



College of Veterinarians of British Columbia

COUNCIL MEETING

Video Conference

Friday, September 23rd, 2022

Minutes of the Open Meeting

- Council Members:** Dr. Jane Pritchard (President), Dr. Michele Martin (Vice President), Mr. Gian Sihota (Treasurer), Dr. Josh Waddington, Mr. Chris Finding, Dr. Jane Mancell, Mr. Harinder Mahil and Ms. Christine Arnold
- Staff:** Dr. Megan Bergman (Registrar & CEO), Dr. Stacey Thomas (Deputy Registrar), and Ms. Rosalee Magcalas (Executive Assistant)
- Guests:** Ms. Amanda Barker, BCVTA (left meeting at 12:05 p.m.) and Ms. Karen Kristianson (left meeting at 12:03 p.m.)

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Pritchard at 10:05 a.m.

2. ROUTINE PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

2.1. Territorial Acknowledgement

Council would like to respectfully acknowledge that we work and live on the traditional ancestral and unceded lands of the Coast Salish, Squamish, Sechelt, Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh nations and we acknowledge all other first nations in British Columbia.

2.2 Approval of the Open Agenda

MOTION: THAT the Agenda be approved with the power to add.

MOVED/SECONDED

CARRIED

2.3 President's Remarks

Dr. Pritchard welcomed our guests as well as everyone else back after the summer. Her comments were brief as there are many important matters to cover today.

2.4. Discussion of Consent Agenda

MOTION: THAT the Open Consent Agenda be approved with items 2.5, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4. Dr. Waddington commented that CA item # 4.1 (new registrant list) did not include the usual "key" to the university codes. The office advised that the Registration Coordinator prepared the list while working from home and did not have access to the key at the time. When asked if he would like that forwarded to him, he declined.

MOVED/SECONDED

CARRIED

2.5. Minutes of the July 15th, 2022 Open Council Meeting

Accepted and not discussed as per the Consent Agenda.

MOTION: THAT the Minutes of the July 15th, 2022 Open Council meeting be approved as distributed.

MOVED/SECONDED

CARRIED

Direction: To post the approved July 15th, 2022 open meeting minutes.

3. ITEMS REQUIRING COUNCIL ACTION/DECISION/DISCUSSION

3.1. EDI Road Map

The Registrar informed Council that background work on the EDI Road Map is ongoing. The Commons are reviewing the College's documents and a callout to registrants was made. We have two volunteers, Drs. Leung and Gordon so far, but The Commons would like to see at least two more and they would also like a representative from the Council. As Mr. Sihota was involved in this working group previously, Dr. Bergman asked if he was willing to consider remaining, to which he agreed. Ideas for further recruitment efforts were requested. It was suggested that perhaps one or more of the seventy-one registrants who signed the letter to the CVBC Council in support of EDI, at least one may consider participating; the Registrar will reach out to Dr. Leung to explore this further.

There was discussion about hosting a Council and Committee member training session on the day of the AGM, with a focus on EDI, to ensure that we have good principles moving forward. Dr. Bergman has already been in preliminary communications with The Commons on this. Council also suggested scheduling some time with just the Committee Chairs to speak about what is going on at the College.

Direction: Dr. Bergman will speak with Dr. Leung regarding possible additional volunteers for the working group; and will continue discussions with The Commons to secure a speaker for the Council and Committee pre-AGM training session.

3.2. Draft Council Policy Discussion

- **Revisiting Past Council Decisions**

Work on this document continues from previous meetings. The final issue for discussion is inclusion of an acknowledgment that the Policy will be adapted in the future as and when there are any changes to the CVBC's regulatory framework (the *Veterinarians Act* or the bylaws). Council reviewed these final draft changes for approval.

MOTION: To approve the CVBC Council Policy on Revisiting Council Decisions as presented.

MOVED/SECONDED

CARRIED

Direction: To finalize this document and put into use.

