024 Fall Convention possible.

b. TREASURER'S REPORT – DEANNA DIPAULO

- a. The 2023-2024 Financial Report was displayed on the projector to review.
- b. Deanna DiPaolo overviewed the report.
- c. Question: Marthe Desmarais-Moen – Where do we see money from sponsorships? Answer: We will see sponsorships reflected in the 2024-2025 Financial Report.
- d. Question: What about the donations given in the past? Jeff Weigl clarified that firms donate door prizes, but that hasn't historically been reflected in the finances; whereas the cash donations given this year for sponsorships will.
- e. Question: Roxanne Johanson: What are the non-council meeting expenses? Answer: Bootcamp and an overnight trip to Edmonton, including car rental, to meet with the Government of Alberta regarding the TMS issue.

- f. Question texted to Angela Porco by an anonymous member
What is the \$98 donation? Answer: Christmas gift for Jason from the Association
- g. Question: Marthe Desmarais-Moen: Our website was reported as costing \$11,500, but it shows \$16,485 on the financial report (page 5). Answer: That is the value of our property and equipment over time so may include past work done on it or maintenance by Pixel.

c. REGISTRAR'S REPORT – Dakota Chartrand

- a. 160 CSR(A)s at close of 2024 fiscal year. Resignations are retirements.
- b. 62 PSR(A) at close of 2024 fiscal year. Changes are some retirements and moving to CSR(A).
- c. No new additions to associate members.
- d. 76 student members at close of 2024 fiscal year.
- e. 4 Honourary members at close of 2024 fiscal year.
- f. Total membership of 304.
- g. Question from Christine Rees: What do the “members at start” and the “total close” mean in the Registrar’s Report? Dakota Chartrand explained the different columns
- h. Question from Roxanne Johanson: of 304 members, how many are at this year’s fall convention? Answer: 94 people, including council and students.

d. NAIT UPDATE – Joanne McKenzie

- a. This year’s intake stats are as follows:
 - online cohort – 28 court transcription students and 11 court reporting students
 - in person cohort – 28 court transcription students and 16 court reporting students
 Picking a cohort to start with is a flexible pathway.
- b. Thanked firms for their involvement and members of the association who also volunteer/work with NAIT to ensure the program’s success.
- c. Discover Steno is still working as a good pre-enrollment tool to allow the faculty to nudge successful candidates forward and maybe dissuade those who wouldn’t be successful at an early stage.
- d. The program has now moved under the School of Media and Information Technology with a new Associate Dean, Mike McCreedy, from Lethbridge College. The Dean position is currently posted and should be filled at the end of the year.
- e. Len Sperling retired end of June after 27 years of service.
- f. Joanne McKenzie has taken the role of interim program chair

and continues to be supported by Shauna Campbell, Ashley Lay, Keegan Sheppard full time, and on a contract basis by Janice Plomp, Tamara Kremer, Jacey Miller, Sashya Churchill, Katie McLeod, and Michelle Gulka.

- g. Expect to be hiring a new part-time position with both in-person and remote duties in the fall. Looking for someone well versed in technology and passionate about court reporting.
- h. Kristen Di Rocco congratulated Joanne McKenzie on her position as interim program chair and highlighted the work Joanne has done for the ASRA and the industry in general over the years.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Website Revamp

- a. Thank you to the website revamp project manager, Michelle Gulka, who took an abstract project, saw the vision, and made it a reality.
- b. Thank you to the website committee, Amber Tudor, Ferdose Mohamed, Hayley Peters, Andres Vidal, Mikayela Robbins, and Liz Royal for bringing the vision to life.
- c. Shoutout to Liz Royal for bringing it to our attention that Google Workspace is free for non-profits. That was a monthly expense we no longer incur.
- d. The new ASRA logo was done by a company called OneFortyFive design. They gave us an acronym version and a long form version.
- e. What's New: Modernized the look, condensed information, removed unnecessary buttons, revamped JerryBuilt, laid out registration process clearly, added new section on why to choose a stenographer.

b. Bootcamp

- a. Deanna DiPaolo attended Bootcamp Virginia on behalf of the ASRA.
- b. Liaised with reporters from across the United States and Canada and got to lobby on the capital.
- c. Learned about AI and how it's being utilized in the court system in the States and what other associations, including the NCRA, are doing with the information they have.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Update on Ways to Earn Ce Points

- a. The new website now very clearly lays out the CE points each member has in their block.

- b. The new website has a CE credit table that has been thoughtfully curated to ensure reporters are earning points in a way that is meaningful to our career.
- c. Reminder that only registered charities are eligible for credit on that table – non-profits are not.
- d. Holly Postma-Strand brought to our attention the University of Alberta Faculty of Native Studies Indigenous Canada Massive Open Online Course. Credits can be earned for this free 12-week course by our membership once in their career lifetime by completing the coursework and providing proof of completion in the normal course.

