

DRAFT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
March 3, 2025
9:35 AM to 4:00 PM
by zoom

Attendees: Mr. Derick Summers, RO, Chair, Elected Member
Mr. Kevin Cloutier, RO, Elected Member
Mr. Omar Farouk, Government Appointee
Mr. Paul Imola, RO, Elected Member
Ms. Peggy Judge, Government Appointee
Mr. Stephen Kinsella, Government Appointee
Ms. Alicia Munian, Government Appointee
Ms. Tonya Nahmabin, RO, Elected Member
Mr. Carlos Pacheco, RO, Elected Member
Ms. Grazyna Sepczynska, RO, Elected Member
Mr. Carlo Sicoli, Government Appointee

Administration: Mr. Fazal Khan, RO, Registrar, CEO
Ms. Amy Stein, Deputy Registrar and General Counsel
Ms. Carolyn Robertson, Manager, Communications and Executive Office
Ms. Blessing Adebimpe, Staff Accountant

Regrets: Mr. Samir Modhera, RO, Elected Member

12.0 In Camera Session

MOTION: TO GO IN CAMERA UNDER S. 7(2) (d) OF THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS PROCEDURAL CODE
TO DISCUSS A PERSONNEL MATTER.

MOVED: P. IMOLA
SECONDED: G. SEPCZYNSKA

FOR: 11
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: **CARRIED**

Following the in-camera session, the Board took a short break. When the meeting resumed, the live stream started on YouTube.

1.0 Introduction

D. Summers introduced himself, the board members, and the administration, and then opened the meeting with a land acknowledgment.

1.1 Conflict of Interest Declaration

No conflicts of interest were declared.

1.2 Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION: TO APPROVE THE AGENDA

MOVED: G. SEPCZYNSKA

SECONDED: K. CLOUTIER

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 0

ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED

2.0 Minutes of December 2 and 3, 2024 Board Meeting

MOTION: TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 2 AND 3, 2024 MINUTES

MOVED: S. KINSELLA

SECONDED: A. MUNIAN

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 0

ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED

3.0 Financial Reports

7.1 Financial Variance Report to December 31, 2024.

B. Adebimpe presented the year-end 2024 financial variance report to the board. Revenue showed a positive variance, owing to factors such as investment income, a rise in accreditation requests, and the timing of examination results that led to an increase in Registered Optician applications in Q1.

Total expenses for 2024 came in at a 0% variance to budget. Some overages in board and committee expenses were noted, which resulted from additional meetings that had not been accounted for in the budget. These overages were offset by other expenses coming in under budget.

The board was invited to ask questions.

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE FINANCIAL VARIANCE REPORT TO DECEMBER 31, 2024.

MOVED: G. SEPCZYNSKA

SECONDED: T. NAHAMABIN

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 0

ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED

The board had some time before the next speaker and decided to move ahead with the 5.1 Financial Planning and Monitoring Report.

5.0 Monitoring Report

5.1 Financial Planning and Monitoring Report

K. Elkin provided some context around the monitoring reports as a risk management check for the Board. The board is asked if the Registrar's interpretation was reasonable, and if the policy was complied with. These reports are used to monitor the Registrar's performance and by extension the performance of the organization.

F. Khan presented the Financial Planning and Monitoring Report to the Board. The report covered the period from January 2024 to December 2024.

The report noted that the board has a multi-year strategic plan and detailed how funds were allocated for specific strategic planning initiatives. The Registrar and Deputy Registrar meet quarterly to review the variance reports and the budget and are regularly in communication with the auditors. No funds from the reserve fund were spent in 2025.

Public Interest Considerations: The steps taken by the Registrar, CEO to comply with the Financial Planning and Budgeting policy will serve the College's public interest mandate by ensuring financial planning and budgeting is done efficiently, transparently, and sustainably. This includes steps to optimize budgeting while reducing financial risk exposure by maintaining a robust financial reserve. The policy promotes financial protection through clear guidelines and regular reviews of the financial planning and budgeting process. This approach helps enhance public trust, protect the college against possible financial risks, and align budgeting with the College's needs.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Considerations: No DEI concerns have been identified with respect to the College's investment strategy.

