

**Meeting of the Board of Directors of the
Canadian Public Relations Society
October 4-5, 2003 – Hamilton Health Sciences Building, Hamilton, Ontario**

Present: Lisa Homer APR (President)
Robyn Quinn APR (President-Elect)
Colleen Killingsworth APR, (Vice President)
Rod Stanley APR (Treasurer)
Blair Peberdy APR (Secretary)
Daniel Granger ARP (Past President)

Rick Mauro, APR, Hamilton
Shawn Kelly, APR, Calgary
Tamara Magnan, Edmonton
Mark Hunter LaVigne APR, Toronto
Angela Street, Regina
Adele Stevens, Manitoba
Lucie-Anne Fabien ARP, SRQ
Pierre Pontbriand, APR Ottawa
Richard Sparkes APR, Newfoundland
Christina Winsor, New Brunswick
Catherine Robertson, Vancouver

Regrets: Douglas Shackell, PEI
Joan Yates, APR, Vancouver Island
Dionne Olsen, Northern Lights
Lorne Darlington, APR, Lethbridge

1. Welcome :

President Homer invited Board members to introduce themselves. She noted that she was looking forward to a successful board meeting and social activities. Homer advised members to keep a proper perspective, a sense of humour and to share their views. She reminded everyone that the Board is responsible for doing what's best for the Society and members. She noted that some Board members had expressed concerns about the accommodations for this meeting. She acknowledged that the Board is all volunteers and expects a level of comfort, however, it is important that the Society address the debt and save some money. She welcomed suggestions for the February Board meeting.

Action item: L. Homer made a commitment to streamline communications between Executive Committee, Board, Presidents and membership. Key messages will be sent on a regular basis.

2. Approval of Minutes of Meetings June 17 & 20 , 2003

MOTION 03:03: Moved by C. Robertson, seconded by C. Killingsworth that the minutes of the CPRS Board meeting of June 17th, 2003 be approved. L. Fabien expressed her desire to have the minutes reflect concerns that were raised about the increase in dues to address the deficit. She requested that minutes be amended to indicate the discussions around membership. Carried.

Motion 03:04: Moved by P. Pontbriand, seconded by R. Quinn that minutes of the Board meeting of June 20th, 2003 be approved. Carried.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION 03:05: Moved by R. Sparkes, seconded by L. Fabien that the Agenda be approved with the addition of new business at the end of Saturday's agenda.

4. Review of Financial Statements

Treasurer Stanley noted that the Board received two Statements of Financial Position – one ending August 31st and one ending September 30th. He noted that year-to-date membership revenues are up 10% over last year. Expenses for printing, translation and couriers are well below last year's figures as these expenses are now being included in the expenses of individual activities (accreditation, membership, awards, etc.) Stanley also noted that this statement does not include the Board expenses for the October meeting, whereas the 2002 Board expenses for the fall Board meeting were included in the September statement last year.

Boyd commented that the debt will be reduced significantly through continued efforts by the National Office to carefully manage costs and the contribution from the PEI conference. He recommended that the printing of the 2004 membership directory be delayed until June, following the AGM, so that the new Board and Committee Presiding Officers could be included. This action would also reduce expenses in the current fiscal year by about \$20,000.

T. Magnan suggested that a two-year plan be developed to bring the debt down which would take into account revenues from sponsorship, membership and awards and still consider the need to provide member value and enhance member benefits.

J. Valin noted that IABC is carrying a debt in excess of \$300,000.

MOTION 03:06: Moved by P. Pontbriand, seconded by T. Magnan that the Statements of Financial Position be accepted as presented. Carried.

5. Review of 2003 National Conference Financial Statements

Treasurer Stanley noted the financial success of the National Conference, which generated a surplus of \$39,106. This is in addition to the contribution of \$15,767 to the National Reserve Fund and \$15,000 for the National Professional Development Fund. A cheque for \$21,552.78 will be presented to the PEI Society. R. Stanley noted the exceptional work done by the National Office in managing costs and providing solid financial information. He particularly thanked Val and Phil Boyd for their efforts. The \$17,552.78 National Office portion will be put aside to pay down the debt. He noted the remarkable accomplishment of a local Member Society with just 15 members whose goal was not to make money but to put on a great conference.

The Board showed their appreciation for the outstanding results. L. Fabien requested that the Board formally thank and recognize the efforts of the PEI Society.

MOTION 03:07: Moved by L. Fabien, seconded by C. Killingsworth that the Profit and Loss Statement for the 2003 National Conference be accepted as presented. Carried.

