

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, 24 October 2017

5:00 p.m. EDT

M-50, Auditorium

Jeff Fraser, moderator: called the meeting to order.

1. Rules of Meeting – J. Fraser

J. Fraser reminded those in attendance that no calls or video users have been screened to restrict this meeting to members only. Please be aware that anyone is able to be on the conference call or web-link online. In cases where questions are more of a personal issue, please direct your question to the RCEA office at another time. The panel is happy to answer any other types of questions. For the recording of the minutes, please state your name, location and portfolio. The meeting will follow Robert's Rules of Order.

Please reserve any questions for the Question and Answer session.

J. Fraser then introduced the head table: Cathie Fraser, President; Marvin Zaluski, 1st Vice President; Bernard Holbrook, Treasurer; Michelle Lévesque, 2nd Vice President; and Joan Van Den Bergh, Negotiator/Labour Relations Officer. He then introduced the office staff: Laurette Ernst, Office Manager; Shelagh Till, RCEA Members and Dues Coordinator.

2. Minutes of Annual General meeting – 18 October 2016

J. Fraser proposed the following motion:

MOTION: “To accept the minutes the Annual General Meeting of October 18, 2016.”

Moved by D. Hewitt, DFS, M-4. Seconded by S. Polvi, Saskatoon.

Carried.

3. President's Report – C. Fraser

Thank you to NRC President Stewart and HR Vice President Gingras for joining us today. I would also like to thank NRC for allowing us to use their communication services for our meeting today.

The RCEA office is very pleased to introduce Shelagh Till. Shelagh joined the office in December 2016 as the Dues and Insurance Co-ordinator. Like Laurette, Joan, and myself; Shelagh does more than her job title. Shelagh is our front-line person when you visit or call the RCEA office. Shelagh sits on the Executive Committee, does website updates, is the COSH member coordinator, and is the Phoenix and Pay and Benefits problem solver.

The RCEA would like to thank Dao Ly for her work as the RCEA Treasurer from July 2015 to January 2017. I would like to introduce Bernard Holbrook who has taken over the volunteer position of RCEA Treasurer.

We also have new stewards this year:
Jacques-André Doucet, Fredericton
Allan Whetter, Ottawa,

I would like to thank outgoing stewards:
Gina Holmes, Ottawa
Dao Ly, Ottawa
Cédric Martin, Fredericton
Cathy McDonald, Halifax
Nathalie Raymond, Boucherville
Shannon Smith, Ottawa
Arnold Tabaro, Ottawa

Thank you to Sandra Polvi, Saskatoon. Sandra has been a steward for 9 years. She will be retiring in April.

Thank you to Tony Hoffman, Penticton. Tony was a steward for 14 years and is now retired.

The 1st and 2nd Vice-President election results are: Marvin Zaluski has been acclaimed for another 2-year term, as has Michelle Levesque, the 2nd Vice-President. Their positions will be expire on December 31, 2019.

2017 has been another eventful year for the RCEA. First and foremost, collective bargaining for 5 of our 6 groups is ongoing. We have reached a tentative agreement with NRC for the Technical group. A ratification vote is currently under-way and the last voting day is Friday, October 27, 2017. We will have results of the vote within a few days of that and will post this information on the RCEA website. Expedited bargaining is taking place for the AD, AS, CS, and PG groups. The OP Group will commence bargaining with NRC in November and December. Joan Van Den Bergh will speak more about collective bargaining and have group updates later in this meeting.

The RCEA office moved on August 29th, 2017, from NRC leased property to 5300 Canotek Rd, Suite 100, Ottawa. The new location is 3.7km from the previous location. The new lease rental cost will be 54% of the previous rental cost, a significant savings for the Association. As a result of the move, other costs have also gone down, including internet and telephone. The RCEA will have an open house on Monday December 4, 2017, 3-7PM, please join us to see your new office and meet the staff. We will post the open house information on the website.

Revisions of the outdated RCEA constitution were presented at the 2016 AGM and were sent out to the membership for a vote. The changes were approved by 74.7% of those who voted (37% of the membership did vote). The revised RCEA Constitution may be found on the RCEA website.

The annual audit, conducted by Deloitte occurred the week of August 14, 2017, and reconfirmed that our continued commitment to financial restraints is working and our budget was upheld. RCEA treasurer B. Holbrook will be presenting the Treasurers Report. Last year the membership tasked the RCEA office to obtain several quotes for the annual auditing. Because of a number of circumstances, but mostly because of the office move, we were not able to do this. For the

upcoming year, we will be asking our current auditors and several other local firms for auditing quotes.

