

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FEDERAL RETIREES  
OTTAWA BRANCH**

**MINUTES**

**Annual General Meeting**

**April 30, 2019**

**Ottawa Ontario**

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FEDERAL RETIREES  
OTTAWA BRANCH  
2285 St Laurent Blvd – Unit B-2  
Ottawa, Ontario. K1G 4Z5**

**Annual General Meeting**

Held Tuesday, April 30, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

At the Ottawa Convention and Event Centre, 200 Coventry Road, Ottawa, ON

**MINUTES**

**Welcome and Introduction of Guests**

The Ottawa Branch President, Robert Giroux, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the largest ever AGM, with over 550 registered to attend. He then introduced board members and guests, including special guests Sherry Romanado, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Seniors; Jean-Guy Soulière, President of the National Association; and Sayward Montague, Director of Advocacy. He also welcomed District Directors Hélène Nadeau and Daniel Brunet; Branch Services Coordinator Bill Turner; and Ontario Advocacy Program Officer Nancy Gleason.

Members of the Ottawa Branch Board of Directors were introduced: Christine Desloges, Vice-President and Chair of the Membership and Services Working Group; Keith Fernandez, Vice-President and Chair of the Advocacy Committee; Harry Ruthnum, Treasurer; Chris Ford, Secretary and Chair of the Recruitment and Retention Committee; Elisabeth Renaud, Chair of the Policy and Governance Committee; Terry Sing, Chair of the Branch Community Liaison Committee; and Directors Leslie Lawry; Patricia Walsh; Darlene Boileau; Richard Wagner; and Gray Gillespie.

Finally, the President welcomed special guest, Gillian Troy, wife of Past President Stephen Troy, who passed away in November.

He then asked all present to join him in a moment of silence for departed members.

This was followed by the request that all in attendance keep in mind those affected by, and dealing with, the ongoing disastrous floods.

The President then invited Parliamentary Secretary Romanado to give the opening remarks on behalf of the Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister of Seniors.

**Remarks from Sherry Romanado**

Mrs. Romanado began by acknowledging the incredible efforts of the Canadian Armed Forces, the RCMP, and other public servants who are assisting in flood relief efforts.

She then acknowledged the Association as a valuable partner for the government in fostering a safe and dignified retirement for current and retired members of the federal public service and for all Canadians. She also affirmed the Association's strong advocacy work.

Mrs. Romanado described measures in the government's 2019 budget to enhance seniors' retirement security, including: an increase in the Guaranteed Income Supplement earnings exemption, proactive enrolment in the CPP for those who have not yet applied and are over 70, better benefits protection in cases of corporate insolvency, \$6B for homecare and palliative care and the first steps in implementation of a national pharmacare plan. Budget 2019 also included a commitment of \$50M over five years to support implementation of a national dementia strategy and \$35M over the next year to support assisted living for First Nations seniors and people with disabilities on reserve.

She advised that funding for the New Horizons for Seniors Program has been increased and she highlighted the \$5K that was announced by David McGinty and that Ottawa Branch will receive to assist with the highly successful financial literacy program, which helps members manage their finances and alleviate the risk of financial abuse. Also to this end, the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada is working with seniors and financial institutions to strengthen consumer rights in banking, increase protections against fraud and increasingly sophisticated scams and support initiatives to help seniors use digital technology and the Internet safely.

Mrs. Romanado closed by stating that she looks forward to continued collaboration with the Association towards a better retirement for senior Canadians and she included a tribute to the work Association members have done over the course of their careers to improve the lives of Canadians.

The President expressed gratitude to Parliamentary Secretary Romanado for the grant from the New Horizons for Seniors Program and invited Mr. Soulière to the podium.

### **Remarks from Jean-Guy Soulière, National Association President**

Mr. Soulière extended greetings to Ottawa Branch members from the National Association's Board of Directors

He stated the Association has been very active over the past year. Most recently, the Association has mounted a campaign in response to unexpected changes contained in the recent provincial budget that would reduce travel benefits under the Ontario Health Insurance Program (OHIP). In a two-day period, the Advocacy team prepared a strategy to mobilize efforts, including a petition, against the proposed changes.