Risk Management Considerations: The steps taken by the Registrar, CEO to comply with the Financial Planning and Budgeting Policy are aimed at minimizing risk to the College's finances by focusing on proper budgeting through trends and hedging risks through reserves.

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THAT THE REGISTRAR'S INTERPRETATION OF THE POLICY WAS REASONABLE

MOVED: G. SEPCZYNSKA

SECONDED: O. FAROUK

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 0

ABSTAINED: 0

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD AGREES THAT THE REGISTRAR, CEO COMPLIED WITH THE POLICY.

MOVED: P. IMOLA

SECONDED: S. KINSELLA

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 0

ABSTAINED: 0

5.4 Corporate Identity, Public Image and Communication Policy

F. Khan presented the Corporate Identity, Public Image and Communication Policy Monitoring report to the board. The report covers the period from January 2024 to December 2024.

The report confirmed that no changes have been made to the organization's name or the logo, and further, outlined the process for communicating with registrants and the public. Communications to registrations and events that the COO attended, where staff met with registrants and the public, were also noted.

The communications manager oversees the logo's appropriate use, which is ongoing and includes all communications, written materials, and advertising items. The Communications Manager oversees all social media and public relations, working closely with the Registrar and Deputy Registrar.

It was also noted that only the Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Chair, and Vice-Chair have the authority to sign or use the corporate seal on behalf of the COO.

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THAT THE REGISTRAR'S INTERPRETATION OF THE POLICY WAS REASONABLE

MOVED: K. CLOUTIER

SECONDED: G. SEPCZYNSKA

FOR: 11
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD AGREES THAT THE REGISTRAR, CEO COMPLIED WITH THE POLICY.

MOVED: A. MUNIAN
SECONDED: T. NAHAMABIN
FOR: 11
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED

4.0 Presentation by Leslee White-Eye on the Indigenous Community Engagement Project

L. White-Eye provided the Board with an update on the Indigenous Community Engagement Project that was undertaken jointly by the COO and the College of Optometrists of Ontario in 2024. Focus group sessions were held in Spring 2024, following which Ms. White-Eye worked with Counsel Public Affairs to deliver a report with a number of recommendations. Work remains ongoing in implementing the recommendations coming out of the report.

At 12:10, the board took a 50-minute lunch break. When the Board returned from lunch, the Board Monitoring reports resumed.

5.2 Strategic Outcomes Policy Monitoring Report

The board receives monitoring reports on the strategic plan in Q1 and Q3 each year. The reports provide a detailed progress report on the achievement of strategies identified in the 2023 – 2025 Strategic Plan.

The Q1 2025 report highlighted changes since the last report, including:

- An update on the COO's Unauthorized Practice program, including complaints opened and closed to date since the updated program launched in 2023 (Section 1.2)
- Details of new resources developed or in development to support inclusive and culturally safe patient care (section 1.3.1)
- An update on efforts to reduce complaint processing times (section 1.4)
- Updates on various ongoing projects, such as a public awareness campaign relating to the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition process, the Indigenous Community Engagement project, and database improvements.

The board was invited to ask questions.

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THAT THE REGISTRAR'S INTERPRETATION OF THE POLICY WAS REASONABLE

MOVED: G. SEPCZYNSKA
SECONDED: P. IMOLA
FOR: 11
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAINED: 0

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD AGREES THAT THE REGISTRAR, CEO COMPLIED WITH THE POLICY.

