

BC Government Retired Government Employees Association

AGM Minutes

October 16, 2024

Coast Tsawwassen Inn

Call to order and introductions:

Present In Person: (70)

Table Officers:

Brian Green

Ken Pendergast

George Bowden

Patrick Harkness

Kathy Torhjelm

Johanna Morrow

Al Barclay

Jodine Ducs

Branch 100 (Fraser Valley)

Mark Perry

Bruce Handysides

Corinne Perry

Branch 200 (North Island/Sunshine Coast)

Dave Dyke

Judi Murakami

Branch 300 (Rocky Mountain)

Deb Kerr

Cathy Phillips

Branch 400 (Grand Forks)

Deb Barclay

Migs Lovlin

Branch 500 (Kamloops)

Edna Park

David LaBar

Branch 600 (Nanaimo/Mid-Island)

Lea Campbell

Lawrence Johnson

Gloria Johnson

Warren McCormick

Branch 700 (Kootenays)

Alex Wallach

Gerrie Melnechuk

Branch 800 (New Westminster & District)

Bonnie Billington

Mike Strath

Alex Dennison

Branch 900 (South Okanagan)

Maurice Davidson

Imre Horvath

Branch 1000 (Shuswap/Columbia)

Glen Hill

Kirstine Hill

JoAnn Fowler

Branch 1100 (Vancouver)

Jean Sickman

Rose Kwek

Terry Dobrozdravich

Branch 1200 (Victoria)

Barbara Golder

Karin Heimlich

Ed Forbes

Branch 1400 (Peace River)

Ray Cox  
Bob Low  
Jacquie Kotak

Lu Gaudet  
Carol Paulson

Branch 1500 (Kelowna)

Merilee Ashworth

Branch 2300 (Mt. Arrowsmith)

Dan Anderson  
Shirley Besler

Branch 1600 (Prince George)

Shannon Carson

Branch 2400 (Golden Ears)

Patrick Dickson  
Ron Morley

Branch 1700 (Cariboo)

George Foisy

Branch 2500 (Peninsula)

John MacLucas  
Elizabeth Wong

Branch 1900 (Northwest)

Branch 2000 (Cheam View)

Brian Taylor

Branch 2700 (Western Communities)

Al Coccola  
Valeska Campbell  
Tammy Welch  
Colleen Coccola

Branch 2100 (Langley/Surrey)

Wilf Brodrick  
Janice Leonard

Zoom Delegates

Dan Harlow – Branch 400  
Grace Kramer – Branch 1500

Art Kaehn – Branch 1600  
Michelle Schilling – Branch 1700

Guests

Angie Sorrell – Chair – Board of Trustees  
Stuart Morgan – ED – Pensions BC  
Tim Anderson – BCRTA  
Caroline Malm – BCRTA  
Leslie Gaudette – COSCO

Terry Erskine – MPRA  
Mark Costales – Bel-Air/Johnson  
Cheryl Anderson – Hearing Life  
Dan Levitt – B.C. Seniors' Advocate  
Linda Foubister - Photographer

Zoom Observers

Sarf Ahmed – Branch 1200  
Mary-Ethel Audley – Branch 2500  
Bonnie Christian – Branch 100  
Elizabeth Coeey – Branch 1200  
Morgan Bridger – Branch 300  
Eric Burkle – Branch 1200

David Carroll – Branch 2300  
Rosita Chan – Branch 1100  
George Davison – College Retiree  
Narinder Singh Dyal – Branch 1100  
Harry (Phil) Erickson – Branch 1700  
Anita Fownes – Branch 1200

Carol Fraser -Branch 100  
Brian Gollan – Branch 1000  
Carol Ann Green – Branch 1000  
Murray Halkett – Branch 1200  
Karen Harper – Branch 1200  
Sharon Hawrelak – Branch 1500  
Murray Jacobs – Branch 2500  
Ulrich Janisch – Branch 100  
Arnold Jenner - Branch 1700  
Alan Kneeland – Branch 200  
Grant Lachmuth – Branch 1500  
Marie Lebrun – Branch 800  
Charles Lee – Branch 700  
Carson Luw – Branch 800  
Jacqueline Long – Branch 1100  
Linda Manzon – Branch 900  
Katie Martin – Branch 2100  
Yvonne Martin – Branch 1200

Susan McGreish – Branch 1600  
Len Meilleur – Branch 5000  
Marilyn Melville – Branch 800  
Georgia Millbank – Branch 1200  
Denise Moreau – Branch 700  
Kathy Nelson – Branch 800  
Rosemarie O’Connor – Branch 1600  
Thomas Ovanin – Branch 1200  
Elaine Parker – Branch 700  
Douglas Portfors – Branch 1100  
Lisa Pritchett – Branch 2100  
John Roche – Branch 2700  
Lillian Rusch – Branch 900  
Gurkiran Sidhu – Branch 2100  
Stephen Smith – Branch 1100  
Sharon Stewart – Branch 2700  
Kenneth Tan – Branch 2100

#### Territorial Acknowledgement -

As a reflection of the provincial scope of our membership and organization, we recognize that our branches operate in the ceded, unceded, and sovereign territories of Nations across what is referred to as British Columbia

We pay our respects to the Elders, past and present, descendants and custodians of these lands as well as their knowledge keepers. We are grateful to them all and are committed to the journey of reconciliation Welcome, Determination of a Quorum, Introduction of guests. Why are we doing this?

Following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s final report, offering a land acknowledgement is common way to show respect and to recognize “the ties the descendants of those First Peoples have to the land – its importance to their culture, ceremonies, and traditions.”

All branches with the exception of Branch 1900 were represented in person and on Zoom.