Mr. Soulière advised members that a five-year strategic plan for the Association has been developed and will be put forward at the Annual Members' Meeting in June.

As well, tool kits are to be provided to all branches for advocacy efforts in advance of the October federal election. Mr. Soulière noted that steps taken will represent the interests not only of the Association, but of all seniors' organizations across Canada. It is important that politicians understand seniors' perspectives on the issues.

Mr. Giroux thanked Mr. Soulière and stated that the Ottawa Branch is cooperating with the National Office in the advocacy campaign against Ontario health cuts. Members were encouraged to join the campaign at the Registration Desk, where staff with laptops could help send emails to members' MPPs and the premier to express concern.

### **Approval of the AGM Agenda and Minutes of the May 1, 2018 AGM**

Mr. Giroux reminded members that 2019 AGM documents had been posted on the Branch website to save costs and the environment. Last year, there had been a large amount of unused AGM documents. He also advised that a small supply of the AGM documents was available in hard copy on site at the Registration Desk. The President indicated that we hope the materials distributed in the tote bags at the meeting would be items that members would be interested in keeping. He referred to the agenda booklet in the tote bag.

He then asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

***Motion 1: To approve the AGM agenda***

***Moved by: Fred Lyle and seconded by: Lucienne Bahuaud***

***The motion was CARRIED.***

### **Approval of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of May 1, 2018**

The President put forward a motion to approve the minutes.

***Motion 2: To approve the May 1, 2018 minutes***

***Moved by: Robert Giroux and seconded by: Mark Phillips***

***The motion was CARRIED.***

### **President's Report**

*Note: an expanded version of the President's Report will be sent to all branch members in hard copy with the summer 2019 Sage Magazine.*

The President stated that the Ottawa Branch had been exceptionally active over the past year, pursuing new initiatives and continually striving to demonstrate the value proposition of membership to existing and potential members. The results were encouraging, with the highest increased membership between 2017 and 2018 of all 79 branches across Canada.

The President attributed this success to three key ingredients: the active support of members, the tremendous team of volunteers, and the creative and dedicated office team.

He described the Advocacy Committee efforts in one-on-one meetings with local MPs to solicit support for the Association's positions on Bill C27, a National Strategy for Seniors, and Pharmacare. Committee members also participated in the February 20 Lobby Day on Parliament Hill, the Ontario Election Watch Party organized by the National Office, and the International Day of Older Persons at City Hall. The Committee is now preparing the Branch's local advocacy strategy in concert with the national election strategy.

The President noted that the Branch Membership and Services Working Group was fully engaged in the financial literacy program. Expertise from five major financial institutions was brought in to expand the workshops offered to members, and the October 15 General Members' Meeting (GMM) on financial literacy, also a member recruitment event, was very well attended and executed. By the end of May 2019, Ottawa Branch will have held 46 financial literacy workshops and two GMMs on financial literacy that have benefitted over 1,570 members.

The Investing for Retirees discussion seminar has been provided eight times by Branch member Michael Fine. Feedback is very positive, and demand has exceeded capacity. More financial literacy events are planned for the fall in larger venues if further funding is available.

Last year, the Branch received \$12,600 in additional funds through generous sponsorships and from the National Association fund for local public outreach and recruitment. This year, the Branch received \$5,000 from ESDC. The Branch also applied for additional funding for the financial literacy program from the National Office and Chartwell Retirement Residences has generously agreed to be our AGM refreshment sponsor.

The President informed members that the Recruitment and Retention Committee developed a proposal for an integrated national R&R strategy which was provided to the National Office. One of the first collaborative efforts with the Outaouais Branch will be to establish an Association presence in the NCR during National Public Service Week in June. The Branch is also strengthening its relationship with the three other branches in the Ottawa-St. Lawrence-Nunavut Region.

From a governance perspective, the President advised that the Branch is running smoothly as a charter branch and the separate corporation that owns the Branch's office building is also functioning well.

The Branch Community Liaison Committee continues to be very active, building strong links with other seniors' organizations in the community and pursuing health literacy initiatives.

