



COUNCIL OF CANADIANS ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING (AMM) MINUTES June 22, 2025, 12:04 p.m. – 3:41 p.m. EDT (via Zoom)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:04 p.m. EDT with 97 participants. A total of 183 participants attended at various points during the meeting.

Land Acknowledgement (Chair, John Cartwright)

John Cartwright opened the meeting by acknowledging that we are gathered from across the country on treaty territories and unceded lands.

Zoom Participation Overview

Daria Ivanochko, Interim Executive Director, walked participants through the “tools for participation” for the Zoom meeting. No one was participating by phone.

Motion 2025-1

Be it resolved that Council of Canadians members adopt the agenda for the 2025 Annual Meeting of Members.

Moved by: Malcolm Richmond

Seconded by: Jerry Mackinlay

Motion Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
5	91	91	0	100%	0%	carried

Motion 2025-2



Be it resolved that Council of Canadians members adopt the Rules of Order and Conduct for the 2025 Annual Meeting of Members.

Moved by: Drena McCormack

Seconded by: Malcolm Richmond

Motion Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
	88	87	1	99%	1%	carried

Motion 2025-3

Be it resolved that Council of Canadians members approve the June 8, 2024, Annual Meeting of Members minutes.

Moved by: Leanne MacMillan

Seconded by: Jerry Mackinlay

Motion Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
25	62	62	0	100%	0%	carried

Report from the Chair (John Cartwright)

John provided his verbal remarks about the previous year, which included internal financial and staff pressures and external events including the federal election and the US election. We cannot dismiss the comments of President Trump about taking water from our country.

Council members used mass zoom calls, town halls and smaller conversations to do everything in our power to stop Poilievre and his party from obtaining a majority in the House of Commons. However, the new Leader of the Liberal Party is not the “friend” we were looking

for. Poilievre lost his own seat and the NDP lost official party status. Our voice is truly needed in these uncertain times.

Our challenge is to build pressure on government which matches corporate power, which has no regard for environmental protections or respect for indigenous rights, and wants to drag us into a new arms race with increased military spending and military actions around the globe.

As a result of the financial situation of the Council and the announced departure of our Executive Director, Christina Warner, the Board had to make some difficult choices. We considered merging with another organization or winding down with dignity. Neither option was acceptable given the political situation.

We took the step to downsize in accordance with the Collective Agreement and a process of Working Groups with bargaining unit and non-bargaining unit staff and Board members which dealt with campaigns and communications, finances and Human Resources. Five employees took a Voluntary Severance Offer, 2 employees left for other opportunities, and 1 employee was laid off. We have a one-year grant which provides funding for an East Coast campaigner on climate transition.

We realized we should have consulted more with Chapters in this process. We thank all the employees who left, and we thank the much-reduced staff who chose to stay.

We are in a rebuilding phase including a new Executive Director, Dru Oja Jay, who will start on July 21, 2025, with a transition with the Interim Executive Director who started in January, Daria Ivanochko. Dru has a long history of activism across the country with his formative role with The Breach, CUTV and Friends of Public Services as only a few examples. He, the Board, remaining staff and Council members have new work to harness the energy of volunteers in this rebuilding phase.

We thank outgoing Board members and welcome new membership which will be announced later. He thanked the Executive Director and the many members who work so tirelessly at the local level to work for a better world and a better Canada.

INTERIM Executive Directors Report (Daria Ivanochko)

Daria is pleased to provide support to Dru as he starts as Executive Director. It is a testament to his energy to take on the role at this time.

Since starting in January, Daria was fortunate to work with the former Executive Director, Christina Warner until her departure in February. She also expressed sincere thanks to the employees who departed, and especially to those who remained with great commitment and passion. She has been developing a more cohesive working relationship among the staff who remain.

The Board and Staff came together in early May for a strategic planning session, to reset, but not replace our existing Strategic Plan. We reconfirmed our mission and values and we will continue to

- oppose the corporate agenda
- Keep water off Trump's agenda
- Resist militarism
- Pharmacare expansion
- Power lines not pipelines

Notwithstanding our lower resources, 1,000 people participated in November 2024 in the launch of the “kitchen table conversations”, more than 300 people participated in small group discussions; 39 council members made 3,000 calls on the weekends prior to the Federal Election on April 28 through phone banks facilitated by Action CoLab. From this calls, 150 supporters indicated an interest in participating in meetings to fight against corporate powers.

We are grateful to all members, donors, monthly donors. However, our revenue continues to decline more quickly than we are recruiting new monthly donors. We did use an innovative method called “Small Change Fund” to assist in our Blue Communities work. We have 100,000 names of people who have participated in our campaigns, but who have not yet donated. We can build on this. We are still seeing the benefits of a very successful fundraising letter signed by Maude Barlow, our former long-term Chairperson.