On December 19, 2016, the RCEA and NRC established a Memorandum of Agreement regarding the ability of the RCEA to meet with members on NRC's premises. In 2014 and 2015, meeting members had been difficult to impossible. The MOA is being applied now as we are having today's meeting in the NRC M-50 auditorium. Because of this MOA, Joan Van Den Bergh and I will commence travelling to the regions or to any location in Ottawa in the new year. If you would like us to visit, please let your steward know, or contact the RCEA office.

The December Shutdown agreement between RCEA, PIPSC, and NRC was signed in July 2017. Days included for the shutdown will be the afternoon of December 22, and December 27, 28, and 29. If you encounter any difficulties in scheduling your shutdown hours or work schedule, please contact the RCEA office for help.

Numerous and ongoing consultation meetings between RCEA and the NRC have taken place: TO Generic Mapping Exercise, Work Place Violence Prevention Policy, NRC Harassment Policy and Directive, National Occupational Health and Safety, NRC Dialogue, December shutdown, and the Joint Consultation Committee. Minutes for the Joint Consultation Committee (JCC) and National Committee on Occupational Safety and Health (NCOSH) are now being posted on the RCEA website.

Many other union related meetings for RCEA have included: RCEA Management Committee, RCEA Finance Committee, RCEA Executive Committee, Deloitte annual audit, and quarterly meetings with the National Joint Council and with the other federal Bargaining Agents. These discussions encompass Phoenix, several federal Bills that may impact members and unions, and collective bargaining issues. The RCEA sits on several NJC Committees: Union Management Relations Committee, Service Wide Occupational Health and Safety Committee, and Relocation Committee. I have been asked to sit on two new joint Bargaining Agent and Treasury Board committees; The Employee Wellness Support Program, which will look at updating employee sick leave and benefits, and a Phoenix sub-committee on union dues.

This year the membership has been invited to provide valuable input through consultation and surveys in several areas: NRC Dialogue, The Public Service Employee's Survey, Public Service Dental Care Plan member input call, and the Public Service Health Care Plan member input call. The RCEA has also provided input to these surveys on your behalf.

I would like to thank the membership for your support. It is my honour and privilege to represent you and the Association.

Thank you.

4. Treasurer's and Auditor's Reports – B. Holbrook

The financial statements being presented today are for the fiscal year July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017. The RCEA's financial audit was performed by Deloitte this past August.

The RCEA is pleased to quote the auditor's opinion "*...the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Association as at June 30th, 2017, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not for profit organizations.*" The audit report was presented and approved at the Executive Committee meeting on September 26, 2017. A copy of this report is available, upon request, by contacting the RCEA office. Today I present an overview of the financial operations, revenue, expenses and the net assets balance.

The financial operations this year carry an excess of revenue over expenses of \$152,734.

Revenue:

Revenue increased by 3.8% compared to the past fiscal year. We have sufficient revenue to cover expected expenses.

It should be noted that the RCEA is not receiving the correct amount of membership dues due to a continuing issue with the Phoenix pay system. NRC is aware of the issue, as is the Public Services and Procurement Canada; the RCEA is cooperating in every way to resolve this issue. We do not expect this Phoenix issue to significantly impact our office operations.

Expenses:

General and office expenses increased by 8.7%, mainly due to increases in RCEA staff wages plus benefits costs and legal expenses. Legal expenses encompass general legal issues, grievances, labour relations and Workplace Safety Insurance Board cases.

To reduce expenses, the RCEA has recently moved from the Stone House to 5300 Canotek Road. This reduces the gross cost of rents by approximately \$32,000 annually (expected net savings of approximately \$26,000 annually after capital costs). These savings will begin to be realized in the 2017-18 fiscal year.

Net Assets Balance:

The net assets opened at \$841,162 and closed at \$993,896. This is an increase of 18% from the previous year.

In consultation with our Auditor, the finance committee has increased the Internally Restricted amount of the RCEA's assets from \$350,000 to \$400,000. This is an increase of \$50,000 to the Association's capital requirements to help manage capital remains, this is in compliance with the norms for non-profit organizations. The Association has internally restricted an amount of \$400,000 from unrestricted net assets to cover operating expenses in the face of unexpected events.