1. Approval of Agenda - M/S Wilf Brodrick/John MacLucas. Carried
2. Approval of Minutes of last AGM - M/S Alex Wallach/Dave Dyke. Carried.
3. Guest Speakers
  - a. Angie Sorrell – Chair – Public Service Pension Plan. – 14 appointed trustees to the Board. The Board is responsible to the recipients of the contributions to the Plan. The Board is responsible for managing the funds of the plan, determining benefits, provide fully indexed COLA.
  - b. Stewart Morgan – ED, PSPP, - Inflation Adjustment Fund. At the end of 2023 a valuation was required and was assured that there is enough money in the plan to pay all pensions.

There is a contract with Greenshield which is reviewed annually. Investments are reviewed on a regular basis. The Board exerts influence to work toward more ethical investments. Dental plan – PSPP has spoken to Federal government concerning members not being eligible for the federal plan dental plan. A gift of a mug and a card was given to each speaker.

- c. Leslie Gaudette – COSCO – promotes and enhances the health of seniors in BC. Volunteer driven. Each major affiliate can appoint 5 delegates. Slides that Leslie showed will be posted on our website. The gift of a mug was presented.
  - d. Mark Costeles – Bel Air/Johnson – Mark provided an update of his organization – Gifts were presented - Road Safety Kit – Gloria Johnson – Branch 600; iPad – Glenn Hill – Branch 1000. Zoom attendees – Road Safety Kit – Linda Manson – Branch 900; iPad – Sharon Hawrelak – Branch 1500.
  - e. Cheryl Anderson – Hearing Life – gave an update on her company and presented a gift basket.
4. Merchandise Presentation by Al Coccoła – encourages each branch to have a contact person of merchandise promotion.
  5. In Memoria – Zoom presentation on members who have passed over the past year prepared and shown by Jodine Ducs.
  6. Break
  7. Keynote Speaker – Dan Levitt – B.C. Seniors’ Advocate – Dan spoke on Senior’s issues in British Columbia and the advocacy he does on ageism, income, housing, health care, etc. His talk was very well received and many questions were asked.
  8. Door Prizes      Jacquie Kotak – Branch 1400 won a gift basket from Hearing Life  
                          Lu Goudet – Branch 2100 won a gift from Martell Insurance  
                          Patrick Dickson Branch 2400 won a gift from Martell Insurance
  9. Honored Member – M/S George Bowden/ Deb Barclay that Marilyn Osborne from Branch 400 – Grand Forks, be made an honored member of our organization. Carried. A certificate and pin will be presented to her at her branch.
  10. Officer Reports – see attached.
    - a. President’s Report – Brian Green
    - b. First VP – George Bowden - worked on privacy, bylaws, AGM planning, calendar of events.
    - c. Second VP – Patrick Harkness -
    - d. Membership Secretary – Al Barclay – Jodine demonstrated how the calendar on our website works.
    - e. Treasurer/ Trustee – Johanna Morrow -
  11. Resolutions – see attached.
    - 1) Motion to have just one membership type M/S Al Barclay/Alex Wallach. Amendment Remove “or” M/S Debbie Kerr/Dan Anderson. Amendment failed. Main motion Failed.
    - 2) Motion to permit electronic delivery of notices to and from members. Carried.
    - 3) Motion to reduce the number of branch executives required. Carried.
    - 4) Motion to reduce the quorum for general and director meetings Carried.
    - 5) Motion to remove explicit fiscal year dates. Carried.

6) Late motion: M/S Patrick Harkness/Jean Sickman re # of delegates of COSCO. Any branch of the BCGREA shall affiliate with COSCO and send delegates. M/S Lawrence Johnson/Barbara Golder that we refer this matter back to the Table Officers. Carried.

12. Elections – Ken Pendergast – These nominations are for approximately 6 months until our next AGM in April 2025.

- a. President — Brian Green - Elected by acclamation
  - b. 1<sup>st</sup> Vice- President — Wilf Brodrick - Elected by acclamation
  - c. 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President — Tammy Welch - Elected by acclamation
- The Officers were installed by Ken Pendergast.

13. M/S Glenn Hill/Warren McCormick that we pay the following honorariums. Carried.

1. Provincial President - \$1500
2. Provincial Secretary - \$2700
3. Provincial Treasurer - \$2700
4. Provincial Communications Committee Chair - \$750
5. Provincial Recruitment & Retention Committee Chair - \$750
6. Provincial Membership Committee Chair - \$750
7. Provincial Finance Committee Chair - \$750
8. Provincial Constitution & Bylaws Committee Chair - \$750
9. Provincial PEN Electronic Distribution - \$750

14. Good of the Order- Thanks to Mitchell Styba Production for their excellent work today in managing our hybrid meeting.

15. Adjournment – Declared by Brian Green at 3:15 pm

16. Next Meeting – AGM – April 30, 2025 at the Coast Tsawwassen Inn.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2023-2024**

This is my annual report as President of the BCGREA covering the period October 2023- October 2024. As with my previous reports, I am distributing it widely as I believe members should have an overview of the Associations' activities and plans.

### **Our upcoming AGM**

As previously communicated, any member can observe our AGM by simply sending an email to [info@bcgre.ca](mailto:info@bcgre.ca) and getting the Zoom link. As an added enticement, you can be entered into a draw for an iPad courtesy of Belair Direct Insurance, should you attend the meeting online.

Both the new chair of the Board of Trustees for the Public Service Pension Plan, Angie Sorrel, and the new Seniors Advocate, David Levitt, will be speaking in the morning, along with our affinity partners –Belair Direct Insurance and Hearing Life.