Our communications and campaigns staff worked very hard to hold meaningful political discussions with tools and materials available on the web and continued our work for universal public pharmacare through town halls and phone zaps. Daria reported on the various activities undertaken Chapters and members across the country over the year.

A member supported the decision to exclude bequeaths or “legacy donations” from the operating budget and direct them to rebuilding the Reserve Fund which is for paying our contractual severance obligations under the Collective Agreement, as well as other obligations. This has been formalized by a Board Resolution.

A member was concerned about the Federal Government’s stated desire to increase military spending to 2% or even 5% of Gross Domestic Product with the consequent negative effects on programs for the public good.

Treasurer’s Report (Sam Hammond)

Sam became the Treasurer in March following the decision of long time Treasurer Steve Staples to step down from the position, while remaining on the Board for the remainder of his term. Sam thanked Steve as well as Wayne Adams (Interim Director of Development) and Lesley Griffiths (external financial consultant).

Sam indicated that in the fiscal year 2023 the Council had a deficit of \$700,000 in net income which caused an equivalent depletion of the Reserve Fund. The Board passed a substantially reorganized budget for 2024, but unfortunately, an error in calculations regarding the Employer share of mandatory contributions meant an additional \$100,000 deficit, which was compounded by the requirement to remit HST. Expenses were substantially reduced and we had a small source of additional revenue from the Small Change Fund, but as seen in the Audited Financial Statements for 2024, we ended the year with a loss of \$208, 171. It could have been much worse.

Management and the Board clearly had to address the situation, which started during a Board Retreat in November 2024. Without action, the Reserve Fund would have been further depleted simply to pay salaries, and we would not be able to continue operating or pay our

contractual obligations. We determined we could not simply let the Council fold; we needed to continue our work.

The Financial Working Group headed by Steve Staples with management and bargaining unit employees provided unanimous recommendations to the Board in January and formally adopted in February for the 2025 budget. These included directing all bequeaths to the Reserve Fund (not the operating budget) and also allocate 5% of all incoming revenue to the Reserve Fund. We used conservative estimates for revenue in addition to the negative projections for monthly donors over a 3-year future period.

With these efforts, we passed a budget for 2025 which should provide a \$169,000 surplus and additional \$118, to the Reserve Fund. As of the end of May 2025 we are tracking to budget. We still must take steps to ensure an increase in our monthly donors and other fundraising and donation options. It has been a very difficult year.

The Board also passed a motion to ensure no money could leave the Reserve Fund without an advance resolution approving same by the full Board, not the Executive or the Executive Director.

Auditor's Report and Statement of Operations (Lesley Griffiths)

Lesley Griffiths presented the financial statements provided by our auditors, OUSELEY HANVEY CLIPSHAM DEEP LLP for the 2024 Fiscal Year. The Auditor had no issues in conducting the audit. They provided a qualified opinion regarding the collection of donations which is applied to most non-profits without a steady stream of income. They felt there were no issues to bring forth to the Board or the members.

AMM attendees had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the Auditor's Report and Statement of Operations.

Motion 2025-4

Be it resolved that Council of Canadians members adopt the 2024 Auditor’s Report.

Moved by: Sam Hammond

Seconded by: John Cartwright

Motion Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
12	80	78	2	98%	3%	carried

Motion 2025-5

Be it resolved that Council of Canadians members engage Ouseley Hanvey Clipsham Deep LLP as the auditor for 2025.

Moved by: Leanne MacMillan

Seconded by: Diwa Marcelino

Motion Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
16	76	76	0	100%	0%	carried

Members had an opportunity to ask questions.

A member asked for the new Executive Director Dru Oja Jay to have the opportunity to save a few words to the AMM prior to the recess. He provided a brief summary of his current work and volunteer activities. He lives in Quebec and expects to work remotely most of the time, but with attendance at the office in Ottawa frequently. He was looking forward to the tremendous opportunities, despite the tremendous challenges we faced. He was inspired by twenty years of working alongside the Council, with its democratic nature, membership involvement and undeniable accomplishments.



A member asked for staff to account for which provincial health coalitions had representation from the Council of Canadians and what amounts of fees were paid by the Council to those provincial health coalitions and if they would be continued with the 2025 budget.

A member wanted to thank the Board and the staff for the incredible effort to get the organization in fighting form for the struggles ahead.

Meeting Recess

The meeting recessed for 15 minutes at 1:25 p.m. and reconvened at 1:40 p.m.

Sam Hammond thanked the finance and development team members for the tremendous work they have undertaken on behalf of the Council and its members.

Resolutions Committee Report (Dave Szollosy)

Dave stated the names of the Resolutions Committee members (Drena McCormack, Joey Hartman, Deedee Slye, and Judith Teichman) and advised that four (4) resolutions were received (in proper order) by the deadline. They would be presented on screen without reading the “whereas” clauses aloud.