This year, a pilot project was launched with BestLifeRewarded, offering members free access to a computer program that encourages healthier living. The Ottawa Branch also offered seven Neighbours Helping Neighbours workshops to members and to other seniors' organisations, focussed on providing respite care for primary caregivers.

The President closed by encouraging members to help the Branch grow by recruiting new members.

He then called for a motion for members to acknowledge receipt of his report as President.

***Motion 3: To acknowledge receipt of the President's Report***

***Moved by: Hélène Nadeau and seconded by: Camille Guérin***  
***The motion was CARRIED.***

**Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Harry Ruthnum gave an overview of the 2018 audited financial statements<sup>1</sup> for Ottawa Branch, which were approved by the Board of Directors. Harry advised that the independent auditor, Frouin Group, gave the Branch a clean, unqualified audit report.

Highlights of the overview:

- Ottawa Branch had a surplus of \$9,736 in 2018. This surplus was due to the \$2,600 increase in membership revenues over budget and the savings the Branch Manager obtained with a prudent economy plan.
- Overall expenses were down by \$6,500, largely due to volunteers who contributed their expertise and time (e.g., translation services, home-based catering).
- An even greater reduction in expenses was obtained through the additional \$12,600 received from sponsors and the National Office fund for local outreach and recruitment. This additional funding was used to cover facility and refreshment expenses for the 2018 AGM and the fall General Members' Meeting. This income is reflected in the notes to the financial statements (that are on the Branch website) and in the notes to the birds-eye view of 2018 expenses and the 2019 budget (on page 2 of the agenda booklet provided to members in their tote bags). The Treasurer stated that, starting in 2019, the Branch will record all sponsorships and additional funding as revenue. The ESDC grant has already been recorded as a source of revenue in 2019.
- The Balance Sheet shows positive Net Assets unrestricted at \$87,325, which is a healthy amount.

The Treasurer called for a motion to attest that the 2018 audited financial statements for the Ottawa Branch, which show excess revenue of \$9,736, have been presented to the members.

***Motion 4: To attest that the 2018 audited financial statements for the Ottawa Branch, which show excess revenue of \$9,736, have been presented to members.***

***Moved by: Camille Guerin and seconded by: Gus Nelson***

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Prior to the AGM, members received multiple electronic notifications that AGM documents (including financial statements) were posted on the Branch website. At the meeting, attendees were advised that a small number of hard copies were available at the Registration Desk. Each meeting attendee received a one-page birds-eye view of the 2018 budget and expenses and 2019 forecast on page 2 of the agenda booklet contained in their tote bags.

One member asked where staff salaries were recorded. The Treasurer responded that they are recorded under Services to Members in the birds-eye view of the 2018 expenses and 2019 budget that members have on page 2 of the agenda booklet from their tote bags and they are also reported as a specific expense in the audited financial statements on the website.

***The Motion was CARRIED.***

The Treasurer stated that the Branch has been satisfied with the work of the auditor, whose services have been used for the last eight years. The Executive Committee has agreed, on behalf of the Board, that Frouin Group be re-appointed.

***Motion 5: To appoint Frouin Group as Auditor for Ottawa Branch for 2019***

***Moved by: Harry Ruthnum and seconded by: Keith Fernandez***

One member asked when consideration would be given to a new auditor, after so many years with the same firm. The Treasurer responded that the work of the auditors was under continual review at every audit, and that there is always the option to change auditors if need be.

***The Motion was CARRIED.***

The Treasurer advised members that it is a best practice for non-profit organizations to use reserves to manage financial risk and cover non-routine expenditures. It is also a best practice to establish the purpose for which reserves will be used. Accordingly, a resolution (also on page 2 of the agenda booklet) was drafted that would enable the Ottawa Branch to:

- 1) allocate \$50,000 for a reserve to risk-manage potential liabilities related to human resources
- 2) allocate \$30,000 for a reserve for leasehold improvements
- 3) delegate spending authority for the use of the Branch reserves to the Executive Committee of the Ottawa Board of Directors – with the stipulation that the Executive can only spend annually up to 50% of the combined total of all amounts held in reserve by Ottawa Branch at the start of every fiscal year.

