

Minutes of the COC 29th AGM, June 11, 2016

1. The electronic meeting was called to order by the president Calvin Wong at 12:00 noon EST

2. Present were:

Calvin Wong, President
Marlene Young, First Vice-president
Jan Johns, Treasurer, Insurance Co-ordinator
Inge Poot, Secretary
Peter Poot, Past President

Central Ontario Orchid Society (Jerry Bolce)
Eastern Canada Orchid Society (Rosanne L'Ecuyer)
Essex County Orchid Society (by proxy to Inge Poot)
Manitoba Orchid Society (Rick Askins)
Orchid Society of Nova Scotia (Gail Schwarz)
Ottawa Orchid Society (Joyce Medcalf)
Pacific Northwest Judging Centre (by proxy to Calvin Wong)
Richmond Orchid Club (Elisabeth Markus)
Saskatchewan Orchid Society (Tom Kondra)
Southern Ontario Orchid Society (Terry Kennedy)
Toronto Judging Centre (Terry Kennedy)
Vancouver Orchid Society (Calvin Wong)
Windsor Orchid Society (by proxy to Calvin Wong)

Absent were:

Central Vancouver Orchid Society
Foothills Orchid Society
Fraser Valley Orchid Society
Les Orchidophiles de Quebec
Niagara Region Orchid Society
North Okanagan Orchid Society
Orchid Society of Alberta
Orchid Society of the RBG
Orchid Species Preservation Foundation
PEI Orchid Club
Regina Orchid Society

South Okanagan Orchid Society
Toronto Artistic Orchid Association
Victoria Orchid Society

Non-Voting participants:

Robin McLaughlin

3. Declaration of Notice and Quorum :

Notice of the meeting was sent to all members and the executive as well as committee chairs by e-mail on June 3, 2016.

17 Voting members were present and since 10 constitute a quorum, we had a quorum.

4. The **2015 minutes** were circulated to all members. Peter Poot moved, Terry Kennedy seconded that the minutes be accepted. Passed and adopted.

5. President's report:

This was the president's second annual report.

Calvin Wong thanked Marlene Young for taking over for him for two months while he was dealing with personal matters.

Calvin thanked the executive team for keeping the momentum going on several key projects and initiatives.

The re-worked web-site is launched. It has been purged of duplicated and invalid content and access to educational webinars, application for grants, and culture sheets. The latter have all Canadian Orchid Societies on the back of the page. The COC is currently in discussion with Home Depot to include the culture sheets on their orchid plants.

Several webinars have been completed and several more are planned. The web-site will also be automated in the next several months for membership and insurance renewals.

Suggestions for future webinar topics would be gratefully accepted by Calvin.

Peter Poot moved, Terry Kennedy seconded that the President's report be accepted.

Passed.

Comments about the web-site:

The logo needs a higher resolution template.

Terry Kennedy indicated that the picture on the front page of the web-page should be a cypripedium not a Cattleya hybrid. It would then have the same theme as the picture on the poster given to societies to advertise the COC at shows and meetings.

Donations of pictures with a sufficiently high resolution are invited.

Calvin will send out the specific required resolution after the AGM to solicit donation of images.

6. First Vice President's Report:

Marlene Young thanks the executive team and commends Calvin Wong for his effective leadership of COC.

7 webinars have been produced to date and three have been uploaded to the web-site as of June 10. The topics were Repotting Phalaenopsis, Pests and Diseases, General Orchid Culture, GMO Blue Phalaenopsis, Purdon Bog, Retaining members, Judging Tips (in French and in collaboration with the Societe Francaise des Orchidophiles).

Future webinars will deal with polyploidy, terrestrial Orchids and seldom heard special speakers on their area of expertise.

We are session partnering with the Smithsonian at the Hawaiian Congress on Orchid Conservation (IUCN) this fall.

Enhancing knowledge of and verifying ID of native Canadian Orchid species.

Dennis Whigham will do a special speaking tour.

European speakers will be developed.

A warning about copyrights:

Member Societies cannot use COC material such as the culture sheets or webinars for fundraising ventures for your organization unless you have the OK of the author and the organization it was donated to e.g.: COC, Smithsonian. You can only recover duplicating costs.

Marlene is working with Tom Shields to bring him up to speed to handle the conservation portfolio.

