



College of Veterinarians of British Columbia

COUNCIL MEETING
Video Conference
Friday, September 11, 2020

Minutes of the Open Meeting

Council Members: Dr. Josh Waddington (President), Dr. Doris Leung (Vice President), Mr. Chris Finding (Treasurer), Ms. Lori Charvat, Mr. Gian Sihota, Dr. Michele Martin, Dr. Jane Mancell and Mr. Gary Kobayashi

Staff: Dr. Jane Pritchard (Interim Registrar), Dr. Stacey Thomas (Deputy Registrar) and Ms. Rosalee Magcalas (Executive Assistant)

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROUTINE PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

2.1. Approval of the Open Agenda

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

A Council Member brought up the discussion amongst Council, via email regarding the CVBC's possible leasing of additional office space on the 3rd floor and that the decision was not minuted and ask that it be added to this agenda.

MOVED/SECONDED **CARRIED**

2.2. Discussion of Consent Agenda

MOTION: THAT the Open Consent Agenda be approved with items 2.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.6.

MOVED/SECONDED **CARRIED**

2.3. Minutes of the July 17, 2020 Open Meeting

Council requested a correction be made to the July 17, 2020 minutes, to item 3.6 by changing the 'Designated Registrar' to 'Designated Registrant' in the 5th paragraph, 2nd line.

MOTION: THAT the Minutes of the July 17, 2020 Open Council meeting be approved as amended and as per the Consent Agenda

MOVED/SECONDED **CARRIED**

Direction: For the office to make the required change to the July 17, 2020 Open Meeting Minutes and post them to the website.

3. REPORTS REQUIRING COUNCIL ACTION/DECISION/DISCUSSION

3.1 After Hours Care and Transfer of Care Policies - UPDATE

In late 2019, the Investigation Committee raised an issue regarding the expectations surrounding after hours care and the transferring of animals. The Deputy Registrar created two policies as well as a Q & A document which were presented to Council at its March 6, 2020 meeting but was tabled at that time for a future meeting.

Council did request that Dr. Thomas reach out to veterinarians in practice to see what they are dealing with and their views on the subject. In an effort to obtain as much information as possible, she has drafted a letter and questionnaire to be forwarded to emergency and specialty clinics.

Council was concerned that the written, “essay format” questionnaire would dissuade participation. It was suggested that busy facility staff would be more likely to take the time to answer and provide their input if it were presented as an online survey, with “click box” answers and an option to provide additional information.

The CVBC already has an account with SurveyMonkey – a Council member pointed out that SurveyMonkey is housed in the US, not Canada which raises privacy concerns. The survey will be anonymous, and it was suggested that an appropriate precaution would be to advise participants of the US data storage so they can choose for themselves whether to proceed. Alternatively, the CVBC may wish to explore alternative e-survey platforms as we are likely to produce several surveys as we move through the Strategic Planning process.

Direction: For the office to reformulate the presented materials into an effective online survey format and to determine the best platform for circulating the survey.

3.2 PFAC Draft Policy – Virtual Reaccreditation Inspections

In April, the Practice Facilities Accreditation Committee passed a Policy allowing virtual inspections to be conducted on new facilities. The facilities that have been inspected virtually, will remain with provisional approval until an inspector is able to visit the facility in person.

Existing facilities that are on a 5-year inspection schedule are starting to become extremely backlogged as in person inspections have been halted due to COVID-19. Many are overdue with even more needing to be scheduled before the end of 2020. The PFAC felt that in the interest of trying to alleviate some of these cases, a determination of low-risk facilities should be made, and a virtual inspection conducted. Low risk would include facilities that have not changed ownership, do not have a new Designated Registrant or have not renovated the facility since the last inspection. The office was unable to provide an estimate of how many facilities would qualify for a virtual inspection – these are all changes/details that a Designated Registrant is expected to report to the Committee, but few DRs understand this expectation.

Council questioned the definition of renovation and wondered how broadly it would be applied. They directed the Deputy Registrar to amend the Policy to say “no **substantive** renovations” to the facility in the past 5 years.

Facilities would not have the ability to apply for virtual inspections, rather the College would screen facilities due for inspection by asking a series of questions to see if they meet the criteria for a virtual inspection and reaccreditation.

Council also expressed concern that there needs to be clearly established guidelines for what constitutes “Substantive Renovations”, otherwise too much discretion is left to the inspectors/committee members and there is risk of bias, or at least the appearance of bias in the application of the policy.

The Council expressed confidence in its Committees, feeling that they know what they require and that they must be trusted to do the right thing. Council would like to leave the responsibility of devising clear guidelines for substantive vs. non-substantive renovations with the Practice Facilities Accreditation Committee, while the Council approves the policy as amended .