### **Current status of the Association and Pension Plan**

So how have we been doing? Our membership and finances are stable, though we do need to keep an eye on our budget as we have only small surpluses as befits a non-profit. As our volunteer base decreases, this puts increased pressure on having to pay for various administrative and program functions. Attracting new members remains a challenge given the over 90 employers who are part of the plan, all with disparate human resources practices. As well, most pre-retirement sessions are online.

We have had a number of organizational changes, including moving our fiscal year to a calendar year basis starting 2025. This should allow for better financial planning and integration with the dues remittances we receive from the Pension Corporation. Our upcoming 2024 AGM is also the first time we will be operating under our new governance model of two delegates per branch rather than representation by branch size. This change was adopted, with considerable debate, at our April directors meeting.

Our pension plan remains robust and well-funded and appears capable of navigating the myriad challenges of the modern world. The continued interest by various political factions to have pension funds such as ours invest for other reasons than the welfare of plan recipients (such as increased exposure to Canadian stock) remains a concern to me as well as the other retiree associations. I suspect we won't be shy about expressing our views! We are fortunate in being the only retiree association in the public sector family that directly appoints a trustee to its Board. A new term will commence next April for three years. We had an email canvas of the membership to ensure as wide a notification as possible about this opportunity. Several expressed interest and I, along with members of our executive, are currently reviewing the applications.

### **Affinity Partner news**

There have also been changes on the affinity front as well. Johnson Insurance is now in the process of completing its rebranding as Belair Direct and integrating with their staff. This has caused some confusion with Belair Direct over the discounts available to our membership on both the travel and home insurance fronts. If you have any concerns in this regard, please reach out to us at [info@bcgre.ca](mailto:info@bcgre.ca). Our dedicated Belair Direct representative has been very helpful in resolving issues. I also receive the occasional email suggesting that coverage under Belair Direct is not as good as other plans. It is difficult to respond to these complaints as insurance quotes are very specific to the particular circumstances and the types of specific coverage. We intend to develop a checklist of items that you should consider irrespective of the carrier you choose for both home and travel/medical coverage. There are a lot of things to consider and some significant "gotchas" if you don't.

As well, our arrangement with Simply Connect wireless for cell phones is coming to an end, as Rogers is ending this brand. There are cell phone and internet offers available from Endless Savings and More which

do require proof of your membership – which is easily attainable if you need. I would invite you to check out these and the wide range of other offers of the ESM app if you haven't already done so. My sense is this is an underutilized offering in part because it is digital. Having said that, it is worth checking out.

### **My activities as President**

Over the past year, I have been able to attend branch meetings across Vancouver Island as well as the Kootenays and Lower Mainland. In all, I have met with folks from 12 branches. I am, as always, impressed by the dedication and hard work of branch volunteers in offering locally based activities.

I have also met with the new chair of the PSPP Board of Trustees and the executive director, the representatives from the non-direct plan partners and participated in a Zoom call with the various unions who represent active plan members to introduce the BCGREA. Other meetings have included the Council of Seniors Organizations of BC (COSCO), the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP) and outreach representatives from the Canada Pension Plan. I, along with Jodine at Central Support, am in frequent contact with our affinity partners on issues and concerns on behalf of members, as well as with our colleagues in the College, Municipal, and Retired Teachers associations. I had the opportunity to attend the annual BC Investment Corporation conference and gained valuable insights about pensions and their sustainability from an international perspective. The good news is Canada and our various public sector plans (known as the "Maple 8") are doing very well by international metrics.

It has been a busy year, but it would be an impossible workload were it not for the dedicated work being done by all the Provincial executive team as well as Jodine Ducs, our Central Support linchpin, and branch volunteers at both the local and provincial committee level. We all owe our thanks to these folks for helping to keep us running.

### **Looking to the future**

I would now like to make a few comments on what I see as the challenges and opportunities that we face. Volunteerism is dramatically down, at least as how it has traditionally been done. Like most volunteer run groups, we have real challenges both in recruiting people to help and in having people attend our local meetings. At the same time, and perhaps ironically, social connections are more frayed after COVID and especially for seniors who live alone or are facing losing a partner. There is compelling evidence that robust social connections are a key component of healthy aging. We are living longer and facing care and community integration issues as never before. There is an increasingly complex legal requirement around powers of attorney, wills and estates. It is a real challenge to downsize or pass on assets particularly to offspring who have different lifestyles and requirements.

I believe the BCGREA can, if it decides to, address some of these changes. To do this we need to take some first steps.

Critically, we need to know with greater clarity what our members **want and support**. We know most members read the Pen, value the representation, and appreciate receiving a variety of information updates. Many access deals from our affinity partners. A smaller percentage participate at the local level. Maintaining a viable branch network is challenging, especially in terms of getting members to volunteer for leadership roles. We should ensure that we do things that align our resources with what the membership wants.

Should I be re-elected as President, I intend to have the BCGREA explore the alignment of our resources. I want this to be an open exercise with involvement from as broad a range of perspectives as possible. After all, it is your organization, and your actions and wishes will determine its future. This may include asking

you to participate in planning sessions or questionnaires, reaching out for help with specific tasks and/or providing your thoughts about what we should do or should not do.

Questions we might consider are: Is there any appetite to become more involved if we do things more informally- meetups and coffee for example? Should we have a social media offering so members can reach out to others who they might have worked with? Should we consider having province wide Zoom tutorials on topics like powers of attorney, downsizing and appraisal, estate planning? Post videos on YouTube? Engage writers to develop profiles of interesting members and their histories in the Pen? These are all approaches that have worked for other groups – do they make sense for us? Would you participate?

