

# **DRAFT Minutes**

## **100<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting**

### **Association of Consulting Engineering Companies - Canada**

**Wednesday, October 9, 2024**  
**Zoom Videoconference**

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#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. EDT by the Chair, Allyson Desgroseilliers. John Gamble was appointed as the Secretary of the meeting.

Allyson Desgroseilliers asked delegates to participate in a moment of reflection to acknowledge the Indigenous Peoples of all the lands that we are on today. Guests and delegates were welcomed to the meeting, and the Chair expressed thanks to Maple Leaf Partners, Victor, BST Global, Deltek, RSM, and Notarius, for their support throughout the year.

The Chair introduced John Gamble, President and CEO, Doug Coles, Treasurer, Jérôme Pelletier, Chair-Elect, and Tim Stanley, Chair of the Nominating Committee. It was noted that Michael Courtright, Director of Finance was available to address any detailed financial questions during the Treasurer's report, and Martin Savard, Manager of IM/IT Systems and Webmaster, was available to assist to resolve any technical issues and, in the event that a formal vote is required, would act as returning officer.

The Chair reminded attendees that only ACEC member firms can vote on motions. John Gamble explained the virtual voting procedure.

#### **2. KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

Catherine Karakatsanis, President of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC), was introduced and welcomed to address the members.

ACEC Canada was thanked for its work on behalf of the profession. Allyson Desgroseilliers was congratulated for a successful term as Chair. John Gamble and ACEC staff were thanked for their work in support of the Association. John Gamble was also thanked for his leadership and advice in support of FIDIC, as well as his recent participation as Chair of Directors and Secretaries Advisory council.

An introduction of FIDIC was provided, and it was noted that FIDIC represents almost 100 country member associations. FIDIC provides global perspective and facilitates collective action needed to serve the public interest on behalf of member associations and the industry at large. FIDIC has an important international role in bringing the industry together and advancing the profession.

FIDIC was originally founded in Belgium, with a mandate to work to benefit member firms around the world. One of the original aims of FIDIC was to study, in fellowship, all questions concerning protection and development of the members' professional interests without taking into consideration any philosophical, political, or religious aspects. This goal is still reflected in FIDIC's work today.

FIDIC's global reach is unique and critical in accessing and sharing knowledge and experience throughout the industry. It also helps serve as a platform to share ideas and innovations to address global issues and offers support to its members in terms of networking, training, contract expertise, advocacy, credentialing, thought leadership, etc.

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Examples of Canadian leadership and support of FIDIC were provided, including John Gamble, Michael Walker, Susan Reisbord, Asifa Samji, and Julianna Fox.

Events hosted by FIDIC were noted for information. The recent global infrastructure conference in Geneva was very well-received. Next year's conference will be in Cape Town in September 2026.

A global newsletter and webinars are also offered, as well as regular other articles and training publications, and policy and advocacy documents. FIDIC is a leader in contract development, and its contracts are also used as an advocacy piece to establish the role of consulting engineers.

FIDIC recently launched the new Climate Change Charter to address the climate change crisis. ACEC and its members were invited to participate in the Charter, which sets out aspirational commitments to address climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience of built environments. Tools and advice in this regard are available from FIDIC.

Key FIDIC partnerships and initiatives were noted, such as with the World Wildlife Fund, with Ernst & Young to issue reports on artificial intelligence, and the Carbon Collaborative Initiative to develop a global approach to help firms reduce their carbon footprints and move toward a net-zero built environment. ACEC and its members were encouraged to collaborate on this initiative.

Following the keynote address, members were invited to participate in a virtual fireside chat question and answer period. No questions were raised.

The Chair thanked Catherine Karakatsanis for taking the time to share her vision and noted that, in thanks, ACEC has made a donation to Engineers Without Borders in the name of Catherine Karakatsanis.