b. POARA to PGA

- a. The Government of Alberta is eyeing 2025 as the year the POARA turns into the PGA.
- b. ASRA council struck a subcommittee and began work on a 100-page bylaw template.
- c. Main differences are that complaint and discipline are a main focus in an effort to protect the public and to keep all PGA associations working within the same framework (i.e., it would be the same process to complain about an engineer as it would be a court reporter).
- d. There will be some membership category changes as the PGA focuses on regulated members. We may keep the PSR as a one-year pathway to CSR designation and ask those who don't wish to be CSRs to instead be associate members so they wouldn't have a CE credit requirement. We still have a lot to discuss in respect to membership tiers and we will be consulting with the membership in due course.
- e. A big change in the PGA is that bylaws no longer need to be ratified by members, although the membership must be consulted.
- f. Deregulation was an option, although we would have had to apply to the Minister and be given permission. Council decided to pursue the PGA on behalf of the ASRA as it lends credibility to our association – “this only matters if we make it matter”.
- g. There will be some legal fees and possibly other consulting fees associated with this as the time comes to tighten up our bylaws.
- h. We are expecting another bylaw template with revisions in the fall.
- i. Question – Jeff Weigl: Will the new discipline process bring costs to our association such as hearings and forced arbitration? Answer: It's a possibility. We will have two years to get our complaints process in order, and some smaller organizations might choose to work together. It might also involve some extra volunteer positions from our membership to sit on complaint review boards.

c. Honourary Membership Application

- a. A request was made by Linda Hallworth for honourary membership of the ASRA.
- b. Linda Hallworth accomplished a lot in her presidency and introduced us to Jason Gariepy.
- c. Linda Kimball made a motion to nominate Linda Hallworth as an honourary member. Deanna Youngblood seconded the motion.
- d. Jason Gariepy asked if anyone wanted to speak in favour of the motion. Marjorie Smith spoke.
- e. Jason Gariepy asked if anyone wanted to speak in opposition of the motion – none.
- f. Jason Gariepy called for a vote – all in favour to make Linda Hallworth an honourary member of the ASRA. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- g. Question by Ashley Lay: Are there other honourary members currently, and who? Answer: There are four – Jerry and Marg Weigl, and two others that we have to look up. (Answer is Colin Cantlie, Brigitte O’Sullivan, Marj Weigl, and Jerry Weigl).
- h. Question by Ashley Lay: Is there a process for honourary membership currently? Answer: No, but we will have to look into it this year.
- i. A request was made by Kaeli Campbell to make Len Sperling an honourary member of the ASRA.
- j. Jason Gariepy asked for speakers in favour. Roxanne Johanson spoke. Jeff Weigl spoke.
- k. Jason Gariepy asked for speakers in opposition. Joanne McKenzie spoke, not in opposition, but reminded us that honourary membership rescinds some rights, such as voting rights, and that perhaps we would want to ask Len if he wants to switch to honourary status before we make him one.
- l. Jason Gariepy suggested we reconsider the motion and work to put a process in place for honourary membership for the next AGM.
- m. Janice Plomp made the motion to reconsider making Len Sperling an honourary member of the Association. Christine Rees seconded the motion. Voting commenced. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- n. This motion was reconsidered so that we could have the opportunity to talk to Len Sperling about whether he would want honourary membership before voting on whether to grant it to him.
- o. There was some discussion about other individuals who should be considered for honourary membership and that council should spend some time putting together a process with the feedback of membership.

d. 2024 Speed Contest Results

- a. Jeff Weigl presented results and reminded us this is another faction of our association that only matters if we make it matter – thanks council for making it matter.
- b. Shoutout to Janice Plomp and Joanne McKenzie for making the test and using the NAIT testing software for test marking.
- c. 2024 Speed Contest participants: Tabea Adams, Ferdose Mohamed, Roxanne Johanson, Andres Vidal, Dakota Chartrand, Amber Tudor, Sandie Murphy, Donna Urlaub, and Sarah Urschatz.
- d. Literary Results:
 - 2nd place – Andres Vidal with 98.1% accuracy.
 - 1st place – Amber Tudor with 99.2% accuracy.
- e. Q&A Results:
 - 2nd place – Andres Vidal with 98.2% accuracy.
 - 1st place – Amber Tudor with 98.6% accuracy.
- f. Combined Results:
 - 2nd place – Andres Vidal with 98.2% accuracy.
 - 1st place – Amber Tudor with 98.9% accuracy.
- g. Congratulations to our winners.

7. COUNCIL ELECTIONS

- a. Michelle Gulka nominates Kristen Di Rocco as president - Accepted.
- b. Three vacant council positions.
- c. Dakota Chartrand nominates Dianna DiPaolo – Accepted.
- d. Jeff Weigl nominates Michelle Gulka – Accepted.
- e. Leah Guevarra nominates Kaeli Campbell – Accepted
- f. All nominated members are acclaimed into council.

8. ADDRESS BY NCRA REPRESENTATIVE, CINDY ISAACSEN, AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

- a. Recognized ASRA council and outgoing members Angela Porco, Ferdose Mohamed, and Aaron Schoengut.
- b. Council members duly installed.
- c. Kristen Di Rocco duly installed as president.
- d. NCRA proposed dues adjustment did not pass. Asks us to consider voting for it next year so NCRA can continue to provide services.
- e. May is certification month.
- f. NCRA Bootcamp in Virginia, February 2-4, 2025,
- g. Court Reporting and Captioning Week February 1-8, 2025.
- h. 26 committees to volunteer on in NCRA .
- i. Board nominations are due by December 20, 2024.
- j. Webinar October 8, 2024, on board service.
- k. Foundation Angels of NCRA – donations support scholarships, career launchers, student education, mental health, and disaster relief.

9. CLOSING COMMENTS BY KRISTEN DI ROCCO

10. ADJOURNMENT

Janice Plomp moved to adjourn at 10:34 AM - **MOTION CARRIED**

Submitted by Sandie Murphy, ASRA Secretary, October 12, 2024