I believe our members should be canvased about these and other topics within the next few months. A survey is one of tools we have to connect with our over 11,500 members and ensure we have their support. We have had success in this regard: the results of our survey two years ago contributed to our recruitment campaign material and our membership blossomed!

While successful, the participation questions were more general than what we may now want- and we have had a 50% increase in membership. We need to gather the new members' views, rather than assume they are the same. We are also now in a post lockdown environment.

I believe that seeking direction is a key component to sustainability and continued relevance for the BCGREA and will advocate strongly for it if re-elected.

The BCGREA appreciates your individual views and suggestions for continued growth; I invite your comments! I can be contacted at [president@bcgre.ca](mailto:president@bcgre.ca)

As always, my heartfelt thanks to all who volunteer both with us and all other volunteer organizations.

Brian Green



### **BCGREA 2024 AGM Vice President's Report, October 3 2024**

Thank you for helping me share my skills this past year. I believe BCGREA has opportunities for retirees like myself to use their professions for BCGREA's benefit, and their own fulfillment. On the web you can find many members with useful skills.

### **Constitution and Bylaws**

1. The committee filed with the BC Society Registrar a new Constitution and new Bylaws thus bringing motions passed before the end of 2023 into force.
2. Al Barclay, Brian Green, and Carol Paulson helped prepare four new bylaw motions and one policy motion for a vote at this AGM, using procedures in the Society Act.



3. The proposed work plan for 2025 focuses on working on the Policies and Procedures. The new relationship between Branches, the BCGREA, and the Table Officers could be documented there.

### **Privacy**

1. Jodine and Laura Lam helped secure membership lists containing private information “at rest” in branches, by adding a password to open the documents.
2. The Table Officers approved a privacy committee, but nobody from the branches volunteered despite the invitation in the last PEN. The risk is too high for the BCGREA Privacy Officer to work alone, so I cannot continue in that role.
3. We encourage branches to shred their old application forms and membership lists containing members’ private information.

### **Computer Skills**

I taught collaborative editing but there is not enough interest to continue just yet.

### **AGM planning**

Some Table Officers, Jodine and some volunteers formed an AGM planning group. A checklist with timelines was developed and used by some. After this AGM and a debrief, It might be updated to make event planning easier in future for those needing to collaborate.

### **Calendar of Events**

With the help of Jodine and Vince, we put an online calendar of branch events on the BCGREA website, found as EVENTS, under NEWS

### **Report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President 2024 Annual General Meeting**

#### **A new pathway:**

This past year has revealed a considerable gap in communication between us and our membership. It might have gone unnoticed by most, but what we should have done is outlined below.

Creating a new pathway for successfully publishing information to our membership involves a strategic approach that is needed now. While some measures have taken place, they could have been done better. I learned of a step-by-step guide to help establish this pathway and share it with you in hopes you might decide to help and support us:

#### **1. Identify Your Audience**

- Understand the needs and preferences of your membership.
- Segment your audience if necessary (e.g., by interests, demographics).

#### **2. Define Key Objectives**

- Establish what you want to achieve with your communication (e.g., engagement, education, updates).

#### **3. Choose Communication Channels**

- Select the best channels for your audience, such as:
  - Email newsletters
  - Social media platforms
  - Website updates
  - Mobile apps
  - Webinars

#### **4. Create a Content Calendar**

- Plan and schedule content in advance.
- Include various types of content (articles, videos, infographics) and topics.

#### **5. Develop Consistent Messaging**

- Ensure that your messaging aligns with your organization's values and mission.
- Maintain a consistent tone and style across all platforms.

#### **6. Encourage Member Engagement**

- Invite feedback and participation from members.
- Use polls, surveys, and discussion forums to foster interaction.

#### **7. Monitor and Analyze Performance**

- Track key metrics (open rates, engagement levels, feedback) to assess the effectiveness of your communications.
- Use analytics tools to gain insights.

#### **8. Adjust and Improve**

- Regularly review your strategy based on feedback and performance data.
- Be open to experimenting with new formats and channels.

#### **9. Provide Training and Resources**

- Equip your team with the necessary skills and tools for effective communication.
- Offer resources for members to enhance their engagement.

#### **10. Celebrate Successes**

- Share successes and positive outcomes with your membership.
- Highlight contributions and achievements within the association.

I hope that developing a new pathway will be helpful and provide a better link to all

#### **A Fond Farewell:**

As I prepare to step aside and say goodbye, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the time I've spent with all of you. This association has been enriching, filled with shared experiences and wonderful connections.

Thank you for your support, friendships, and memories. I'll cherish them always. Your contributions have been invaluable, and I wish you all continued success and joy in your future endeavours.

I encourage everyone to consider how they might help with our communications pathway. If you are interested in helping, contact the President.

Adieu,

Patrick Harkness  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

## Membership Secretary's Report to BCGREA AGM – 2024-10-16

It has been a busy year since my 2023 report and I will mention some of the activities that I have been involved with. On September 29, 2024, the BCGREA had 11,297 members, which is a 1% decrease from the total reported last year. Some of this decrease was due to new members from the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary campaign declining to continue their membership after their initial free year. In addition, non-DCO members that we do not have contact information for were removed from active membership.

The delegate formula committee recommended polling the membership to determine their preference for a formula to use with respect to vote entitlement at the AGMs. 58.8% of the responses were for the 2 representatives per branch option and the results were statistically valid, so that option was approved at the April 2024 Directors meeting.

A 5-person committee followed up on the recommendation from the 2023 special general meeting and revised the membership types. The resolution to change the bylaw to incorporate these changes is being voted on at this AGM and a backgrounder explaining the changes was circulated with the pre-meeting materials.