MOVED: S. KINSELLA
SECONDED: A. MUNIAN
FOR: 11
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED

5.3 Global Operational Constraint Policy Monitoring Report

F. Khan presented the Global Operational Constraint Policy monitoring report to the Board. The report covered the period from January 2022 to January 2025 and outlined the details of how the COO met the policy criteria including: Taking steps to safeguard confidential information from unauthorized access, including the introduction of multi-factor authentication and updates to the virtual boardroom. It was noted that the college has covered all bases, is prepared for another emergency, and has sufficient funds in the reserve fund. It was further noted that based on the advice of the auditor, the fund will be increased from 9 months of expenses to cover 12 months of expenses.

In order to ensure the organization's actions and activities are aligned with COO values, all board and committee members participated in Indigenous Anti-Racism Training in January 2023, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training, and appreciative inquiry training.

The board was invited to ask questions.

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THAT THE REGISTRAR'S INTERPRETATION OF THE POLICY WAS REASONABLE

MOVED: G. SEPCZYNSKA
SECONDED: P. IMOLA
FOR: 11
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAINED: 0

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD AGREES THAT THE REGISTRAR, CEO COMPLIED WITH THE POLICY.

MOVED: K. CLOUTIER
SECONDED: C. SICOLI
FOR: 11
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED

6.0 Board Monitoring Reports

6.1 Board Monitoring System Policy

A. Munian presented the Board Monitoring system policy monitoring report. The board was fully compliant in all areas, and no actions that need to be taken were identified. The report was provided for information only, and the board was invited to ask questions.

7.0 2024 Board Action Plan Status Update

A. Stein presented a status update on the board's 2024 action plan. The majority of action items were completed, with a number remaining in progress. This was provided for information only.

8.0 Registration

8.1 Life Member Status

D. Summers presented the stakeholder feedback regarding the proposed changes to the Life Member Program. Most respondents indicated they were in favour of maintaining some form of recognition for long-serving opticians, and the majority of respondents were also in favour of the alternative model proposed by the Registration Committee. On review, the Registration Committee determined to recommend that the board discontinue the current Life Member program, and to instead implement the proposed alternative program, with one change: to replace the title "Honorary Retired Optician" with "Legacy Retired Optician" to avoid any public confusion about the recipients' credentials.

The board was invited to ask questions. It was confirmed that existing Life Members would automatically be moved to the Legacy Retired Optician Program.

Public Interest Considerations: The majority of registrants supported continuing to honor retired opticians for their contributions, with some preferring to retain the "Life Member" status. However, the Committee noted as follows:

- As a result of recent regulation changes, it will not be possible to maintain the status quo with respect to the Life Member recognition program.
- There did not appear to be a clear public interest rationale articulated by survey respondents to continue supporting the recognition program.

- The term “Life Member” has the potential to create public confusion. In addition, the term “Honorary Retired Status” may also cause confusion because the term “honorary” might suggest that the individual was an “honorary optician” (i.e. a non-optician granted honorary status) rather than a qualified optician who has since retired.)
- However, with certain changes in place, the Committee was of the view that the College could continue to recognize long-serving opticians in a way that would not contradict its public interest mandate.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Considerations: In reviewing stakeholder feedback, the Committee noted that registrants did not identify any concerns from a diversity, equity, and inclusion perspective on the proposal to move from “Life Members” to “Honorary Retired Status”.

Some registrants expressed the view that opticians with this status should retain voting rights in order to account for their perspectives post-retirement, although the majority of were not in favour of this. One commenter highlighted that some retired opticians may still operate optical businesses. On review, however, the Committee was of the view that the public interest weighed in favour of limiting voting eligibility to current registrants, as they would have the most up-to-date and relevant knowledge of the profession. The Committee also noted that other non-registered business owners are not eligible to participate in board elections.

Risk Management Considerations: From a risk management perspective, the Committee identified that the current "Life Member" title could potentially mislead the public and cause confusion, posing a potential risk to the College. The alternative model proposed by the Committee addresses this concern by increasing clarity for the public while also publicly recognizing the achievement of long-serving retired opticians.

The board affirmed the Public Interest, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Considerations and Risk Management considerations put forward by the committee.