### **3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Chair requested a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

**Moved by Tim Stanley and seconded by Ben Coles that the agenda of the 2024 Annual General Meeting be adopted as presented.**

**Carried**

### **4. INTRODUCTION OF THE ACEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Allyson Desgroseilliers introduced the members of the 2023-2024 Board of Directors:

Tim Stanley, Past-Chair (British)  
Jérôme Pelletier, Chair-Elect (Quebec)  
Doug Coles, Treasurer (Prince Edward Island)  
Craig Clifton, Vice-Chair (Alberta)  
Nancy Inglis, Vice-Chair (Saskatchewan)  
Tom Montgomery, Vice-Chair (Ontario)  
Bill Allison, Director (Ontario)  
Dominique Brault, Director (Quebec)  
Ben Coles, Director (New Brunswick)  
Brad Dawe, Director (Newfoundland and Labrador)  
David Evans, Director (Ontario)  
Rob Girvan, Director (Northwest Territories)

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Sabrina Martineau, Director (Quebec)  
Perry Mitchelmore, Director (Nova Scotia)  
Steve Panciuk, Director-at-Large (Marsh Canada)  
Todd Simenson, Director (Alberta)  
Raya Smertina, Director (FLN Chair)  
Bryan Stanton, Director (Ontario)  
Olivier Turcotte, Director (Quebec)  
Selina Wilson, Director (British Columbia)

At the Chair's request, John Gamble confirmed that quorum has been met.

**5. READING OF NOTICE OF MEETING**

Allyson Desgroseilliers read out the Notice of Meeting as follows:

"That the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies - Canada will be held via Zoom on October 9, 2024 from 12:00 p.m. to 13:30 p.m. for the following purposes:

- To ratify the decisions of the Board;
- to receive and consider the reports of the Chair, the Treasurer, the President/Secretary, the Officers of the Association and the Presidents of the Member Organizations;
- to appoint Auditors for fiscal year 2024-2025; and
- to elect Directors of the Board."

John Gamble confirmed that the Notice of Meeting was properly given in accordance with the By-Laws.

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Chair noted that all present received and presumably read the minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting and requested a motion to approve same.

**Moved by Gary Poxleitner and seconded by Sara Anderson that the minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting be approved and adopted as presented.**

**Carried**

**7. APPROVAL OF ACTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ACEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Moved by Tim Stanley and seconded by Brian Feuer that that all acts and proceedings of the Directors of the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies - Canada (ACEC) as exhibited by the Minutes of the meetings of that body, held since the last meeting of the members of the Association and all acts and proceedings taken, all payments made by or to the officers, agents of employees of the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies - Canada under authority of or pursuant to any By-law, resolution, motion, instruction or direction contained in the By-law and Minutes of the Board of Directors held subsequent to the last Annual Meeting of the members of the Association, be, and the same are hereby ratified, approved and confirmed."**

**Carried**

## **8. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Allyson Desgroseilliers presented a report, with highlights noted as follows:

ACEC staff and the Board members were thanked for their support of the Chair and the Association throughout the year. Relationships with the member organizations, as well as with ACEC-US were further built up this year.

Concern was expressed regarding the significant impacts of climate change on the country over the past year. A. Desgroseilliers noted the related demand for engineers to evolve their approaches to design and construction to ensure sustainability and future readiness, taking into account the entire infrastructure lifestyle, and minimizing energy consumption and maintenance needs.

The industry should be forward-thinking, to adapt and scale infrastructure to meet the growth needs of communities and address growing climate and environmental issues. This includes continued government advocacy to implement the National Infrastructure Assessment, to guide a strategic long-term approach to planning new and replacing existing infrastructure. Procurement, moving forward, should prioritize innovation and design rather than cost.

Environmental concerns should also be addressed via clear, consistent, and agile regulatory requirements. Natural resource extraction should be conducted ethically and sustainably, and decommissioning should also be considered as part of infrastructure projects. Agility is required in regulators to ensure requirements continue to reflect evolving science and technology.

An executive forum was recently held with industry leaders, a poll of members was conducted to assess the likely impacts of new government language requirements, and a town hall meeting between Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) and ACEC members was presented to discuss policy changes.

In collaboration with the ACEC Research Institute, ACEC-Canada recently released the first economic assessment and five-year forecast of the engineering and design services industry in Canada. The ACEC annual conference has been reimagined and expanded to include an Association Day with the Executive Directors, Chairs, and incoming Chairs from every province.