A survey of branch executive members was conducted in March to get their assessment of their branch vitality. The responses showed that many branches are having a difficult time recruiting new executive members to take on leadership roles and that some branches have the potential to cease operating. A report summarizing the results in more detail was presented at the April directors' meeting and is available for viewing upon request.

A small committee reviewed the types of emails that are being sent out to members and defined categories to describe them. An email preference form was developed and sent to all valid email addresses advising that they could select the types of correspondence they wished to receive going forward to minimize the number of unwanted emails that they would receive. Additionally, wording and links were placed in the footer of broadcast emails that allow members to revise their preferences by submitting the preference form or by signing directly into their Member Portal and revising their selections.

Two Zoom meetings that included most of the branch membership people were held in the spring to offer the opportunity for people to get to know others filling these roles throughout the province and to solicit feedback. The participants felt that there was merit in holding an in-person meeting in conjunction with the October AGM in Tsawwassen and that will take place. A folder for membership people has been set up in Sync where notes from meetings since 2018 and other items of interest are stored. Use of the Sync file transfer process will be a topic of the October meeting.

The Findjoo data management system offers the ability to poll members of a branch to get feedback about their preferences and priorities. The Kootenay and Golden Ears branches contacted the provincial executive to advise them that the branch was in danger of folding. Polls were sent to branch members asking if they wanted the branch to continue and if they were willing to take on a leadership role. Work is ongoing with these branches to see if sufficient interest exists to continue operations.

## Central Support

Jodine Ducs has filled the Central Support duties for 15 months and she continues to take on new tasks when she identifies them. This approach is supported by the table officers as it can reduce the workload on volunteers throughout the association. Her willingness to help new potential members and current members reflects well on the association with many people expressing their appreciation for her efforts. Her assistance with organizing and supporting the Directors' meeting and the Annual General Meeting helps these meetings run smoothly and allows people to relax and enjoy the gatherings.

The past year has seen ongoing exploration of the Findjoo database platform. As Jodine has become more familiar with it, the opportunities it presents have been recognized and put into place. These have included attaching documents to member's records, expanded use of distribution lists to send out meeting notices, tracking and reporting on email campaigns and polls, tailoring information to meet the needs of the end users. In addition to using the system, Jodine has held numerous online training sessions with branch people to ensure those who want to use it are able to.

Another area where CS has expanded is maintaining the BCGREA website at both the overview and branch levels. Branch web pages are a great tool for getting information to members and branches are encouraged to keep their webpage up to date. Jodine can post information and photos when requested. The addition of the Events calendar allows quick checking of scheduled events at all levels. Branches can choose to update the calendar themselves or send requests to Jodine.

Moving forward, we will offer branches the opportunity to have CS assist with or take over the collection of payments from members who are not on the automatic dues check-off (DCO) system. Branches will be able to choose whether they want to take advantage of this or to continue collecting dues at the branch level. Details are still being worked out and we are currently looking into the option of using Findjoo to accept payment by credit card for those members who have chosen not to enroll in DCO with the Public Service Pension Plan (PSPP) or who are not eligible as they do not receive their pension from the PSPP.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Barclay,  
BCGREA Provincial Membership Secretary

### **Recruitment & Retention Committee Report BCGREA AGM October 16, 2024**

This year began with a complete review of **the R & R Committee Terms of Reference**. The updated version that is now posted on the BCGREA website, includes an objective to prepare a work plan for review and update annually.

**A major issue facing this association is retaining volunteers**, including executive members at all levels. In keeping with the need to gauge the vitality of branches within the BCGREA, this committee developed a **Branch Executive Questionnaire** that was sent out in February. Al Barclay compiled the results and analysis indicating that retaining volunteers and filling vacant executive positions remains a significant and ongoing challenge for many branches.

An amended version of the **Branch Formation Procedure** developed by Al Coccola and Wilf Brodrick, was approved at the Director's Meeting on April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2024 to be added to BCGREA Policies and Procedures. However, when a branch is facing closure, the R & R committee agrees with the pending AGM motion to

change the procedure for **Branch Dissolution** to lower the number of executive required in order for the branch to remain operational.

This year the committee revised the **Role Descriptions and Guidelines** for key positions of Branch Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Chair. Final versions drafted by Al Barclay are now posted on the R & R webpage. It is pertinent to note: the guidelines are generic documents, meant to be *flexible* to promote smoother branch operations.

Cariboo Branch hosted a successful '**Open House**' in the Spring with the idea of bringing together upcoming retirees, potential and existing members in the geographical area while showcasing the Association to the general public. This type of event is an opportunity to promote connectivity and invigorate branches who are struggling. Western Communities and Nanaimo Branches are organizing a similar event in Duncan on Oct 8<sup>th</sup>.

**The Merchandise Committee** has remained active throughout the year, attracting some new branch representatives. The committee is pleased with the merchandise offerings this year, including new lapel pins and the latest t-shirts that will be available at the AGM for sale at just below cost. These items are included in a "traveling box" of BCGREA branded merchandise, available to branches for a hands-on look and direct purchase.

The **55+ Games in Salmon Salmon Arm** were held from Sept 10-13<sup>th</sup>. This event was successful in attracting visitors to the tent set up outside the arena with a highly visible BCGREA banner. Larry Martin and Al Coccoia handed out a free BCGREA hat to members from local branches who dropped by. Feedback from participants and visitors was positive, including members of the Municipal Retirees Assoc. The 2025 Games will be held in Nanaimo. For more information on the games please contact Larry Martin at [kaleden155@gmail.com](mailto:kaleden155@gmail.com)

George Bowden has posted a **province wide 'Branch Event Calendar'** on the BCGREA website, showcasing the most up to date meetings and events that can be easily accessed on the main page by clicking on 'News' then 'Events'. Branches can edit in their own info or contact Central Support.

