

Council of Canadians Governance Committee 2023 AMM Interim report

Who are we?

The Governance Committee is comprised of:

3 Council of Canadians members:

- Marilyn Keddy, South Shore chapter, Nova Scotia
- Richard Goodbrand, Guelph chapter, Ontario
- 1 vacant position*

1 Staff Bargaining Unit representative:

- Nikolas Barry-Shaw, Montréal, Quebec

1 Staff Management representative:

- Charlotte Kiddell, Ottawa, Ontario (Angela Giles, Halifax, Nova Scotia has been filling in over the past few months)

2 Board members:

- Bianca Mugenyi, Montréal, Quebec
- Tara Seucharan, Toronto, Ontario

Richard Goodbrand and Tara Seucharan serve as the committee's co-facilitators.

What's our mandate?

The purpose of the Governance Committee is to:

- Develop a conflict resolution process;
- Develop and update policy, and review governance processes in support of the strategic plan and supportive developmental processes;
- Make recommendations to enhance participation and openness in Board meetings;
- Review the role of the Executive Committee;
- Consider processes to manage conflicting positions to build integrated and holistic relationships internally and with partners and affiliates;
- Review and recommend updating of bylaws to reflect best contemporary practices;
- Consider decision-making processes regarding how to engage members, staff and board, including how to consult quickly in crisis situations;
- Recommend a process to clarify and mediate, if necessary, Board members' relationships with staff.

What are we doing?

Since our convergence in the Fall of 2022, we have reassessed the scope of our work due to the far-reaching implications of our mandate. This was necessary in order to fully carry out our work in a way that is equitable to all; promotes more holistic relations and better participation from the various people within our organization; and ultimately results in greater trust, transparency, and cooperation within our organization.

We are now moving forward in 3 ways.

1. Conflict Resolution

This was the critical reason why the Governance Committee was convened, and is our priority.

We are analyzing our current policies/practices and identifying how they need to be improved.

Three resolutions are being considered at this year's AMM regarding the Code of Conduct for Members; Conflict and Accountability; as well as the necessary by-law changes needed. These resolutions align with the new Conflict Resolution section in the updated Chapter Handbook, and are modeled on current best practices on conflict resolution in the not-for-profit sector.

2. Board / Staff Relations

Our goal is that Board and Staff relations be respectful and congenial. Exploring how the Board could be less hierarchical, more engaging, and more consultative with the membership and the Bargaining Unit is critical. Awareness of each others' roles, responsibilities, ways of working, and capacities will also greatly help with this.

To start, we propose that the Staff and Board attend a best practices workshop by Mike Perry (our governance expert resource person, and a former member of the Good Governance Task Force) in the Fall of 2023.

3. Check-in's with all parts of the Organization

Members of our committee want to chat with you! We want to find out what you'd like to see from us, and what you consider to be our priorities and timeline. We'll be chatting with a representative sample of members-at-large, chapter members, regional reps to the board, staff including bargaining unit and management, co-EDs, and Board members.

This work will start in Summer 2023 (soft launch), and continue into the Fall 2023.

*** Finally.... we need YOU!**

We have an ambitious and far-reaching mandate. We're looking for 1 motivated Council member who is keen to work with us and help us reach our inspired goals. Is this you?

The member-at-large position is eligible to all Council of Canadians members in good standing.

Email the Governance Committee's co-facilitators, Tara Seucharan (tara.cdn@gmail.com) and Richard Goodbrand (rdgoodb@gmail.com) to apply. Deadline is one month from now, on July 16, 2023.