3.3. Code of Conduct – Procedure Document

The goal of this document, which has been an ongoing agenda item this year, is for the Council to have a clear procedure in place should there be a complaint about the conduct of a Council member. This meeting's discussion included: clarifying the decision-making process, specifically whether a panel decision must be arrived at by unanimous decision or by majority

vote; procedures for appointments to the panel, specifically clarifying that the member who is the focus of the complaint is not able to appoint themselves to the panel; including a process for appointment of a panel chair and clarity for the role of the chair in the voting process.

Necessary changes were incorporated into the draft to address these items. Regarding decision outcomes, and the appointment of and role of a chair in voting, it was recognized that these details are already established in the Governance bylaws but can be incorporated into the text of the policy as well, for clarity.

MOTION: To approve the Procedure for Addressing CVBC Council Code of Conduct Complaints with suggested amendments.

MOVED/SECONDED

CARRIED

Direction: For the Registrar to make the requested changes and circulate to Council for final approval prior to implementation. The Council does not see a need to have it presented again at the next meeting.

At this time, introductions were made (by all attendees) for the benefit of guest, Karen Kristianson.

3.4. Standardizing 'Bio' Forms

Dr. Martin presented a version of the form which is updated from what was first presented at the last meeting reflecting suggestions made at the last meeting. Other than the mandatory field for name, all questions/fields are optional, allowing registrants to complete part or all of the form. The creation of this document will assist in keeping biographies standardized and help registrants make an informed decision when voting. If a registrant chooses not to complete the form, they will still be given the option to provide a candidate statement and will not be precluded from running for Council, we just want to use it as another tool.

New suggestions are to include a note on the form somewhere that this information will be shared with the voting registrants and a link to a detailed geographical map link.

Council considered whether it would be a good idea and appropriate to ask nominees to include a photograph to accompany their biographies. It was unclear whether a request for photos would support efforts to encourage diversity on Council or would inadvertently have the opposite effect. It was suggested that The Commons should be consulted.

MOTION: To adopt the use of the Candidate Biography Form as a strongly encouraged tool for candidates to submit to be included in the election materials provided to registrants during the election. (inclusion of a request for a photo will depend upon feedback received from The Commons).

Direction: The Registrar will reach out to The Commons regarding requesting a photograph from nominees for Council. To conduct a virtual vote of Council afterwards.

3.5. CVBC Election Process

This year's Council Election cycle is rapidly approaching, with three positions to be elected (Dr. Martin and Dr. Mancell's first terms are coming to an end, plus the vacancy left by Dr. Whelan's resignation). Council was reminded of the key dates of the process, the first deadline being appointment of the Nomination Committee by October 15th.

At the last meeting, Council considered the possibility of appointing someone to fill Dr. Whelan's seat pending the election of a new member. On further reflection, Council concluded that there would be little value in such a short-term appointment as any new member would take some time to get "up-to-speed". Council, presently with 4 elected members and 4 appointed members, reflected that it is not struggling with quorum, all members are fully engaged, and there were no concerns raised about the amount of work required of members. Thus, it was decided to leave Council composition as it is until newly elected members join in March.

Direction: To move forward with the election process

3.6. Process for Identifying Public Member Candidates for Committees

The Registrar informed Council that the Investigation Committee and CVBC Complaints department have been working on refining the processes for investigations and plan to establish a panel of the IC that will be responsible for dealing with the lower risk investigation outcomes. With this in mind, the Registrar notified Council that there is a coming vacancy on the Investigation Committee as a registrant member's term is ending. The IC has two public members presently, but the Registrar would like to see another public member appointed to ensure that there can always be a public member on any IC panel. Additionally, it would be good to build a pool of public member candidates to facilitate appointments on all committees as they come open. Dr. Bergman sought Council's ideas for how to conduct the recruiting process. In addition to posting an announcement on our website, it was suggested that we should post to the websites of other professional bodies (lawyers, engineers, physicians, etc). In the meantime, Dr. Bergman will start to frame out a list of what the CVBC is looking for in a public member and will also seek other recruiting suggestions from her contacts.

Direction: Dr. Bergman will pull ideas through her contacts and run past the Council Executive, so she is not overstepping.

Council took a break to return at 11:15 a.m.