A list of suggestions for branch activities is posted on the BCGREA R & R website but looking ahead, more work needs to be done on implementing strategies and best practices for member involvement and retention.

Given the approximate 50 percent increase in membership resulting from the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary recruitment initiative in 2022, this committee supports the Table Officer's concept of another survey to assess the membership's current interests and priorities.

We invite anyone with interest and ideas to attend an upcoming R & R committee meeting by contacting the Chair of this committee. We thank Alan Kneeland who has stepped down for health reasons.

Bonnie Billington, Chair

## Treasurer's Report for the October 2024 AGM

As the association's treasurer I am responsible for the financial management of our organization at the provincial and branch levels. This includes ensuring regulatory compliance to maintain our non-profit status, monitoring internal controls to protect our financial assets, preparing financial statements and corporate tax returns, working with branch treasurers, and managing the routine financial activities at the provincial level. At times, such as fiscal year end, the treasurer's activities can seem like a full-time job. At other times it can be managed with 5-10 hours per week. I enjoy the role and thank the membership for their continued support.

Our finances are managed through the provincial level and the network of 23 branches, each with their own budget and bank account(s). It's not until our December 31<sup>st</sup> year end that the branches' financial data is collected, reconciled, and combined to produce financial statements for the entire organization. Therefore, the information on the next page only represents income and expenses at the provincial level. Branch spending typically accounts for less than 25% of the BCGREA total spending.

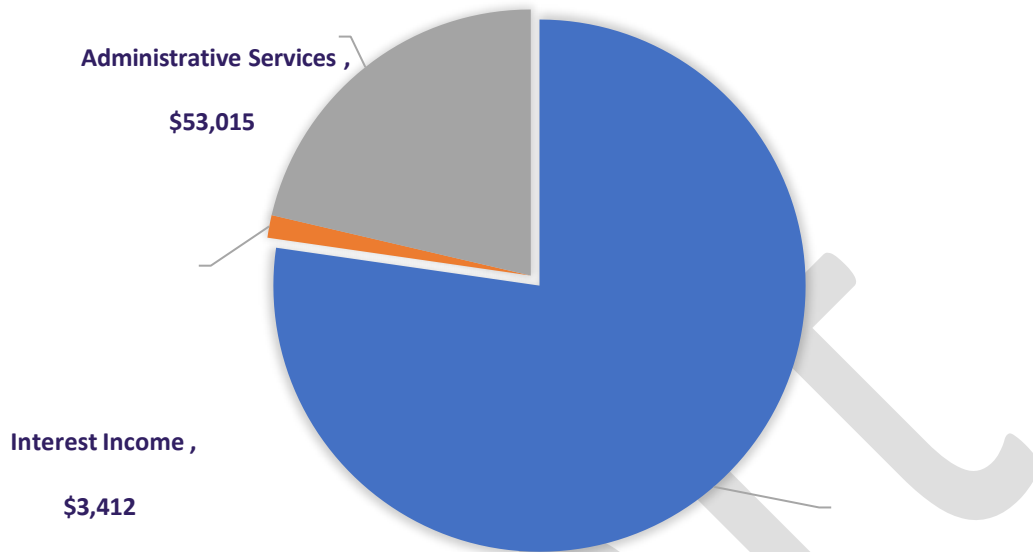
For the first nine months of this year we are tracking slightly under budget with no significant unplanned expenditures. The graphs on the next page show the provincial level annual income and expenses (based on nine months' actual and three months' projections).

I am not planning a formal treasurer's presentation at the AGM but will be pleased to answer questions.

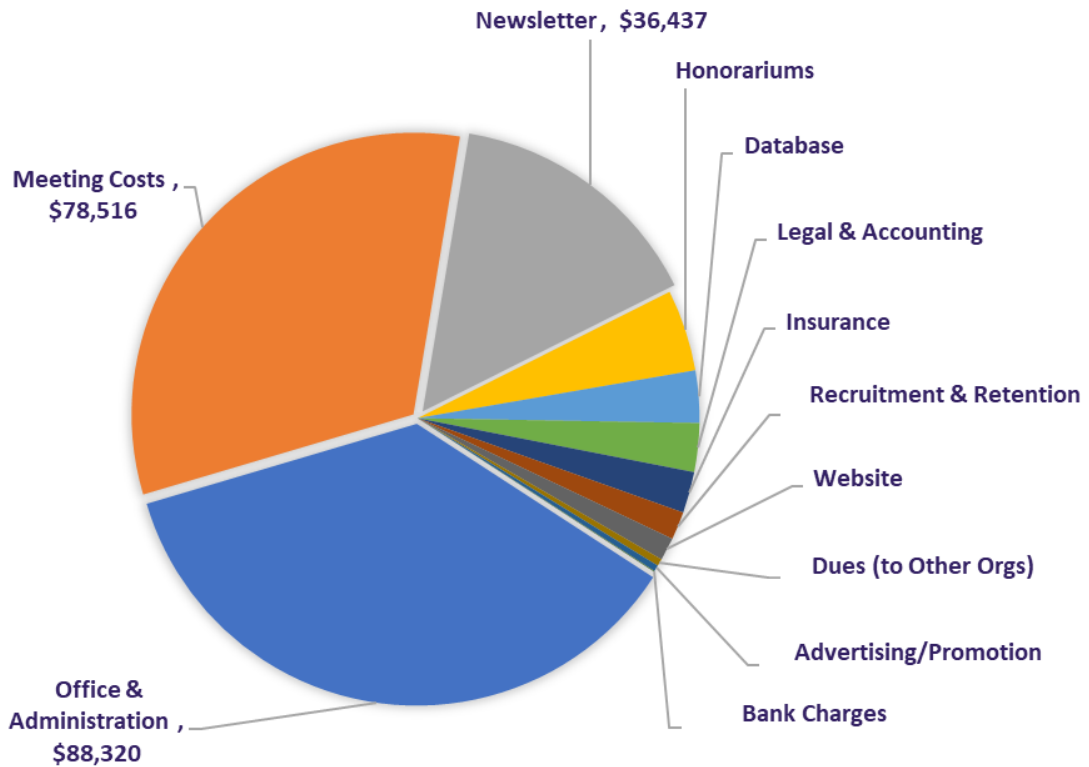
I would like to thank the Finance Committee (members: Brian Taylor, Dan Anderson, Davis LaBar, George Bowden, Roland Oliynyk, Sarf Ahmed, and Kathy Torhjem) for their advice and support throughout the year. And a special thanks to Kathy Torhjem who, along with her many duties as our Association Secretary, is also my second signer/approver for all provincial level expenses.