Resolution 2025-6

Resolution #1: Media Impact

Submitted by: Windsor Chapter

Resolution category: Action

Whereas, if a tree falls in the woods and no one is around to hear it, does it make a noise? The obvious answer is yes but we are asking the wrong question. The question should be does it make an impact? If no one hears your struggle you have no impact; and

Whereas the struggle is real to be heard when the corporate media has no interest in our voices; and

Whereas Facebook refuses to share and pay Canadian media; and

Whereas governments have not taken the lead to protect their constituents' lives; and

Whereas we have a failure to hold those in power accountable;

Therefore be it resolved that the Council of Canadians works with Canadian media and local groups to make our voices heard; and

Be it further resolved for the Council of Canadians to take on a leadership role in organizing nongovernmental organizations and citizens groups to change the way information and power are obtained and distributed; and

Be it finally resolved the Council of Canadians creates a real network of the people putting people over profit.

Speakers:

Maggie Gabor, from the Windsor Chapter, read an ode, introducing a media app called ‘ and others spoke in favour, such as the Edmonton Chapter who already produces podcasts.

Chelsea spoke against the motion because of the financial implications and the possibility that the Council would be bound by the Online News Act, which might affect our ability to use existing social media formats and our materials might not be shareable.

Eagle reiterated Chelsea’s comments and also indicated we would require investments to develop an app which would be contrary to the Council’s position of not accepting money from governments or corporations.

Robert Hackett moved to amend the resolution by deleting the first ”Be It Resolved That” was introduced. Norah Fraser seconded the amendment.

Amendments:



Therefore, be it resolved that the Council of Canadians invest in media production and distribution through the development of a Canadian app to rival the American corporate powers. Local media are the accountability this system demands. Bring our stories to life; and

Discussion on the amendment ensued.

Amendment Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
15	74	71	3	96%	4%	carried

The meeting reverted to discussion on Resolution number 1, as amended.

Resolution Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
11	77	52	25	68%	32%	carried

Resolution 2025-7

Resolution #2: Canadian Water For the Canadian Water Table Not the Bargaining Table

Submitted by: London Chapter

Resolution category: Action

Whereas the Council of Canadians has been a leading protector of water since its inception, further formalized in the Blue Community movement; and

Whereas the Council of Canadians was born to highlight and oppose threats to Canadian sovereignty by trade agreements and mega corporations; and



Whereas the US president has recently made threats to Canadian water referring to the "faucet" here that could flow our water to the US : this being said in a context of general threats to Canadian sovereignty; and

Whereas the water reality is that only one percent of global water is actually drinkable; and

Whereas this urgent threat to Canadian water falls under more than one of the Council's Statements of Purpose but particularly the commitment to protect the commons. It also falls within the commitment to fair trade and perhaps also the human right to water.

Therefore be it resolved that the Council of Canadians commit to action to alert, inform, and pressure relevant Canadian politicians to refuse any form of water trade in upcoming trade negotiations.

Speakers:

Lynn Brown as the mover of the motion was the first speaker.

Avril wanted to ensure that the spirit of the motion would protect existing treaties about water such as the one for the Colombia River.

No one spoke against the resolution.

Resolution Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
5	82	81	1	99%	1%	carried

Resolution 2025-8

Resolution #3: Distribution of Minutes of the Board of Directors

Submitted by: Atlantic Region Chapters

Resolution category: Action



Whereas the Chapters of the Council of Canadians have expressed deep concern about the sharing of information by the Board of Directors through 2024 (and in earlier years); and

Whereas the Board of the Council of Canadians have expressed a commitment to transparency with the Chapters; and

Whereas Resolution 2005–5 states “Therefore be it resolved that the minutes of meetings of the Board of Directors, once approved, should be made available to National and Regional Offices, and to Chapters automatically”;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the Council of Canadians adhere to Resolution 2005-5 and restore the practice of making minutes of meetings available to the Chapters automatically, effective immediately.

Speakers:

Yvonne Earl, as the mover, spoke to the motion.

Leanne MacMillan hoped this would not replace the practice of providing a summary of the Board meeting before the minutes are actually passed at the next meeting.

Resolution Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
9	79	75	4	95%	5%	carried

Resolution 2025-9

Resolution #4: Uphold and Strengthen Democracy within the Council of Canadians: Budget

Submitted by: Yukon and South Okanagan Chapters

Resolution category: Bylaws and Governance

Originally submitted as a single resolution, Resolution 2025-9 was debated on the floor. A motion to split it into two separate parts was introduced and carried.

Speakers:

Avril Torrence, as the mover, spoke to the motion, as did others.

Some members spoke against the motion.

Andy and Barb Mitchell Pollak moved to divide the resolution into 2 separate paragraphs, one dealing with the budget and the second dealing with the organizational chart. This is a non-debatable motion.