Council also discussed the possibility of inspectors conducting after hours inspections (to minimize interactions with staff etc.), presuming the Designated Registrant agrees as the Interim Registrar advised that the *Veterinarians Act* only allows for inspections to be conducted during normal business hours. Dr. Pritchard has reached out to the Ministry of Agriculture to see if there is a possibility of changing the *Act* so that out of hours inspections could be performed.

MOTION: TO approve the PFAC’s Temporary Policy during COVID Pandemic: Remote/Virtual Practice Facility Reaccreditation Inspections subject to the addition of **substantive** to renovation and have PFAC move forward with creating a list of questions for the inspectors to determine eligibility for a virtual inspection.

MOVED/SECONDED

CARRIED

Direction the Deputy Registrar to amend the Policy to add **substantive** to clarify renovations to facilities. The Policy to go back to the PFAC for development of a clear, working definition of substantive renovations that would warrant an inspection.

3.3 Personal Use Accounts – Working Group

The Interim Registrar advised Council that the first video call between herself, Dr. Thomas, Drs. Martin and Leung, 4 registrant volunteers and Dr. Garth Graham, General Manager of Associated Veterinary Purchasing (AVP) was held on September 8th. After brief introductions were conducted, the working group began to develop a basic Terms of Reference with the plan to meet monthly and agreeing to work between meetings to move the development of a PUA Policy along to a final product. The working group is quite diverse and covers most sectors that would be looking to access Personal Use Accounts. The group has no deadline per se, but the Interim Registrar would like to see this come to fruition before the end of her term.

3.4 Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting for 2020 will be held virtually, due to COVID-19. Pre-COVID, the date of November 6th had been tentatively set to coincide with the SBCV’s meeting that weekend. As everything is being done virtually this year, we do not have to be tied to them in order to obtain savings on room rental or to maximize registrant attendance. The Interim Registrar is asking Council to consider a different date and to set a time.

What does the College want to achieve at the AGM? Should it be an opportunity for registrants to voice concerns or ideas, or should it be a platform to present the Annual Report. In previous years, turnout was always quite low with an average of 60 to 70 registrants participating. By holding it virtually, the numbers could be significantly higher, and Council feels that we should take this opportunity to present the Annual Report, but also use it as a platform to

gather ideas about what the registrants are wanting to speak about with a plan to follow up with targeted discussion forums over the following month(s).

General consensus was to hold it on a weekend day so it would enable more registrants to join. The practising veterinarians on Council reminded that most clinics are open on Saturdays and thought Sunday would be a more amenable day. Keeping religious observations in mind, Council decided on a 2:00 pm start for an approximate 1 hour meeting.

The CVBC will ask for preregistration as a way to gauge how many registrants plan on attending (results to be finalized 48 hours in advance). On the day, if a non-registered registrant wants to join, we have an obligation to allow them to participate. Our current Zoom account only allows for a maximum of 100 participants, so the College will increase the participant number to 1000 for the month of November. This may be setting our expectation high, but the increase in price for 1000 participant membership is far lower than the cost of holding a meeting in person.

The Council agreed to set the Annual General Meeting for Sunday, November 15th, 2020 starting at 2:00pm for a 1 hour meeting. If registrants have questions, make them aware that they should send them through the chat feature, and they will be answered and/or shared. To also consider holding a series of shorter meetings on different hot button topic for registrants over the following several weeks.

MOTION: TO set the date and time for the Annual General Meeting for Sunday, November 15, 2020, starting at 2:00pm.

MOVED/SECONDED

CARRIED

Direction: To send an Eblast to registrants notifying of the AGM date and time and to update the website with that date.

3.5 Screening of Public Members for Committees

Direction was given at the last meeting to the Interim Registrar to gather information about the possible screening of public members for Committees. Dr. Pritchard canvassed the other jurisdictions as well as other BC regulators and recommended that if we have a request from an individual to volunteer for a CVBC Committee, we ask for a CV and check their references.

In addition, the various Committees should be approached to see what they want and need in new members and then match up volunteers with the positions. Council would like to set up a Council Nomination Committee, similar to the one set up to screen veterinarians during elections, to screen these Committee volunteers. This process will have to be formalized with a Terms of Reference so that it can be streamlined. It should include both public and elected Council members and must be diverse and inclusive. Instead of being a stand-alone Committee, it should be a Council Committee as Council has a higher degree of knowledge of what is needed across all Committees. Ms. Charvat offered to share a terms of reference for a similar committee for another BC regulator.

Direction: For the office to develop the Terms of Reference for the Nominations Committee to screen volunteers for Committees based on the Terms of Reference provided by Ms. Charvat from the College of Physicians and Surgeons and bring back to Council at its next meeting.