Johanna Morrow Treasurer,  
BCGREA

## 2024 INCOME ESTIMATE PROVINCIAL LEVEL ONLY



## 2024 EXPENSE ESTIMATE PROVINCIAL LEVEL ONLY



## **Motion To Have Just One Membership Type**

### **Preamble**

Recognition as an honoured or life member brings no more rights than a Member. It is not consistent with the Act to have a class of members with no additional or fewer rights than another class of member. Recognition is an important procedure, but not a membership class. There are about 70 Associate members in our 11,000 members.

It would be much simpler to convert Associate Members to full Members.

Membership payment procedures (DCO vs non-DCO) should be separated from membership classes.

The motion allows any Member receiving a pension from the BC Pension Corp, not just from Public Service Pension Plan (PSPP), to be elected, including to the President position.

**Al Barclay, and George Bowden** move to have just one membership type.

### **Motion:**

#### **Replace**

PART 2 – MEMBERSHIP

3. (a) Membership in the Association shall consist of four categories: Active, Honoured, Life and Associate.

(i) Persons receiving a pension from the Public Service Pension Plan administered by the British Columbia Pension Corporation, and/or their spouses, are eligible for Active membership.

(ii) Active members who have rendered distinguished service to the Association are eligible for Honoured membership.

(iii) Active members who have paid dues continuously for twenty years become Life members.

(iv) Persons, or their spouses, receiving a pension from a plan administered by the British Columbia Pension Corporation, other than the Public Service Pension Plan, are eligible for Associate membership.

(b) At no time shall the number of Associate Members be permitted to exceed the number of Active, Honoured and Life Members.

#### **With**

PART 2 – MEMBERSHIP

3. Persons receiving a pension from a plan administered by the British Columbia Pension Corporation, and/or their spouses, are eligible for Membership. The surviving partner of a person who received a pension from a plan administered by the BCPC is eligible to continue their membership.

(i) Members who have rendered distinguished service to the Association are eligible to be approved by the Association for Honoured Recognition.

(ii) Members who joined twenty or more years ago are eligible for Life Recognition

#### **Replace**

24. (a) The right to vote shall be vested in Active, Honoured and Life Members. An Associate Member shall not have the right to vote or hold office in the BCGREA or in any Branch; however, they shall have the right to attend meetings of the Association or a Branch.

#### **With**

24. (a) The right to vote shall be vested in Members.

#### **Replace**



7(d) All members upon presentation of a valid membership card of the Association, shall be entitled to attend General Meetings...

**With**

7(d) All members on the membership roll of the Association, shall be entitled to attend General Meetings

Signed by George Bowden and Al Barclay and Brian Green

**Motion to permit electronic delivery of notices to and from members.**

**George Bowden, and Kathy Torhjelm move** to update bylaws 7d, 8, 35, 54 and 55 to allow delivery of notices by post or by email or by posting on the association website.

**Preamble.**

1) The act's wording of "in writing" allows for email notification of general meetings but it is recommended to have bylaws that allow emails.

2) About 10% of our members have not provided email addresses. To allow notification on the BCGREA website the Act requires an explicit bylaw.

3) The Act requires every member to receive notices of general meetings, so 55(b) must be removed.

**MOTION**

**Change**

8. Any member may terminate their membership in the Association by submitting a resignation, in writing ..

**To**

8. Any member may terminate their membership in the Association by submitting a resignation, in writing or by email, ...

**Change**

35 (a) ...Notice of the specific date and place of a meeting, as determined by the Officers, shall be given ...

**To**

Notice of the specific date and place of a meeting, as determined by the Officers, shall be given by email, post or posting on the association website

**Change**

**PART 12 – NOTICES TO MEMBERS**

54. Notice sent by mail is deemed to have been given on the second day following the day on which the notice is posted, and in proving that notice has been given, it is sufficient to prove the notice was properly addressed and put in a Canadian post office receptacle.

55. (a) Notice of a general meeting must be given to

(i) each Officer and every branch shown on the register of branches on the day notice is given, and

(ii) the auditor, if appointed under Part 11.

(b) No other person is required to receive a notice of a general meeting.

**To**

**PART 12 – NOTICES TO MEMBERS**

54. Notice sent by mail or email is deemed to have been given on the second day following the day on which the notice is posted, and in proving that notice has been given, it is sufficient to prove the notice was properly addressed and put in a Canadian post office receptacle or emailed to the address on record of the member.