3.7. Revised Terms of Reference for RC and CCC

These documents were first presented for review at the last meeting and all proposed changes were accepted, except concerns were raised about the language used in the new section on videoconference participation. They were returned to Council at this meeting for approval of the amendments made to that section to reflect that discussion.

MOTION: To approve the proposed revisions to the Terms of Reference for the Registration Committee, effective immediately.

MOVED/SECONDED CARRIED

Dr. Mancell and Mr. Finding abstained as they had not returned from the break.

MOTION: To approve the proposed revisions to the Terms of Reference for the Continuing Competence Committee, effective immediately.

MOVED/SECONDED CARRIED

Dr. Mancell and Mr. Finding abstained as they had not returned from the break.

Direction: To put these into use and to post on the website.

3.8. Veterinary Shortage – Correspondence from a Registrant

Mr. Finding returned to the meeting

An email was received from a registrant with a suggestion to help alleviate the veterinarian shortage by allowing retired veterinarians to come back into practice, perhaps with a part-time license at a lower fee rate. Such changes would require bylaw amendments, and the Registrar brought the suggestion to Council for input.

Council considered the suggestion but were interested to hear what other jurisdictions do. As far as Dr. Bergman is aware there is no restricted, reduced rate license in any other jurisdictions, but it would be worthwhile to survey the other provinces. The issue of length of time out of practice is important; Council was advised it could be an obstacle to a retired registrant's return to private practice, as non-practicing and retired registrants are only eligible to reactivate for the first 3 years in an inactive status, and a minimum of 12 months of practice in the last 5 years is a requirement for Private Practice registration.

Another issue with inactive vets returning to practice is CE. Active registration requires 30 hours of CE every two years, but the bylaws waive that requirement for the period of time that a vet is in an inactive class. What could be done to ensure returning retired vets have maintained their skills and knowledge? Would a part-time registrant's CE requirement still be 30 hours, or would it be prorated? These are all details that could be sorted out through bylaw revision, but with the increase of free online CE, access to CE shouldn't be an obstacle.

Members wondered if creating a new form of registration is actually likely to solve the veterinary shortage problem – how many registrants would actually want to come out of retirement. Council speculated that the greatest impact may not be registrants coming back into practice but rather registrants considering retirement who may want to ease into it by reducing the number of days they work. It may be best to focus such a form of registration on those who want to reduce their workload down to a day or two a week, before turning the focus to encouraging the return of recent retirees.

Regulating part-time veterinarians to ensure they are complying with the part-time limitation could possibly be difficult and would largely rely on an honour system and use of self-declarations of work hours, as we do with TEMP registrants.

Dr. Thomas mentioned that the Law Society has part time licensure. It might be helpful for the College to reach out to them and other professions to see how they manage part time licensure.

A lot of changes to the bylaws will be necessary and could be a costly process. The Registrar will bring this back to Council after gathering information from other jurisdictions and other professions, exploring the scope and cost of bylaw revisions, and surveying retirees to get a sense of interest level in a part-time license. The Council President offered a retiree's perspective and if a retiree works one day a week, it impacts their pension and the salary they would receive would only be about 50%.

Dr. Bergman will reach out to other jurisdictions, the AAVSB, the CVMA, and also consult with our lawyers. She will also circulate a fairly simple poll for registrants to test interest in a part-time registration class. Council feels that additional research should also focus on three points that have been identified in this discussion: what would be the registration fee? how long could a registrant be retired and still be eligible to return with a part-time license? and how long would the need bylaw revisions take and what would be the cost of doing it?

Direction: The Registrar will survey registrants and conduct the discussed research. Respond to registrant's correspondence.

Dr. Mancell returned to the meeting

3.9. Ministry of Agriculture Correspondence re. Animal Welfare

The CVBC has received a letter of invitation from the Deputy Minister of Agriculture to participate in an upcoming assessment of BC's farmed animal welfare framework (legislation, policies and practices).

Council wondered if the Ministry is reaching out to practitioners directly (in addition to engaging the CVBC's input) – the Registrar feels that their challenge is that they do not know how to tap into the practitioners (as evident during the flood response last winter). She notes it's unclear at this time what level of involvement they are seeking from the CVBC – whether Council's input, or to use CVBC to engage with our registrants. She expects to get more information from them soon.