ACEC-Manitoba and WSP were thanked for the opportunities and support that they have provided of A. Desgroseilliers' involvement with and ongoing participation in ACEC.

## **9. PRESIDENT AND CEO'S REPORT**

John Gamble, President and CEO, was invited to present highlights from the annual report.

Member associations and ACEC-Canada have participated in shaping public policy that allows the Association to be effective in the services provided to its members.

Members were encouraged to review the annual report and year-end review, and to subscribe to the monthly newsletter to keep updated on advocacy efforts, activities in support of the industry, ACEC events, and to remain engaged with fellow professionals across the country.

The ACEC-Canada mandate was clarified, taking into account its role as a federal representative. The Board is responsible to the strategic plan and related allocation of resources, based on the Association's vision of a strong and resilient Canada designed and built by a thriving consulting engineering industry.

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Three basic themes were highlighted in the strategic plan: championing industry (advocacy) at the local, provincial, and national levels; challenges in procurement, contracting, and business practices; and strengthening member firms.

A submission recommending changes to procurement regulations driven by the Official Languages Act will be filed at the end of November 2024. Advocacy for the National Infrastructure Assessment is ongoing.

Significant priority and resources have been placed on improving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in ACEC-Canada and engineering overall. This work includes continued participation in 30 by 30, which is working to accomplish 30% women in engineering by 2030, and development of DEI tools for members that will be made available on a dedicated ACEC webpage. ACEC also works to present engineering as a desirable career, which is tied in with the work being done to create inclusive workplaces.

2025 will be ACEC-Canada's 100<sup>th</sup> year, and planning for various Centennial activities is underway.

ACEC-Canada provides a platform for networking and idea-sharing, and a number of forums and events are provided to support this objective. A new forum for small firms is being launched this year to provide opportunity to discuss and provide feedback on how ACEC can further support smaller firms. The new Association Day is also being launched to bring together the leaders from each provincial association.

The recent economic assessment and five-year forecast is being used to underline advocacy efforts and demonstrate the impact and successes of Canada's engineers, and their contributions to the economy.

The Board members were thanked for their focus, confidence, and support of ACEC-Canada, its staff, its members, the industries, and their communities. Member organizations were thanked for their continued participation in ACEC-Canada and support of its initiatives. ACEC staff were thanked for their work and dedication on behalf of the members and the industry.

## **10. TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Chair invited the Treasurer to provide a financial report.

Doug Coles reported that the audited financial statements prepared by Deloitte were included in the Annual Report which was distributed in advance of the AGM. Copies are available upon request. A 'clean' audit opinion was issued.

The Treasurer summarized highlights of the 2023-2024 fiscal year as follows:

- 2023-2024 concluded with a surplus of \$263k against a planned deficit of \$28k, \$291k above plan.
- Revenue was \$300k above budget, driven by stronger than expected membership dues, high investment returns, and strong events revenues. Expenses were \$9k higher than budget. Net assets were \$2.63M at year-end (97% of budgeted operating expenses for 2024-2025)
- The balance of the General Reserve fund at March 31 stood at \$1.92M in cash and unrestricted reserves, plus \$700k in restricted reserves, and \$12k in capital assets

The Treasurer requested a motion to approve the Audited Financial Statements:

**Moved by Doug Coles and seconded by Michael Walker that the 2023-2024 Audited Financial Statements of the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies - Canada be approved as presented."**

**Carried**

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The Treasurer advised that, as per best practices, an RFP process for auditing firms was conducted and a change in firms is recommended for the next fiscal year. The Treasurer tabled a Motion to appoint the new Auditors for the 2024-2025 fiscal year:

**Moved by Doug Coles, seconded by Selina Wilson that the firm of Welch LLP be retained as ACEC's auditors for the 2024-2025 reporting year.**

**Carried**

## **11. NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Tim Stanley acknowledged and thanked retiring Board members:

- Tim Stanley (British Columbia)
- Craig Clifton (Alberta)
- David Evans (Ontario)

Allyson Desgroseilliers announced that each retiring Board member will receive a framed certificate acknowledging their service and contributions to the Board.