55. (a) Notice of a general meeting must be given to

(i) each Officer and every branch shown on the register of branches on the day notice is given, and

(ii) the auditor, if appointed under Part 11 and  
(iii) each member, by post or by email or by publication on the association website.  
Signed by George Bowden and Brian Green and Kathy Torhjelm

**Motion to change the procedure for branch dissolution by reducing the number of branch directors required from four to three**

**Preamble**

When a branch suffers executive resignations, it takes time to find replacement branch executives. We should be flexible about how the branch is structured as long as we have someone who will act as the main contact person (or persons) and a structure that ensures fiscal responsibility.

**Al Barclay**, and **George Bowden** move to lower the required number of branch executive from four to three.

**Motion:**

**Replace**

Branch Dissolution Procedure

When a Branch is contemplating closure or dissolution, the following steps must be taken:

...•

If fewer than four Branch members are willing to serve on the Branch Executive, all Branch members will be informed via email, or in writing, of this fact. The notice will clearly state that unless the minimum number of members is prepared to serve on the Branch Executive, a date for the dissolution of the Branch will be established, and all current members will be informed of the action to be taken and the reason(s) for this action.

**With**

Branch Dissolution Procedure

When a Branch is contemplating closure or dissolution, the following steps must be taken:

...•

If fewer than three Branch members are willing to serve on the Branch Executive, all Branch members will be informed via email, or in writing, of this fact. The notice will clearly state that unless the minimum number of members is prepared to serve on the Branch Executive, a date for the dissolution of the Branch will be established, and all current members will be informed of the action to be taken and the reason(s) for this action.

Signed by George Bowden and Al Barclay and Brian Green

**Motion to reduce the quorum for general and director meetings, and to change rescheduling requirements**

**Preamble**

The quorum is based on voting members which include the seven Executive Directors plus two members per branch (now just one branch Delegate plus the branch Chair/Director)

To remove the likelihood of having to adjourn a meeting we should remove the fixed minimum and lower the quorum for general meetings from two-thirds to one-half of voting members.

For consistency, set the Directors meeting and committee quorum to the same percentage as the general meeting quorum.

These quorums do not apply to branch meetings.

When the quorum is not met, allow the attending voting members to schedule the reconvening meeting.

## **MOTION**

**George Bowden and Kathy Torhjem**, move to update bylaws 18, 19, 35b and 39e to reduce the size of the quorum from two thirds to one half of the voting members.

Change

18. ((c) A quorum shall be two thirds of registered directors and accredited delegates. This number shall never be less than thirty-five.

17. ... it must stand adjourned to the same day in the next week, at the same time and place...and place...

To

18.(c) A quorum shall be one half of voting members

19. ... it must stand adjourned to be reconvened in the same year, with a date and format to be set by the voting members of the adjourned meeting ...

Change

35 (b) Two thirds of the total number of Directors shall constitute a quorum for a directors meeting.

To

(b) One half of the total number of Directors shall constitute a quorum for a directors meeting.

Change

39. (e) A quorum for a committee appointed by the Directors shall be two thirds of the members of the committee.

To

(e) A quorum for a committee appointed by the Directors shall be one half of the members of the committee.

Signed by George Bowden and Kathy Torhjem and Brian Green

## **Motion to remove explicit fiscal year dates and allow swapping of AGM and Directors meeting dates**

### **Preamble**

A change in the fiscal year was approved by the Association Officers and Canada Revenue. April is no longer our fiscal year end. The coming sequence of meetings will likely be 2024 AGM, 2025 AGM, 2025 Directors meeting.

**George Bowden**, and **Johanna Morrow** move to remove the explicit fiscal year end and the requirement for alternating the AGM and the Directors meeting.

### **Motion:**

Replace

35. (a) There shall be at least one meeting of the Directors each year, approximately midway between Annual General Meetings.

with

35. (a) There shall be at least one meeting of the Directors each year.

and replace

49 The financial year of the Association shall end on the 30th of June, in each year, or on a date as determined by the directors.

With

49 The financial year of the Association shall end on a date as determined by the directors.

Signed by George Bowden and Johanna Morrow and Kathy Torhjem

## **LATE RESOLUTION PRESENTED TO THE 2024 AGM OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT RETIRED EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION (BCGREA)**

**AFFILIATION WITH THE COUNCIL OF SENIOR CITIZENS' ORGANIZATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
(COSCO)**

Whereas it appears that a change in policy related to BCGREA memberships to provincial and national associations states that *all dues and donations to provincial and national associations will be made only at the provincial level.*

*(This ensures we are not duplicating our contributions. Branches that have been paying dues to the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of B.C. (COSCO) and have a branch-designated COSCO representative should contact the Provincial Treasurer to have this person added as a provincial delegate.*

Whereas as a provincial body, the BCGREA currently is allowed a maximum of five positions for BCGREA members to affiliate with COSCO, and

Whereas there are between 15 and 20 BCGREA members who are now and wish to continue their affiliation in their role as Delegates in COSCO, and

Therefore, we propose to amend this policy to allow for a continuance of representation by BCGREA members in COSCO. This amendment would maintain their representation, ensuring the members' voices are heard and their rights upheld.

Therefore, IT IS MOVED by the Chair of the Cheam View Branch 2000 that:

***Any branch of the BCGREA may affiliate directly with COSCO, thus allowing one or more of that Branch's branch-designated COSCO representatives to become a member of COSCO.***

*(This maintains that all dues to COSCO can still be made at the provincial level.)*

Signed by Patrick Harkness, Maurice Davidson, Tammy Welch