3.6 Proposed Supervised License Category

At the July 17th Council Meeting, the Interim Registrar was asked to gather information regarding how other jurisdictions manage supervised licensing for internationally trained veterinarians (IEVs) pursuing their CQ, as the Council is interested in exploring a new license category for BC. As the provincial government is not interested in increasing the number of seats available at Canadian veterinary schools, other alternatives to increasing the number of registrants has to be sought. Dr. Pritchard reached out to other provinces and shared the information received with Council.

There are many complex steps that will need to be completed for this bylaw revision to be done correctly and effectively, while still being accomplished in a timely manner. As a next step, the Interim Registrar will develop a draft bylaw addition and supporting policy for discussion and input from the Registration Committee.

Council discussed possible limits on the number of supervised veterinarians at any one clinic to ensure that these veterinarians will have sufficient one-on-one mentoring and supervision. Council would also like to impose limitations to the length of a supervised license, to ensure that the system does not get abused. After a set period (eg. 3 or 6 months), if the IEV has not yet received a CQ, the IEV would need to request an extension, and the Designated Registrant would have to provide an update on the IEV's practice.

Council realizes that the CVBC has no authority over employee compensation and acknowledges the possibility that IEVs might, in some instances, be exploited. However, they feel that the creation of a supervised practice class of registration will provide options to clinics that are short-handed and have struggled to find licensed veterinarians to join their practice and that need and competition will stimulate fair salaries..

The draft bylaw & policy will be put on the Registration Committee's next scheduled meeting to begin the discussion. Council is aware that it may take them 2-3 meetings to produce a final version ready for Council approval. Only after Council approval will the change be ready to present to the registrant body for a vote, as is required for all bylaw changes.

Direction: For the Registrar to draft a bylaw revision/addition regarding the proposed supervised license category and present it to the Registration Committee for their input and reworking to be brought back to Council after it has been developed, so that it may be presented to the registrants for a vote as it is a Bylaw change.

3.7 AAVSB Annual Conference

The CVBC received an invitation to attend the AAVSB's annual conference, which is typically held in a US city and only extended to the Registrar and Council President. As it will be held virtually this year, the invitation was extended to everyone. The Deputy Registrar was seeking input from Council on their interest in attending and it was decided that for the nominal group registration fee of \$250, that she would sign up all of Council, Committee Chairs and office staff, on the understanding that Council and Committee members would not be compensated for their attendance, but would be able to claim CE hours.

4. REPORTS RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION

- 4.1 Report on New Registrants – Accepted and not discussed as per the Consent Agenda.
- 4.2 Change of Registration Class Report – 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 Report re. IC Cases/Status

This report, as provided to the Investigation Committee is being provided as an update for Council also. The Deputy Registrar commented that this report shows the hard work performed by staff in clearing the cases from 2017 with only a few remaining from 2018. There is a constant stream of files that are being presented to the Panel and then coming back to the inspectors with direction to gather more information from complainants and/or registrants. If a registrant has engaged legal counsel, the process of gathering information can be slowed down significantly.

Council would like to see, if possible, these statistics put onto a graph to aid in the visualization of the data, in addition to changing the heading ‘Investigation’ to ‘Lead Investigator’ to alleviate confusion.

Unfortunately, as new complaints continue to be received, the backlog of complaints is not being significantly reduced and the College needs to continue to work to address this issue. It is stressful to a registrant to have a complaint in their lives for years, in addition to having the appearance to the complainant that the CVBC is not doing their job effectively.

Council would like to educate registrants on common complaint issues, to help them proactively try to improve their own practise. The Council President will prepare a message for the Fall Newsletter on this topic.

The Deputy Registrar advised that the CVBC’s general counsel, Ms. Camille Karlicki looked into the processing times for complaints in other jurisdictions and we are on par with both Alberta and Ontario. In 2019, average time to process a complaint was 10 months. Ms. Karlicki also advised that currently there are 12 complaints that are over a year old, with a complaint being counted as “live” based upon when it is ready to be considered by the Intake Panel. This definition is because there is often several weeks following first contact from a complainant before the office will have all of the necessary information for it to be considered by the IP. It should also be noted that since the start of COVID-19, there has been an increase in the number of complaints received, which may be due, in part, to people having more time on their hands.

- 4.6 Task List – Accepted and not discussed as per the Consent Agenda.
- 4.7 CVBC Potential Lease of Space on the 3rd Floor – Council Decision (ADDED ITEM)

At the Council Meeting held on July 17th, Council discussed the possibility of the CVBC obtaining additional space on the 3rd floor of the building they currently occupy. As more information was requested and due to the time constraints placed on the office by the leasing company, Council discussed this issue via email after receiving the requested information.

Council decided to not support the idea of securing additional space at this time and the College did not move forward. This issue will be revisited in the future, possibly 6-9 months once life has settled from COVID.

5. **ADJOURNMENT**

5.1 Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday October 23, 2020.

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