If your society has done some conservation work, Marlene would be glad to receive your slides or videos and work them into a Citrix webinar. You can then post the webinar on your web-site as an ad for your society. Send her an e-mail if you are interested.

Jan Johns developed an educational pilot series that was aired at the April 2016 Ottawa Orchid show. She also developed a basic questionnaire to get audience involvement with answers provided on the facilitator's version that make it possible for a less than expert facilitator to lead the series.

This series as well as the culture sheets are aimed at the "throw-away" buyer and try to get them to become orchid growers. The Pests and Diseases webinar was aimed more at people who were already trying to actually grow orchids and the percentages of audience members for the different webinars showed that they reached their target audiences.

Marlene is the administrator of the on-line Orchid Journal. She found that more women than men followed the Journal and 50% followed on mobile devices. She is using social media to direct traffic to the COC web-site.

Peter Poot moved and Jan Johns seconded that Marlene Young's report be accepted and commended her for her untiring efforts. Carried.

7. **Second Vice-President:** Wayne Louis is stepping down from his position and did not file a report.

8. **Treasurer's Report** by Jan Johns:

The audited 2015 financial statement was circulated to all members.

Moved by Peter Poot and seconded by Terry Kennedy that the audited 2015 financial statement be accepted. Carried.

Jan is extending her thanks to Steve Mockler for doing the audit report for COC and Andre Couture our former treasurer for helping her to sort out things for the transition, since she took over rather late in the current term. Steve Mockler received a \$100 LCBO gift card as a token of our appreciation for his work.

Steve is retiring from the auditor's position and we need to find another auditor. Calvin asked for suggestions.

Peter Poot moved, Elisabeth Markus seconded that **the board of Directors find a new auditor**. Passed.

Preferred qualifications for future auditors are that they were a chartered accountant or had an accounting background. Peter will ask someone if he/she would be willing to serve.

We prefer a volunteer, but if no one volunteers the Board will have to hire an accountant.

The excess income over expenditures realized during this term allowed the purchase of our own copy of Citrix and more generous travel grants.

9. **Insurance and membership:**

The treasurer will take over this job, since Dianne Gillis has resigned from it and it will be simplified by allowing on-line application/renewal of membership and insurance from the COC web-site.

The information has been sent out to all members.

Opting into the insurance is not mandatory.

The membership fees remain the same at \$1.00 per member society member with the insurance fees on top of that. Jan Johns is still negotiating for the best deal on insurance fees and has a range of quotes with the best and worst being:

For societies without shows, the best is a fee of \$1.10 and the worst \$1.15 extra per member of a society.

For societies with shows an additional (best) \$0.05 or (worst) \$0.08 per show attendee, the number to be based on last year's show attendance.

For special circumstances, such as alcohol to be served at the show or other society function, a special rider will have to be purchased.

These numbers should help societies budget for the cost of insurance.

Jan thanked Dianne Gillis for all her help and for doing such a great job for many years in the past.

Gail Schwarz moved, Peter Poot seconded that the Insurance Programme report be accepted. Passed.

10. At this point Tom Shields our newly appointed Chair of Conservation was able to join the meeting.

11. Travel Grants:

Gail Schwarz reported that:

For the first time we had 9 applications this year, including 4 first time applicants. Because we had money left over from last year when there were only 3 applications, we were able to give the grant to 6 societies instead of the usual 5.

1-Orchid Species Preservation Society is bringing in Tom Mirenda (Smithsonian).

2-Victoria OS is combining with other societies to bring in 3 speakers, Terry Groszeibl (Forestview Gardens, BC), David LaFarge (France), and Tom Mirenda (Smithsonian).

3-ECOS is bringing in a number of speakers over the year, Cordelia Head, David LaFarge, Calvin Wong, Terry Kennedy and Fred Clarke.

4-London OS rented a bus and went to the RBG show in February.

5-Richmond OS will either bring in a speaker or visit a neighbouring society to hear their speaker.

6-Saskatchewan OS is bringing in Terry Groszeibl from Forestview Gardens in BC.

Each society is receiving \$200.00 and the cheques have been mailed out.

Acceptance moved by Terry Kennedy, seconded by Rosanne L'Ecuyer, passed.
Calvin thanked Gail for the excellent job she did .

12. **New Business:**

Education and Outreach:

Marlene Young thanked Sandra Svoboda for the loan of her Citrix programme up until the time we decided to buy our own.

