

COG 2004 AGM
Saturday, March 27, 2004
4 pm – 6 pm
Cornwall, PEI

Chairperson: Janine Gibson

Minutes: Andrea Berry

Present: Janine Gibson (President), Marina S. Buchan (Vice-President), Celia Guildford, Susan Ross (GOOFY), Brian Lendrum (GOOFY), Tom Manley (Ottawa), Sam Godfrey (SIOPA, ING), Joanne Currie, Karen Marchewka, Paula Anderson (Kawartha), Phil Ferraro (Member at large), Beth McMahon (ACORN), Ray Pearmain, Jean Arnold (NB), Clark Phillips (NB), Arnold Taylor (SOD), Susan Tyler (NB), Achim Mohessen-Beyk (PEC), Ronald Caston (Niagara), Av Singh (NS), Judy Lien (NF), Larry Slipp (ACORN), Liz Dacombe, Susan MacKinnon, Fred Dollar, Mirna Hernandez, David Cozac (NB).

Welcome and call to order

Adoption of agenda

**Moved by Tom Manley and seconded by Marina Buchan to adopt the agenda as amended. Motion carried.*

Approval of minutes of 2003 AGM

**Moved by Theresa Schumilas and seconded by Samuel Godfrey to adopt the minutes of the 2003 AGM. Motion carried.*

Election of officers – Presentation of slate, Marina Buchan

Marina presented background to selection of officers

- Summer issue of EFG carries call for nominations
- VP and others start recruitment of names
- Names put forward on slate, presented to membership in mailout 30-days in advance of AGM
- Past accepted nominees from the floor, this year not doing it
- Executive committee will be selected from the approved slate

Tom – not enough farmer representation on board

This slate will be retiring from at the 2005 AGM.

**11 votes to accept the 2004 slate of officers*

**2 abstentions*

Proxy votes:

**229 votes to accept the 2004 slate of officers*

**4 against*

**Janine Gibson notes that the 2004 slate of officers has been accepted by the membership.*

Executive Reports

President's Report (Janine Gibson):

- McConnell Foundation funding for 3 years was granted
- Hired ED Laura Telford through funding
- Thank Falls Brook Centre for hosting National Office through past 2 years
- Office moving to Ottawa – looking for new Office Manager/Membership Services
- COG commitment to move AGM around the country will continue (next board meeting will be in Saskatoon, SK, November 2004), need to determine AGM location for 2005
- Supported Organic AG Protection fund
- Supported Organic Regulation Committee, National Standard, Organic Coalition – comes from activity in IFOAM 2002
- Mary Perlmutter Scholarship continues – Julia Wagner from UBC winner for 2003, 2004 call for applications, continued thanks for EJLB
- COG Patron – Right Honorable Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada
 - Clarification of Patron and Sustaining membership categories
 - Recommendation to recognize these members by regular acknowledgement in EFG
 - Idea presented to take off membership fee part and give charitable donation form to Patrons and Sustaining members for balance of their fee

Treasurer's Report (Janine Gibson for Marion Markus):

- Thanks Joan-Scarrow Valyear (COG Bookkeeper) and outgoing treasurer Marion (Max) Markus
- Max reformatted accounting structure, much easier for bookkeeping
- 3 components consolidated: EFG, IFOAM 2002, COG
- 2003 year-end first time auditors say new format, still needs fine tuning
- 2003 first year for registered charity information form (federal government)
- Chapter consolidation – chapter financial is last component to include in COG financial statements
 - Standardized format will be circulated to chapters for financial reports due in August 2004
- 2 year ends in 2004 (due to change in year-end to December 31 to better fit in with government deadlines)
 - AGM will need to be held within 3 months of year-end
 - Will eliminate possibility of Guelph Conference (end-January) for AGM location
- New forms/procedures for cheque requests, expense claims
- Tracking revenue from publications – working on system to help make decisions on reprints

*Moved by Theresa Schumilas and seconded by Jean Arnold to accept financial statement as presented. Carried.

- Funding received by McConnell Foundation, Canadian Magazine Fund
- Thanks to Eleanor Heise for outstanding successful fundraising efforts for the transition handbook project.
- Thanks to Theresa Schumilas for work in developing Policy and Procedures manual.

Executive Director's Report (Laura Telford):

- Building COG as organization, building leadership potential for organic sector
- Defining COG and how we fit into moving the organic sector forward
- Strategic planning process facilitated by Joanne Currie
- Thanks to Theresa for initiating strategic planning process
- Planning for end of McConnell Foundation funding – build core funding through publications, membership
- Build strategic partnerships to increase effectiveness
- Working to create a consolidated, coherent funding proposal to Agriculture Canada
 - Working with National Organic Coalition
 - Ottawa office will increase profile and influence
- Building individual memberships – lapsed member campaign, seed house mailing, certifying bodies communication
- Revamping Eco Farm and Garden through Canadian Magazine Fund support
 - Name change, change to look
 - Thanks to Elizabeth White for coordinating the project
- Introduced monthly e-newsletter, revamping COG website
- Implemented ACORN as first Affiliate member
 - Affiliates share COG’s values, benefits negotiated on a case-by-case basis
- Library – consolidated book ordering process, started paying \$1500 honourarium to Leanne McCormick (volunteer librarian)
- Publications
 - More marketing
 - Transition handbook will come out next March, COG bought handbooks for all the farmers that participated on the project
 - All monies have been raised to cover all cost, including storage and translation
 - Janet Wallace writing new book on “Best of Cognition/EFG”
- Developing national fundraising plan for organic sector
 - Participating in dialogues around national coalition
 - 3 parts: increasing number of organic acres by increasing organic farmers (new young farmers, transition farmers, mid-life crisis folk); support for processing, seeds, equipment; consumer education
 - Objective to have proposal ready around next AGM

Motion to amend COG by-laws (President, on Board’s recommendation)

- Concern that smaller chapters won’t be adequately represented by regional representation
 - Chapter Rep (individual) level of activity on board not dependent on size of chapter but on the interest/availability of the individual
 - Members can communicate issues/concerns directly to the board of directors and the president
- Suggestion to have minutes from board meetings available on the website
 - Some issues discussed in board meetings should not be available to public
 - Questions from chapter members to know what is happening at board meetings

- Encourage communication with members by having direct relay of information from Chapter reps rather than just on-line
- Suggestion to have summary of motions available
- Suggestion to have 2 documents: minutes and report (edited by COG Secretary)
- COG Secretary will provide 2 documents from COG board meetings: minutes (available to the board) and a general report to the membership.
- **Friendly amendment to By-law 15: A summary of the board minutes shall be made available to the membership upon request.** (Take out line “shall not be available to the general membership of the corporation but...”)
**Moved by Tom Manley seconded by Theresa Schumilas to accept the amendments to the COG by-laws as presented. Proxy votes: 209 in favour, 5 against. Carried.*

Thanks for office staff, ED, and President for dedicated work.

Motion to Adjourn

**Moved by Jean Arnold and seconded by Paula Anderson that the meeting adjourn.
Carried.*