Conclusion:

The RCEA will continue with fiscal restraints. The RCEA has been able to eliminate past deficits. The next year will see the remaining bargaining groups going into negotiations, therefore expenses, including legal and consultations, are expected to rise. The RCEA will continue to exercise control of expenses and save operational costs when possible.

5. Collective Bargaining Update – J. Van Den Bergh

We will know the TO collective agreement ratification results by end of day Friday, October 27, 2017. We will notify NRC on Monday, October 30, 2017. We will post them on our website. NRC then has to go through their own, internal, ratification and approval process, and we will be posting something on our website soon that shows the process after a tentative agreement is reached and the time frames. Once we have ratified and notified NRC, they have to go through an internal process, they have to get a non-objection letter from Treasury Board and then they have to go to the Governor in Council through their Minister and we have no control over that and we have no control over how long that will take. Once we have ratified, we do not know when the contract will be signed. It is totally outside of our control.

We have scheduled bargaining dates for the Operational Group and we are bargaining for the Operational Group on November 22, December 6, and December 7.

For the other groups, we entered into what we hoped would be an expedited process. NRC came to us around the time we started the TO bargaining and they said “What if we just made you an offer for these groups? We will match what they got in the Core and we will come to you and you will take those offers to your bargaining teams and then you will come back to us.” We went to the bargaining teams and said “Are you interested in proceeding that way?” They decided they were and so NRC produced some initial offers. There were some questions we had and some issues we had with some of those offers, so we went back to them on a number of points and, once we had the TO tentative agreement, they came to us with settlement proposals for PG and CS and we raised a couple of issues that we had addressed in the TO bargaining that we felt we wanted very strongly to apply to all of our bargaining units. They said that will take us 4-6 weeks to go back for a new mandate. I think they thought we would say “Well, that’s too long so we will just drop it.” But we didn’t. We are waiting for them to come back. There were also some errors in the CS and we are waiting to hear back from them about issues for the Pay Advisors that will match what Pay Advisors receive in the Core.

We are hoping within the next couple of weeks the NRC will get their revised mandate, they will come back to us for those groups. I will take those proposals to the bargaining teams. Those bargaining teams will decide yea or nay and then those will go out for ratification votes to all the bargaining units. The advantage to this was that NRC was not going to submit any demands to us. Basically, we would get most of what the Core got, the positive things, the wage increases, and they would not ask us to give up anything. We are going back and forth on a few things, but that is essentially what it is likely to look like for those 4 groups.

Question and Answer Session

Question from the floor – B. Holbrook stated that the RCEA is not receiving all dues from the Phoenix pay system. Is that because they are not giving you the money or they are not taking it off our paycheques?

A – C. Fraser: Both. They are not taking it off some paycheques and we are missing some remittances to our office.

Question from the floor – Regarding dues: Is there going to be a big deduction for missing dues from Phoenix where the employer decides “We’re going to take it all in 1 lump sum because we haven’t been collecting it for 6 months or so.”

A – C. Fraser: What should happen is any dues in arrears to be recovered may only be one month plus one month. From the Dues Directive: “from the employee’s pay at the rate of one current month of union dues plus an additional amount equal to one month of dues.” If you have any problems with your paycheques due to Phoenix, please call the RCEA office.

Question from the floor – You said that you hoped the CSs would be getting what the Core CS has and the hope is we wouldn’t have to give anything up. Do you know what concessions the Core CS gave, if any?

A – J. Van Den Bergh: No, I don’t know. I don’t think they gave up very much. For the CS group, NRC came to us with an offer and we’ve gone back to them.

Question from the floor – I am in the TO group and we have a tentative agreement. In the miscellaneous section in our ratification package, there is language regarding the Union’s concerns about health and safety. “Health and safety: NRC will make managers and SEC (Senior Executive Committee) aware of our concerns regarding responsibilities being put on and assumed by RCEA members with respect to safety and health.” Could you maybe talk a little bit about that?

A – J. Van Den Bergh: I’m sure a lot of members are on Emergency Response Teams and Laser Safety and Radiation teams and Hazardous Waste officers and all these various committees that go on to keep NRC safe and that members spend time on. So, the bargaining teams put a demand forward that, we weren’t looking for rewards or awards, but we wanted recognition of what members do, recognizing that it’s part of their job, reflecting it in their CTEs, providing them with enough training so that they can do that properly. We wanted all this work recognized. This is also something that came up in the NRC Dialogue and, if you’ve read the NRC Dialogue, it’s referred to as well. The NCOSH is also taking this submission to SEC. They have committed that, once the tentative agreement is ratified and signed, they will brief managers about these changes. SEC is the Senior Executive Committee of NRC. NRC wasn’t prepared to put language in the collective agreement, but they told us loud and clear, “We hear you. We understand what you’re saying. We recognize the problem and we want to try to address it.”