Three webinars are uploaded to the COC web-site and four more are waiting to be added. These webinars will hopefully be of help to member societies in their programming. Let Marlene know if there are any topics your society would find helpful. See below for some more ideas.

Marlene is trying to set up an Orchid Conservation Network centered around OSPF and the Smithsonian. She will pass the job onto our newly appointed conservation chair, Tom Shields.

Marlene is also working on setting up a forum for all public collections containing orchids. By getting together they can better deal with common problems and better advance their agendas.

Marlene is suggesting that we set up an Associate membership tier for out-of-country organizations wishing to access our webinars and services. La Societe Francaise des Orchidophiles is interested. They publish a newsletter called "L'Orchidofolie" and maybe COC members can get a discounted rate in return for it if anyone wants to subscribe. Other hobby groups may be interested too.

Marlene would like to have a forum in September of this year on membership recruitment and retention. There are some societies that have had their membership numbers increase and she would like them to share their strategies with all other member societies.

The COC web-site is automating 2017 membership renewals, insurance payments and hopes to have this function working by October. Payment will be possible by Pay-Pal, Interact and e-transfers.

As part of the membership benefits, Calvin indicated that COC Member's Societies can now use the COC Go-To-Meeting programme for any meeting they may prefer to do on-line, but the COC rep will have to make advance reservation with Marlene.

Calvin also thanked Jerry Bolce for the wonderful newsletters he has produced for COC over the years.

The future of the COC newsletter was discussed both in terms of content, frequency and format.

The web-site contains lots of information and archived newsletters are searchable by topic. Jerry suggested that maybe it could just have a "waive-the-flag" function and consist of a monthly e-mail that points out information.

Jan pointed out that we have a presence on social media already. Perhaps a future functionality of the web-site should be to send out mass e-mail using the "e-mail Chimp" software every second month or as needed to advise member societies of new information.

Thank you messages should be on an appropriate page on the site.

It was also discussed that this could be a culture change in terms of communication , where we move from a traditional passive approach where COC sends out newsletters, to an active approach where members check the COC web-site and Facebook page for updates and information.

It was moved by Peter Poot, seconded by Elisabeth Markus that **we forgo newsletters and instead send out an e-mail every second month to member societies with pointers on what can be found on the web-site for the next 12 months as transitional measures.** Carried

For next year Marlene hopes to have an on-line option for revenue raising such as an on-line auction.

Round table discussions of executives on-line with other executives.

We need to tweak the culture sheets. We need a culture sheet or sheets for terrestrial orchids. Margaret Hayden of OOS offered to assist.

13. Two Certificates were awarded :

Jerry Bolce was awarded a COC certificate in recognition of his years of service to the COC as its web-master and its newsletter editor. He provided guidance and was COC's rock in turbulent times. We thank him from the bottom of our hearts.

The second certificate was awarded to Dianne Gillis to thank her for her years of service looking after the COC insurance file. And thank you for helping Jan Johns during the transition.

We thank Andre Couture for his service as our treasurer for the last two years. Thank you to Robin McLaughlin for serving as the Membership Liaison Officer during the last year.

Thank you to Wayne Louie for his help while serving as the second vice-president during the last year.

14. Nominations:

Peter Poot presented the slate for next year:

Calvin Wong, president

Marlene Young, first vice-president

Jan Johns, treasurer

Inge Poot, secretary

Peter Poot, past-president

The slate was elected by acclamation, since there were no further nominations from the floor.

We need a second vice-president, a Membership Liaison Officer, and a webmaster. Since the web-site has been modernized and converted to Wordpress, the job of webmaster is much easier.

15. Next year's AGM:

We have received an invitation from the Edmonton, Alberta orchid Society to be part of their 40th anniversary celebratory show in April 2017.

Moved by Peter Poot, seconded by Terry Kennedy **that we accept the invitation.**

Passed.

16. Round Table of all delegates:

How can we get better attendance at the AGM?

Notice should go out earlier to allow for planning to attend.



Marlene offered one-on-one sessions for would be delegates who are inexperienced. This offer should be repeated when the AGM is announced in 2017.

If registration and sign in can be simplified, we might get more people to try it. Registration will be automatic using the webinar software next year, which will make registration and invitation easier.

17. Adjournment:

Peter Poot moved, Elisabeth Markus seconded that the AGM be adjourned. No dissent.