

National Association of Federal Retirees
Ottawa Valley Branch (ON53) 2024 Annual General Meeting
25 March 2024
Carleton Place Canoe Club, 179 John Street, Carleton Place, ON K7C 1N7

Call to Order

Since the Branch currently has no members to form a Branch executive, Carol Grieco, Director, Ontario District, chaired this meeting. She called the meeting to order at 14:15.

Moment of silence for our departed members followed by singing of 'O Canada.'

Recording of Members Present

27 members in attendance. Based on the by-laws, the quorum required for this meeting was 2% of the Branch's membership. Since the Branch has 1,738 members, 35 members were required to be in attendance to achieve quorum. Quorum was not reached.

Lionel Raymond, Governance Officer at the National Office, explained that this means that no formal business can be conducted at this meeting. The Branch will need to hold a meeting at another date to proceed with the business on the agenda (approval of previous meeting's minutes, approval of financial statements, elections, etc.).

The members present noted that holding an in-person meeting where no lunch is served makes it less appealing for members to attend. It was agreed that holding a meeting electronically will likely attract more members to attend.

Approval of Agenda

It was agreed to proceed with the agenda as presented. Since there is no quorum, it was agreed to skip the items requiring any voting.

Approval of record of proceedings of the last Branch Annual Meeting

Item skipped.

Address by Carol Grieco, Director, Ontario District

Ms. Grieco explained that, as members of the National Board of Directors, she and Ted Young (the other Director for the Ontario District) assist members and volunteers in the district (which covers the whole province of Ontario, excluding Ottawa) She gave a brief description of the Association and its strategic goals, noting that the national Board is currently working on a new strategic plan for 2024-2027. She added that a new Special Committee on Association Structure has been created and will look at alternate governance structures for the Association, and how to find enhancements to move the Association forward.

Ms. Grieco also talked about the challenges experienced in 2023 with the transition to Canada Life as the plan administrators for the Public Service Health Care Plan. She then provided an update on the activities of the Association at both the National and Provincial level. She also encouraged all interested members to become volunteers with the Branch, and particularly on the Branch Executive, noting that similar efforts were made with other branches in a similar situation, with a successful outcome. She then shared a story about Everybody, Nobody, Somebody, Anybody.

Presentation on the Branch's membership numbers and financial records

Mr. Raymond presented a table showing the branch's membership numbers since January 2022. They showed a slight decrease until July 2022, followed by a steady increase from 1,645 members in July 2022 to 1,738 now, which is very encouraging.

He then presented the financial statements, explaining that the records being presented had not been reviewed as per the Association's regulations. They were a compilation created by the National Office based on all the data that was available. Mr. Raymond explained that the only expenses since October 25, 2023 General Meeting was the cost of that meeting, and the reimbursement of an expense claim made by the previous treasurer.

One of the members present asked if the funds allocated to the national Defense of Benefits Emergency Reserve could be recovered by the branch. Mr. Raymond explained that those funds cannot be recovered. However, when the branch manages to elect members to form a Branch executive and restarts activities, they will be able to use the money generated from membership fees again without having to contribute them to that national reserve. Aaron Wise, Corporate Services Officer at the National Office, noted that branches can hold the equivalent of one year of operations expenses (based on the average of the past three years of operation) as unreserved equity. Anything over that amount must be sent back to the national office as a contribution to either the national Defense of Benefits Emergency Reserve, or another reserve called "Branch Infrastructure Reserve" (or a combination of both).

Mr. Wise also explained that for member-only events, branches can only offer a total of \$10 subsidy per calendar year (either \$10 for one event or \$5 for two events). Branches are not permitted to offer a \$10 subsidy at two member-only events a year. Subsidies to a maximum of \$10 per member per year can only be offered once, whether used or not. This is based on requirements by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). It does not matter if a member only attends one meeting and receives a \$5 discount once, the fact is that it was offered to them twice and they had the opportunity of a total of \$10 discounts within the year. This makes it difficult for branches to organize events where a hot lunch is served (without having to make participants pay for the meal). One way to mitigate this is to make these branch events a recruitment event and allowing non-members to get the same benefit for the same price (i.e. same price charged for members and non-members).

Mr. Raymond asked if there were any other questions. One member asked for details on the branch's catchment area. A map was shown on the screen with the branch's boundaries. Another member asked if they could receive a copy of the branch's by-laws. Mr. Raymond provided a copy and noted that the document was also available on the branch's web page, although it was noted that most members would likely not know where to look for this information.

Elections for the Branch Executive

Item skipped.

Break

Presentation by Arbor Memorial

Scott Lockwood, General Manager of Community Relations and Development at Arbor Memorial, did a presentation on Arbor's services. He talked about planning end-of-life arrangements. He also noted that Arbor clients can have access to a free estate planning kit.

Logan Hedmann, Assistant Manager at Arbor Memorial, also spoke about Willful, an online platform to help people prepare a will.

Scott Lockwood also spoke about community grief support groups across Canada.

The meeting was adjourned at 16:08.