One question posed was whether this is a matter more appropriate for the SBCV to lead on, but the SBCV's primary membership is small animal veterinarians, and they wouldn't likely be able to "tap into" the large animal veterinarian population which will be more relevant to the issues being evaluated.

Council wondered if the Ministry had also already reached out to the new Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr. Theresa Burns. Dr. Pritchard and Dr. Bergman are both unaware of any contact and it would be a good idea for the College to put the Ministry in touch with her to ensure she is brought into the discussions. Council asked that they be provided with updates.

Direction: The Registrar will provide Council with updates and will reach out to Dr. Burns.

3.10. SBCV Peer Support Program

The SBCV has raised this program to Council several times over the last couple of years while it was in development, seeking Council input and support. Council, in turn, has requested additional information on the planned program, which has not been provided and shared in this agenda.

The SBCV has now asked the CVBC to speak to their peer support providers (during their upcoming training session) regarding our complaints process, and what they should be aware of when providing support in cases that involve a regulatory complaint. The CVBC's goal would be to make sure that they understand their role as a peer support counsellor while still respecting their own duties as CVBC registrants; and also, that they understand that the

conversations they are having must protect the confidentiality and anonymity of any other people involved in the complaint that the caller might be dealing with.

Mr. Walsoff and Dr. Bergman will provide the presentation to the trainees. At this time, the Registrar was seeking input from Council, or if they had questions they want answered. Dr. Bergman reminded Council that the Cayton report was not keen on the CVBC collaborating with the SBCV, but she believes CVBC direct input in this area of the training is important and is happy that a lawyer will be involved.

Direction: To advise the SBCV that the CVBC will speak at the training session and Dr. Bergman will keep the Council posted on how things progress.

3.11. Telemedicine

Guest attendees, Amanda Barker and Karen Kristianson, left the meeting at this point

This item is meant to keep Council apprised of the evolving state of telemedicine, as the College is receiving questions from registrants. With new telemedicine platforms popping up and a variety of models being used, the CVBC needs to make registrants aware of how to provide these services appropriately and the College is communicating with the registrant body as a whole, via our blog (1 of 2 planned entries have been posted), and also responding directly to registrant questions via email responses to questions and directions to the website's blog and posted Guidelines. The office is seeking input from Council on any other ways we might expand the numbers of registrants we are reaching. Dr. Thomas has also reviewed and updated the Telemedicine FAQ document that was first developed in 2021, to better reflect the questions (and misunderstandings) that we have identified over the last year. Council suggested making a podcast to answer questions solicited from registrants, to be posted on the website so registrants can listen to it on their own time.

Council was informed that this is a topic that is being discussed across all the provinces and at the AAVSB, and summarized the key difference between our policy and others:

1. Some provinces and states do not allow establishing a VCPR virtually
2. Some provinces and states do not allow prescribing of controlled drugs, or it is extremely limited
3. Some provinces and states have developed a class of practice accreditation for telemedicine service providers

As with all matters, the College needs to consider the benefits and/or risks of telemedicine to the public.

Dr. Mancell advised Council that she has been exploring providing telemedicine services recently and is interested to understand the requirements. In summary: in order to provide services, a veterinarian must be a CVBC registrant and affiliated with a facility, and that the client and patient must be in BC; if the CVBC-registered practitioner is not physically in the province, they must declare that at the outset as part of the informed consent discussion. The veterinarian providing the telemedicine services is providing them through their affiliated practice facility – therefore, the Designated Registrant (+/- owner) of the facility in question

must be made aware (and be supportive) that they are doing this because if there is a complaint made, the facility/DR could be involved as well.

The Accreditation Standards do identify that the standards applicable to a particular facility will reflect the declared scope of practice of that facility. PFAC will need to consider whether or not the bylaws support accreditation for just telemedicine services, and which accreditation standards would be requirements and to develop a policy document within the existing accreditation standards framework to establish telemedicine practices as a recognized limited form of accreditation and clearly outline requirements. “Limited Accreditation” allows PFAC to define the limitations of the activities of a facility so accredited – if a DR then wished to provide broader services, they would need to request a modification of the terms of their accreditation.