6. Member Society Reports

Board members presented local Member Society reports. Written reports were distributed from the Presidents of Member Societies from Calgary, Regina, Manitoba, Toronto, Ottawa/Gatineau, SRQ, Nova Scotia, PEI and from Catherine Robertson representing CPRS Vancouver. The report from Newfoundland is being distributed with the minutes. Written reports were not received from Northern Lights, Lethbridge, Saskatoon, Hamilton or New Brunswick.

7. Global Alliance update

Incoming Chair of the Global Alliance, J. Valin, presented a powerpoint entitled "One Profession-One Voice" which covered the role of GA, the leadership role that CPRS has played and to seek input in the GA strategic plan. Other documents distributed for Board review were The Global Alliance News – Summer 2003 and the Global Alliance Strategic Planning Process.

Action Item: National Office to post One Profession-One Voice powerpoint on the web site and distribute to Member Society Presidents.

Action Item: Board members were asked to complete the questionnaire that was distributed with the Global Alliance Strategic Planning Process.

The Board thanked J. Valin for his outstanding work with Global Alliance.

8. Overview of CPRS Action Plan for 2003

President Homer highlighted the four key priorities for the Society in a powerpoint presentation entitled "Action Plan 2003-2004". These are continuous improvement in membership services, increased financial focus, governance review task force initiative and increased PR for PR.

Member Services:

Recent improvements include the introduction of on-line renewal forms and a policy to accept new memberships with an anniversary renewal date and a focus on retention. Ongoing improvements in the accreditation program, additional services at conferences (web casting, archived photo library) and a significantly improved membership records/database were also noted. Current membership stands at 1,554 as of September 30, 2003, or an 8% increase over last year.

Financial Focus:

The Treasurer and the National Office will continue with their efforts to reduce the debt of \$66,000. New revenue streams are being developed through the National Sponsorship program, and expenses for Board meetings and for the Accreditation and Awards programs are being carefully managed. The decision to delay printing the 2004 Directory until the next fiscal year will also reduce expenses. CNW and CCN Matthews have already committed to sponsoring the Society for three years at the Gold level.

Governance Review Task Force:

This initiative is a significant undertaking for the National Society, which includes the implementation of a comprehensive consultation process. A detailed package of information has already been distributed to the Executive Committee and Board members. An email will be sent to local Member Society Presidents with all the Governance documentation. The consultation process begins October 6 and continues to December 4, 2003.

PR for PR:

President Homer met with the Presiding Officer of the College of Fellows Luc Beauregard and Past President D. Granger to discuss a national volunteer speakers bureau. The Global Alliance efforts in working towards a universal code of ethics has increased the visibility of CPRS members who have been instrumental in developing the code. Homer noted that member Terry Flynn, APR, is working on a Ph. D. dissertation on the state of public relations in Canada and will be surveying CPRS members for their views. Finally, the Presidential Tour is underway with visits to Calgary, Montreal and Hamilton already completed. Plans are underway for Regina in December and Toronto and Ottawa in February.

9. Governance Review Task Force Update

Governance Review Task Force member R. Sparkes lead the discussion on the status of the work conducted by the Task Force since the June Board meeting using a powerpoint presentation entitled "Implementation Plan". Task Force members G. Diffey, C. Killingsworth, P. Pontbriand and J. Yates (via conference call) contributed to the discussion. The Task Force had incorporated feedback from the June Board meeting and Executive Committee meetings and membership at the AGM.

An operational plan, transition plan, timeline, consultation program and tools were developed. Documents include key messages, Q&A, a letter to local Member Society Presidents, Feedback/Discussion form and a consultation plan. The key considerations are dealing with Industry Canada regarding bylaw changes, requirements for a Special Member vote on bylaw changes, the need to publicize and recruit under a new nomination and election process and the need to proceed prudently to ensure a smooth transition. Sparkes reviewed the detailed timeline.

Board members were asked to encourage town hall meetings, local Society board discussion and individual member input. Board members were asked to direct questions to members of the Task Force to ensure accuracy and consistency in interpretation and messaging.

New Business

C. Robertson advised the Board that CPRS Vancouver plans to develop a teleseminar PD program offering for its members, similar to the highly successful Counselor's Academy program. It is basically a conference call set-up, with a 30-40 minute presentation, then a moderated question and answer period. Supporting materials will be available in pdf for download or for viewing on-line. Members will be able to register on-line for the sessions and the fees are based on a "site fee", so several people can listen in on a speakerphone at one site. CPRS Vancouver is prepared to offer access to this program to any CPRS member society that wishes to promote it to their members, and will share registration fees with the member society.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business for the day, moved by R. Mauro, seconded by R. Stanley the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Sunday, October 5 – 9:00 a.m.