The Chair invited Tim Stanley to present the Nominating Committee Report. Tim Stanley reported that one Director has been re-nominated for an extended term:

- Brad Dawe, Stantec, re-nominated by ACEC-Newfoundland and Labrador

Tim Stanley reported that three candidates have been nominated by ACEC Member Organizations to fill current vacancies on the Board:

- Ryan Betker, McElhanney, nominated by Consulting Engineers of Alberta for a four-year term
- Richard Bush, Binnie, Nominated by ACEC - British Columbia for a four-year term
- Christine Hill, Arcadis, Nominated by ACEC - Ontario for a four-year term

One Director-at-Large has been re-nominated to return to the Board for an additional year:

- James Olson, University of British Columbia (Faculty of Applied Science), nominated by the Nominating Committee as voting Director-at-Large for a term of two years

John Gamble noted that voting Directors-at-Large must be elected at a general meeting of the membership. Two vacancies for non-voting Directors-at-Large may be appointed as needed by the Board in accordance with the by-laws.

The Chair requested a motion to acclaim the nominees.

**Moved by Tim Stanley and seconded by Benedict Marks that the nominees presented by the Nominating Committee be acclaimed.**

**Carried**

Tim Stanley reported that, in accordance with the by-laws, the Board of Directors of ACEC has appointed its Executive Committee for 2024-2025 as follows:

Past-Chair:	Allyson Desgroseilliers (Manitoba)
Vice-Chair:	Sabrina Martineau (Québec)
Vice-Chair:	Tom Montgomery (Ontario)

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Vice-Chair: Ben Coles (New Brunswick)  
Treasurer: Nancy Inglis (Saskatchewan)  
Chair-Elect: Doug Coles (Prince Edward Island)  
Chair: Jérôme Pelletier (Québec)

## **12. INCOMING CHAIR'S MESSAGE**

Allyson Desgroseilliers invited Jérôme Pelletier to present an inaugural address as the new Chair. Jérôme Pelletier gave an address, with highlights noted as follows:

Jérôme Pelletier thanked Allyson Desgroseilliers for her service, leadership, and guidance to the Association while serving as Chair, and noted that the Past Chair will receive a gavel mounted on a plaque to commemorate their term as Chair and a Past-Chair's Pin, which they are encouraged to wear proudly.

Jérôme Pelletier reflected on the future of the organization, engineering industry, and the country overall. It was noted that Canada is a progressive and resource-rich nation that is well-positioned to achieve transformative progress and lasting prosperity. These objectives can be achieved by prioritizing energy transition and environmental sustainability, such as by investing in renewable energy and clean technologies, leveraging technological innovation supported by Canada's wide talent base in AI and biotech, and continued leadership in infrastructure development, including investments in transportation, telecommunications, and urban development.

Future growth will also depend on leveraging Canada's natural wealth of resources and building infrastructure required to get them to market, while prioritizing climate resilience and maintaining a low carbon footprint.

Indigenous economic development is also a key piece in Canada's growth. Partnership and collaboration with Indigenous businesses will benefit both Indigenous communities and all Canadians.

ACEC-Canada is uniquely positioned to help clients, stakeholders, and policymakers overcome challenges and take advantage of new opportunities. Jérôme Pelletier thanked the Board for this opportunity to work with ACEC and its member organizations to address these issues, and for its trust and confidence.

## **13. RECOGNITION OF MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS**

A map of the Member Organizations was presented for information. Allyson Desgroseilliers thanked all Member Organizations for their important work and support of the Association.

## **14. EVENT INVITATIONS**

The Chair invited delegates to the 2024 National Leadership Conference, the 2024 Canadian Consulting Engineering Awards, and to ACEC's 2024 Parliament Hill Day being held in person in Ottawa on October 22-24, 2024.

## **15. OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was raised for discussion.

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**16. ADJOURNMENT**

Allyson Desgroseilliers moved for adjournment, with none opposed. The meeting ended at 1:08 p.m. EDT.