MOTION: TO DISCONTINUE THE LIFE MEMBER PROGRAM.

MOVED: G. SEPCZYNSKA

SECONDED: K. CLOUTIER

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 0

ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED

MOTION: TO CREATE A LEGACY RETIRED OPTICIAN PROGRAM TO RECOGNIZE LONG SERVING OPTICIANS WHO HAVE PERMANENTLY RETIRED FROM THE PROFESSION.

MOVED: O. FAROUK

SECONDED: S. KINSELLA

FOR: 11
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED

9.0 Board Policy Review and Updates

9.1 Registration Committee Terms of Reference

Registration Committee Terms of Reference and Mandate Policy 4-13: This policy outlines the composition, authority, accountability, and responsibilities of the Registration Committee. No updates were proposed to this policy.

9.2 Fitness to Practice Committee Terms of Reference

Fitness to Practise Terms of Reference and Mandate Policy 4-14: This policy outlines the composition, authority, accountability, and responsibilities of the Fitness to Practise Committee. No updates were proposed to this policy.

It was noted that the Public Interest, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and Risk Management Considerations put forward by the committee were the same for both policies.

Public Interest Considerations: The board recognized the importance of strong governance to carry out its object of regulating the profession in the public interest and has invested significant time and resources into updating its governance policies and processes. Reviewing the content of these policies ensures that they remain consistent and effective, and that the College is up to date with regulations, technology, and regulatory best practices.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Considerations: The Governance Committee did not identify any concerns from a diversity, equity, and inclusion perspective

Risk Management Considerations: Regularly reviewing the content of governance policies to ensure that they remain relevant and continue to serve the board's needs and strategic objectives aligns with the COO Strategic Plan 2023- 2025 and helps to mitigate organizational risk.

The board affirmed the Public Interest, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Considerations and Risk Management considerations put forward by the committee for both policies.

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE STATUS QUO FOR THE FITNESS TO PRACTICE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND THE REGISTRATION COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

MOVED: T. NAHMABIN
SECONDED: P. IMOLA

FOR: 11
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED

10.0 Approval of the 2025 Pre-Election Training Module

A. Stein presented the proposed 2025 pre-election training module to the board. Registrants are required to complete the module before running for election to the board in 2025. The pre-election training module was first introduced in July 2020, following a change to the by-laws. It was proposed that the 2025 pre-election training module remain Chapter 4 of the Jurisprudence Manual, on the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA).

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD APPROVE JURISPRUDENCE CHAPTER 4: RHPA AS THE PRE-ELECTION TRAINING MODULE FOR 2025.

MOVED: G. SEPCZYNSKA
SECONDED: C. SICOLI

FOR: 11
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED

11.0 Department Spotlight

The registration team made a presentation to the board that covered the department and their roles.

12.0 Reports

12.1 Registrar's Report

F. Khan presented the Registrar's Report, which covered:

- The status of pending regulations, notably the exemption for spousal treatment.
- The addition of a new staff member, Ranee Law, to assist with the strategic planning preparations.
- Key dates for upcoming external relations events.
- Collaboration efforts with the College of Optometrists of Ontario on the joint Indigenous Engagement project and a project the COO is working on with the College of Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists of Ontario to create two webinars to educate registrants on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

The board was invited to ask questions.

12.2 – 12.4 Committee Reports, Committee Annual Reports, Communications Report

F. Khan provided some highlights from the reports. The reports were then approved using an omnibus motion.

MOTION: TO APPROVE THE COMMITTEE REPORTS, ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORTS, AND THE COMMUNICATIONS REPORT AS PRESENTED.

MOVED: G. SEPCZYNSKA

SECONDED: C. SICOLI

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 0

ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED

13.0 Adjournment

MOTION: TO ADJOURN

MOVED: S. KINSELLA

SECONDED: G. SEPCZYNSKA

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 0

ABSTAINED: 0

VOTE: CARRIED