1. Executive Committee reports on Committees

a. Accreditation

Vice President C. Killingsworth reviewed the Accreditation Process Improvements Implementation Team Proposal for Researching Online Exam Options presented in two documents (On-Line Examination Proposal and Proposal for Analysis of Web-based Accrediation Examination Alternatives) The first recommendation related to conducting further research to develop a web-based form that could be hosted on the CPRS site. The research will be done in consultation with CPRS web site managers and will include identifying on-going costs, and the cost of making the exam available in both official languages.

With the potential to eliminate both candidate and examiner travel costs a recommendation to pilot a new oral exam process with a sample of accreditation candidates participating in 2003 was put forward. One examiner would be in the same physical location as the candidate and two examiners would be on-line using 3-way calling technology. The on-site examiner would be able to provide the personal presence and presentation assessment with the two on-line examiners assessing the content of the candidates responses.

R. Mauro asked if the National Council on Accreditation had reviewed the changes to the accreditation exam that have been implemented by the PRSA. C. Killingsworth advised that the Council had conducted some initial research which showed the exams had been fundamentally changed and disagreed with the approach. G. Diffey has offered to take the new PRSA exam and provide feedback to the Council.

MOTION 03:08: Moved by C. Killingsworth, seconded by R. Quinn, "that we support the National Council on Accreditation recommendation to conduct further research and report on a web-based form that can be time-stamped and password protected, and hosted on the CPRS web site, with a cost not to exceed \$1,800." Carried.

MOTION 03:09: Moved by C. Killingsworth, seconded by R. Sparkes, that the National Council on Accreditation recommendation, "that an oral exam option 2 be piloted with a sample of the 2003 accreditation candidates," be accepted. Carried.

L. Fabien asked if there was a budget for the web-based exam research. C. Killingsworth acknowledged it had not been budgeted for in this year. However, it is anticipated that the cost savings could be \$3,000 per year if implemented.

APIIT Update C. Killingsworth also advised the Board of the APIIT's final actions and the fact that the committee has been dissolved as it has fulfilled its implementation mandate.

Action Item: National Office to send APIIT final report to Board members and to post on the web site.

b. Awards

President-Elect R. Quinn reported that she was very pleased that Guy Litalien and Pierre Pontbriand had agreed to co-chair the National Awards Committee. There will be an additional challenge with the Awards ceremony next year in Quebec City as SRQ will be combining the presentation of their Society awards with the presentation of the National awards.

S. Kelly relayed concerns that were raised by Calgary members who were part of the 2003 judging team relating to the quality of entries and judging criteria. Co-chairs of the 2003 Awards Committee David Rowney and Nancy MacLeod formally responded and a copy was sent to the 2004 Co-Chairs for their consideration.

c. Web site

R. Stanley referred the Board to the Website Development Report that included a WebTrends report on the CPRS web site activity. He noted the site received 88,250 visits in the first nine months of this year. The top 10 areas of the site visited included career opportunities, accreditation, education, professional development, membership, national conference and national awards, about CPRS and News. The most downloaded files included accreditation handbook, membership application, awards brochure, annual report and bylaws.

He expressed disappointment that very few Board members responded to the email sent in March requesting feedback on the site from various levels of membership. Also an email from the National Office to Member Society Presidents in March asking for more involvement in the National site from Member Societies was virtually ignored.

R. Stanley asked the Board to encourage Member Society Presidents to share their Society newsletters, professional development events, etc. with the National Office.

Action Item: National Office to contact local Member Societies for articles in newsletters, web sites, etc. to centralize material on National web site.

Action Item: K. Dalton and R. Stanley to review the possibility of polling members with questions in pop-up boxes on the national web site.

Action Item: National Office to distribute full WebTrends report to Board members.

d. Bylaws

P. Boyd noted that the changes to the Society's Bylaws was a two-step process. The current Bylaws need to be updated with Industry Canada. Once the proposed changes arising from the new governance model have been voted on by the membership, the new bylaws will be submitted to Industry Canada.

e. Sponsorship

President Elect R. Quinn reported that a National Sponsorship program had been implemented with a goal to increase revenues for National programs including the National conference. P. Boyd developed a concrete program creating opportunities for various levels of support and corresponding recognition for sponsors. K. Dalton and P. Boyd met with CNW and CCNMatthews and secured three-year sponsorships from each at the Gold level. R. Quinn asked Board members to encourage local Member Society Presidents to share local sponsorship arrangements with the National Office.