Q – R. Tom, HHT, Montreal: I have a couple questions regarding the TO ratification. Hours of Work and Travel. The second item is called “Travel time: Employees will now be able to request travel time as compensatory leave.” The travel time, does that refer to the time that we take to go to work on the weekends.

A – J. Van Den Bergh: Travel time is when you are in Travel status. If a member is on government business travel. It is not overtime. It is compensated as overtime, but it is different from overtime. It’s if you are in travel status, and that is defined in the collective agreement. Until now, the only way travel time could be compensated for TOs was to pay it out and we pointed out to NRC, the ROs get to use their travel time and use it as comp leave and the TOs didn’t, so we negotiated that change.

Q – R. Tom, HHT, Montreal: Would that be based on simple time if it's Monday to Friday, time and a half and double time respectively for Saturdays and Sundays?

A – J. Van Den Bergh: Travel time is overtime. The maximum you can claim has been increased from 12 to 15 hours of the straight time you are travelling. It's not unlimited. For example, if you are travelling to Hong Kong and you are travelling for 30 hours or something, unfortunately you don't get compensated for all those hours, is the way it is across the public service, but this was a big improvement. People who do travel on business don't have to take that in cash if they don't want to.

Q – R. Tom, HHT, Montreal: My second question is also within the miscellaneous section of the TO ratification package: "Leave with income averaging. The NRC negotiator committed to bring this proposal to SEC (Senior Executive Committee) in the form of a revised policy on self funded leave". I am ignorant of this. Could you elaborate?

A – J. Van Den Bergh: NRC has a policy on self-funded leave. This is found in the NRC HR Manual. Self-funded leave is, essentially, you work for 3 years or 4 years and each year of those years, a percentage of your salary is put aside into a bank account or withheld, and then the fourth or fifth year you are off, you are on leave, and that money that was put aside is paid to you. You are funding your own leave.

Q – R. Tom, HHT, Montreal: Is it like a sabbatical?

A – J. Van Den Bergh: It's leave without pay that you have funded yourself. But the self-funded leave is for longer periods of time. For example, if a member wants to take 3 months off or 4 months off. How is it funded? The NRC self-funded leave policy does not allow that, because it's for longer periods. Leave with income averaging allows you to do this for shorter periods of time. The RCEA has been raising this with NRC in every round of bargaining for many years, and NRC has committed in the past to addressing it and they recognize they haven't addressed it, so NRC has made another commitment to address it.

Q – M. Lowery, Construction, Ottawa: Joan, you mentioned yesterday at the Executive meeting that you wanted to look into our legal grounds for signing an expired contract, if that were to come to pass. Have you had a chance to do that?

A – J. Van Den Bergh: No, I did not do that today. I will.

Q – V. Desjardins, IRAP, Boucherville: In the TO ratification, I wanted to clarify one thing in the leave section, first page, point 2. It says "Agreement to include language that annual leave should normally be taken in the year it is earned." Normally is the important word, here, so they are not going to impose us to take it the year it is earned?

A – J. Van Den Bergh: It is not about scheduling your leave. It's about asking you to identify when you want to take leave and normally you should take it in the year in which you earn it. The flip side of that is NRC have to make every effort to give you the leave when you want it. Normally it should be scheduled in the year in which it is earned and they have to make every effort to give you the leave you want. It's not like the employer reserves the right to schedule your leave at a time when you don't want it. That's not what it is.

Q – V. Desjardins, IRAP, Boucherville: If for example, I have 5 days left of leave at the end of the year, can I still carry those over?

A – J. Van Den Bergh: It does not change any of the carry over. Currently, you can carry over 35 days and if you currently have more than 35 days in your carry over bank, you have to draw that down at a certain rate per year. None of that changes.

There were no further questions.

6. Adjournment

MOTION: “To adjourn the Annual General Meeting.”

Moved by M. Birt, AST, Ottawa. Seconded by R. Tom, HHT, Montreal.

Carried.

Meeting adjourned.