The Registrar wanted to first discuss this with Council before initiating work at the PFAC/staff level in case there is not an appetite from Council to move forward.

Council still sees this as a slippery slope where partial accreditation outside of the province and the writing of prescriptions is concerned.

Council is supportive of pursuing discussion at PFAC to explore telemedicine accreditation, as it is the best model for ensuring CVBC oversight and authority over these services.

Direction: to pursue development of a framework for accreditation through PFAC, including research of other jurisdictions so that that work can build upon what others have already learned, before bringing back to Council for input and approval.

3.12. Workforce Congress Report

The Registrar attended the CVMA Workforce Congress and shared the report with Council because it is a summary of some of the challenges with the veterinary workforce in Canada.

The CVBC has already introduced PSA registration, which is helping to bring more veterinarians into the workforce and is exploring the possibility of partial registration (as an alternative to full retirement), which might also help to alleviate the shortage.

Dr. Bergman feels that all jurisdictions have to work together as this is a national issue. Ongoing engagement with the CCVR and the NEB, together with WCVM will be important.

The province has indicated an interest in supporting other initiatives to address the shortage, in addition to the funding already committed to the expansion of student seats at WCVM, but they need to know what the most useful efforts would be.

The NEB practical examinations present a significant bottleneck to international veterinarian entry to the profession, and this would be a good focus for exploration of solutions with the NEB. For their part, WCVM is expanding their NEB testing capacity and exploring ideas to help expand their student capacity despite the limitations of their infrastructure, such as outsourcing the pre-clinical training (students complete classroom training at other campuses, then WCVM would be the hub for the clinical training); or outsourcing clinical rotations to private practices. There is also early talk of a veterinary school opening at Thomson Rivers

University. All of these initiatives are potential targets for provincial funding. Dr. Bergman will have more information on the WCVM activities after the WCVM Advisory Committee meetings later this month and will update Council at the next meeting.

Direction: Dr. Bergman will keep Council updated regarding the discussions with the other province's Registrars and the NEB after the WCVM meeting

3.13. Consideration for Including Residency as Criteria for Elected Council Members

Further to Council's request at the last meeting, the Council President looked into including residency as criteria for elected Council members and her understanding is that it would require two bylaw amendments – first to establish residency as an eligibility requirement; then to add non-residency as a factor that would cause an elected member to cease to be a member of Council. In order to be fiscally responsible, the necessary changes should be incorporated into the next planned bylaw revision. Council was asked if this is something that the College should continue to pursue, and they agree that residency is important to a Councilor's role and that the required bylaw changes should be pursued, but also agree that it should not be a stand-alone revision as bylaw voting is expensive.

Direction: Dr. Pritchard to continue with developing this bylaw update, then pass to the Registrar to complete.

3.14. Facility Terminology and Self-Assessment Changes

Accepted and not discussed as per the Consent Agenda.

Council was advised that PFAC approved this updated Self-Assessment form and Dr. Waddington commented that the existing Self Assessment document has been outdated for years and is no longer relevant. This new form provides a mechanism to make registrants aware that they must be responsible to contact the College to advise of important changes.

4. REPORTS RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION

- 4.1. Report on New Registrants – Accepted and not discussed as per the Consent Agenda.
- 4.2. Report on Change of Registration Class – Accepted and not discussed as per the Consent Agenda.
- 4.3. Name Approvals – Accepted and not discussed as per the Consent Agenda.
- 4.4. Report on Facilities, Closed, New & Reaccredited – Accepted and not discussed as per the Consent Agenda.
- 4.5. Task List – Accepted and not discussed as per the Consent Agenda.

5. ADJOURNMENT

5.1. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday October 21, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

MOTION: THAT the Open meeting be closed at 12:28 p.m.

MOVED/SECONDED

CARRIED

Council broke for lunch, to return at 1:15 p.m.