The Treasurer explained that, in 2019, after making allocations to manage HR risks and for leasehold improvements, the remainder of the reserve (\$7,325) would be unallocated. The Executive would be able to spend up to 50% of the total \$87,325 held in reserve this fiscal year.

***Motion 6: To approve the resolution that \$50,000 will be allocated for a reserve to risk manage potential HR liabilities and \$30,000 will be allocated for a reserve for leasehold improvements and that the Executive Committee of the Ottawa Branch Board of Directors will have delegated spending authority to spend annually up to 50% of the total combined amounts held in reserve by Ottawa Branch at the start of every fiscal year.***

***Moved by: Harry Ruthnum and seconded by: Fred Lyle***

In response to questions from members about the reserve allocations, the Treasurer stated that Board Directors do have liability insurance, that reserve allocations will cover expenses related to unforeseen circumstances, and that the allocations were being segregated to ensure transparency. Regarding the HR liability allocation, the Treasurer clarified that the reserve could be used for compensation, if ever required, in the event of staff departures. He also explained that the leasehold improvements allocation could cover reconfiguration of the office space to accommodate larger events and more attendees. Finally, he confirmed that funding for the reserve would come from unrestricted net assets.

***The Motion was CARRIED.***

**Election of Directors**

The President stated the Nominating Committee ensured that proper notice went out in the Spring 2019 edition of *Sage* to invite nominations for candidates to join the Board of Directors.

No outside nominations were received. In the meantime, the Nominating Committee developed a slate of eight excellent candidates that was approved by the Board of Directors. In keeping with the by-laws, the proposed terms for the candidates have staggered end dates. The President advised that election by ballot was not necessary since no other candidates came forward. Therefore, he declared the following eight candidates elected by acclamation:

- For a two-year term:
  - Dave Bennett
  - Alain Corriveau
  - Robert J. Giroux
  - Leslie Lawry
  - Elisabeth Renaud
  - Terry Sing
  - Patricia Walsh

- For a one-year term:
  - Darlene Boileau

**Volunteer of the Year Award**

The President announced that, based on their stellar leadership of Branch financial literacy initiatives, Michael Fine and Alain Corriveau were the recipients of the Ottawa Branch Volunteer of the Year award, an award given in honour of Don Yeomans, a highly esteemed Past President of Ottawa Branch.



With these awards, the existing plaque is now full. A new plaque for this award has been created and henceforth will honour the late Stephen Troy, another inspiring Past President who recently passed away. The new plaque was previewed in the presence of Gillian Troy, Stephen Troy's wife.

### **Sponsor Remarks**

The President turned the floor over to Tracey Parslow, Business Development Manager of Chartwell Retirement Residences, the AGM refreshment sponsor. Ms. Parslow spoke of the difficult choices her own family faced giving home care to close relatives suffering from dementia and physical ailments. She recommended an approach of natural progression, where seniors "have a say" in their care. She described Chartwell as the largest provider of retirement residences in Canada, able to support a variety of lifestyles.

### **Adjournment**

The President then called for a motion to adjourn the 2019 AGM of the Ottawa Branch.

***Motion 7: To adjourn the 2019 AGM of the Ottawa Branch***

***Moved by: Stavros Zoukis and seconded by: Patrice Lemyer***


***The motion was CARRIED.***

The official business portion of the meeting terminated at 10:25 p.m.

After a thirty-minute break, the non-business portion of the Ottawa Branch AGM commenced, and members listened to keynote speaker, Dr. Andrew Frank, a cognitive and behavioral neurologist and medical director of the Bruyère Memory Program, who spoke on "The Future of Alzheimer's Disease". This was followed by a presentation from Dean Henderson, Clinical Director of The Dementia Society Ottawa and Renfrew County on the "Mind Your Brain Health".

Finally, the President announced the winners of prizes offered by INFOMART exhibitors: BestLifeRewarded (FitBit); Tradex (gift basket); Champlain Community Support Network (gift card); Chartwell Retirement Residences (garden gift box); Solva Senior Living (2 gift cards); Retire-at-Home (gift basket); and Bereaved Families Ottawa (chocolates).

The non-business portion of the Ottawa Branch AGM concluded at 12:15 p.m.

  
Robert Giroux, President

  
Chris Ford, Secretary