Resolution Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
13	75	61	14	81%	19%	carried

The two resulting motions were considered and voted on individually.

(Divided) Resolution 2025-9a

**Resolution #4: Uphold and Strengthen Democracy within the Council of Canadians:
Budget**

Submitted by: Yukon and South Okanagan Chapters

Resolution category: Bylaws and Governance

Whereas, In its mission statement, the Council of Canadians identifies democracy as a key theme by which to challenge corporate power while simultaneously advocating for people; and

Whereas, On the Council’s website, its “About Us” page identifies the Council as a grassroots organization built on democratic principles. These principles provide an open membership

and give all members a voice and vote in our organization. We are accountable to the groups we work with and to the frontline activists and communities we support; and

Whereas, Demonstrating democracy in action through transparency and accountability in the fundamental internal workings of the Council is an inspiring method by which the Council can sustain long-time members and encourage new members and employees to find a home within the Council of Canadians; and

Whereas, The Council’s existing Code of Conduct (2023) includes as its first statement the following:

Members listen to each other to understand each other and approach interactions with people in our Chapters, in our local communities, and the Council community with curiosity and an interest in building common understanding, open communication, good faith, honesty, transparency, and openness; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Council of Canadians Board of Directors act internally in accordance with democracy by providing electronically to its chapters (Amendment 1) an annual budget that categorizes strategic priorities and directions, to be updated quarterly;

Speakers:

Drena McCormack/Barbara Mitchell Pollack: Motion to amend the word ”members” to ”chapters” in the Resolution

As a proposed change to the Council bylaws, a two-thirds majority was required.

Amendment Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
8	74	65	9	88%	12%	carried

Resolution Defeated

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
13	73	36	37	49%	51%	defeated

(Divided) Resolution 2025-9b

Resolution #4: Uphold and Strengthen Democracy within the Council of Canadians: Organizational Chart

Submitted by: Yukon and South Okanagan Chapters

Resolution category: Bylaws and Governance

Whereas, In its mission statement, the Council of Canadians identifies democracy as a key theme by which to challenge corporate power while simultaneously advocating for people; and

Whereas, On the Council’s website, its “About Us” page identifies the Council as a grassroots organization built on democratic principles. These principles provide an open membership and give all members a voice and vote in our organization. We are accountable to the groups we work with and to the frontline activists and communities we support; and

Whereas, Demonstrating democracy in action through transparency and accountability in the fundamental internal workings of the Council is an inspiring method by which the Council can sustain long-time members and encourage new members and employees to find a home within the Council of Canadians; and

Whereas, The Council’s existing Code of Conduct (2023) includes as its first statement the following:

Members listen to each other to understand each other and approach interactions with people in our Chapters, in our local communities, and the Council community with curiosity and an interest in building common understanding, open communication, good faith, honesty, transparency, and openness; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Council enhance understanding and communication by providing electronically to its chapters (Amendment 1) an Organizational Chart of employees: people, positions and responsibilities, which is kept up to date and redistributed as necessary.

Speakers:

Sam Hammond/Kathy Duncan: Motion to amend the word “members” to “chapters” in the Resolution.

Amendment Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
10	72	60	12	83%	17%	carried

The question was called on the Main motion. As a proposed change to the Council bylaws, a two-thirds majority was required.

Resolution Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
4	76	63	13	83%	17%	carried

Report of the Nominating Committee (Sam Hammond)

Sam Hammond provided the verbal report of the Nominating Committee which also included Diwa Marcelino and Bianca Mugenyi in addition to the written report which was posted on the Annual Meeting webpage on May 22, 2025. He advised 4 of 12 Director-at-large positions were to be elected for two-year terms in 2025/2027. Nominations were opened on April 11, 2025 and by May 16, 2025 nomination forms were received from 5 candidates.

The Committee confirmed 5 candidates met the eligibility requirements for a Director-at-large position on the Board of Directors, consistent with our diversity criteria which includes region/ gender/ age/ indigenous/ equity seeking groups.

An election was held using an online platform called Simply Voting during the period June 12 to June 18, 2025. The four candidates elected for the two-year term were as follows:

- Ayendri Riddell
- Alex Silas
- Robin Tress
- Marie Dolcetti Koros

Motion 2025-10

Be it resolved that Council of Canadians members adopt the Nominations Committee report.

Moved by: Sam Hammond

Seconded by: Diwa Marcelino

Motion Carried

abstentions	total votes	total in favour	total opposed	% in favour	% opposed	
	81	81	0	100%	0%	carried

Closing and Adjournment

John Cartwright provided closing remarks, regarding the importance of volunteers to our 40 year history. He welcomed the new board members and thanked Leanne MacMillan for her service as a Board Member and her role as Secretary on the Executive.

Adjournment at 3:41 p.m. EDT