Action Item: National Office to provide quarterly update on activities.

L. Fabien reported that the SRQ Board was very upset with the recent partnership agreement negotiated with the Canadian Institute. She suggested that the local Member Society was not consulted prior to the agreement being struck. P. Boyd clarified that every Society that might have their professional development program affected by Canadian Institute conferences was consulted. In fact, the Canadian Institute was immediately notified that Quebec was not interested in participating in the partnership. L. Fabien noted that the SRQ appreciated that the National Office did not proceed with the Canadian Institute for the two conferences planned in Montreal in 2003-4. Conferences in Toronto, Calgary and Ottawa were going ahead as planned in 2003-4.

f. National Resource Library

C. Killingsworth presented a report prepared by Pam Bannister regarding the relocation of the Resource Library to the Lincoln Park Campus of Mount Royal College and reminder of the services offered to CPRS members. L. Fabien asked if there were any plans to provide access to a full resource library similar to those offered by universities.

2. National Office Operations

Executive Director K. Dalton reviewed the national membership statistics, noting that net membership growth was 8% or 120 more members higher than last year. As of September 30th, 2003, membership was 1,554 compared to 1,434 in September 2002. Fourteen per cent or 255 members did not renew in 2003. In the first nine months of the year, the National Office had processed 220 new member applications. The membership by category percentages are 30% private sector, 25% agencies, 19% government, 8% other, 7% education, 6% associations and 5% health.

S. Kelly recognized the efforts made by the National Office in maintaining accurate membership records and providing statistics and updated lists to the Member Societies.

L. Homer advised the Board that the 2004/2005 Directory will be printed in July, giving ample time following the renewal period and after the AGM, to ensure it contains the most up-to-date information. This will also allow for extra time to obtain advertising from National Sponsors.

K. Dalton noted that the online Membership Directory will be updated before the end of the 2003.

K. Dalton also reviewed details of the strategic alliance that was negotiated with the Canadian Institute. CPRS will be premier sponsor of Canadian Institute communications conferences held across Canada for the period September 1, 2003 to August 31, 2004.

Action Item: K. Dalton to send membership report to each Society President and Membership Chair.

3. National Conferences

PEI Wrap Up Report 2003 (via teleconference)

2003 Conference Chair A. Stanley reported that she was very happy with the National Conference results. She noted she had a small, but strong committee of volunteers. She had a number of recommendations and offered to provide a comprehensive report. Highlights include the success of having local flavour and getting the delegates out of the hotel. She cites examples of the Winnipeg train trip and the lobster supper in PEI. She suggested that pacing the conference to include adequate time for networking was important. Sponsorships and in-kind services need to be monitored carefully. Simultaneous translation was not used at the PEI conference.

Action Item: Board should investigate the necessity for simultaneous translation at national conferences.

The Board thanked Ann for a job well done and a cheque for \$21,552.78, representing the PEI Society's revenue was presented to R. Stanley.

Quebec City Report 2004

L. Fabien presented a progress report on behalf of the Organizing Committee for the National Conference in Quebec City. Highlights include an agreement with PRSA International Section and Global Alliance to hold joint meetings. With the assistance of the National Office, sponsorships have been secured with CNW as Title Sponsor and CCNMatthews as Platinum Sponsor.

Calgary Report 2005

S. Kelly reported that the organizing committee was preparing themes for review and approval by the Executive Committee. The Calgary Society has created a Board position for the chair of the National Conference. P. Boyd noted that he was preparing a template for conference sponsorships.

Hamilton Bid 2006

President L. Homer referred the Board to the official letter of interest in hosting a Niagara area national conference received July 11, 2003 and co-signed by Peter Reesor, President of Hamilton Society and Rick Mauro, Hamilton Board representative.

MOTION 03:10: Moved by Colleen Killingsworth, seconded by Angela Street, that the Board accept the proposal of the Hamilton Society to host the 2006 national conference. Carried.

4. New Business

Presidential Tour

Suggested locations and dates:

Toronto, Ottawa – January/February

Regina – December

Vancouver Island, Northern Lights – February

PEI, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick - April

Quebec – June

R. Stanley thanked C. Winsor of New Brunswick for attending the meeting and taking on the challenge of a small Member Society.

Action Item: K. Dalton to provide brief synopsis of each Board item for communication to members.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business for the day, moved by C. Killingsworth, seconded by B. Peberdy the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Next meeting of the CPRS Board will be February, 21-22, 2004 in Vancouver.