

Federation of Associations for Counselling Therapy in British Columbia
Narrative Summary of Combined Annual General Meeting and Board Meeting

May 29, 2015, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM

Vancouver, BC

Where, When and Who

Our meeting was held at City University of Seattle's (CityU) downtown campus. This fits with our process of seeking out venues that have low cost and that put us in touch with organizations that are supportive of the FACTBC mission. Our previous FACT-BC meeting was at Adler University. The next board meeting, set for October 2nd, 2015 will be held at Simon Fraser University (downtown campus). Thanks goes to CityU administration for opening up this venue, and special thanks to the CityU staff who provide such a warm welcome and comfortable setting.

The meeting was attended by Roger Wells from the BC Association for Marriage and Family Therapy; by Michael Nell and Randy Frost of the American Association of Pastoral Counsellors; by Rosemary Fromson of the Canadian Professional Counsellor's Association; by Jacqueline Nadworny of the Professional Association of Christian Counsellors and Psychotherapists; by Duncan Shields, Carolyn Fast, and Glen Grigg of the B.C. Association of Clinical Counsellors; by Blythe Shepard, Wendy Woloshyn, Cathleen Dyer, and Natasha Caverley of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association; by Susan Summers of the Music Therapy Association of B.C.; by Joanie Tara and Mike Stephan of the Association of Cooperative Counselling Therapists of Canada; and by Sharon McCann of the Association of Registered Clinical Hypnotherapists. Philip Crowell representing Spiritual Health attended as an observer. John Gawthrop, our lobby coordinator was also in attendance and recorded the meeting minutes.

We had a full agenda before us! The meeting started with the basics: minutes, agenda, and identifying this meeting as also an Annual General Meeting (AGM). The idea of an AGM being combined with a regular FACTBC meeting may seem a bit odd until you remember that the membership of FACTBC is associations, and that those associations each have one designated representative who is also a FACTBC board director. Consequently, any FACTBC meeting meets the requirements for being an AGM, and we chose this one so as to stay well within the annual cycle.

Vigilant Decision-Making

With leadership from Sharon, we returned to the question of consensus at the FACTBC table. Sharon brought forward an example of a consensus process, what we might call the “five finger model”, some definitions of consensus, and a motion that would embed specific processes and terms about consensus in the bylaws. Sharon pointed out that, at best, FACTBC has been using what is often called “rough consensus”—the absence of serious objection—rather than a deep consensus where the decisions of the group reflect all the voices and all the ideas and concerns of every member.

Later in the day, we returned to this discussion under a motion to put consensus definitions and processes in the bylaws. That motion was tabled.

Working with Government Officials

Glen reported that he was recently given verbal confirmation by Melissa Murdock, Director of Regulation, and Mark McKinnon, Assistant Deputy Minister of Health, that two new colleges will be created under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA): Diagnostic and Therapeutic Occupations College, and the College of Counselling Therapists. The former will be created this year, and the latter in the spring of 2016. Glen said that written confirmation of this plan is not realistically attainable, but that the above two officials have said they would attend the FACTBC meeting this October, if invited. Natasha suggested that FACTBC consider also inviting the provincial Labour Mobility Coordinator, in order to broaden the perspective. After some discussion, it was agreed to invite the Coordinator to a separate FACTBC meeting.

Governments can report out on plans and intentions, and this is helpful. However, it seems crucial to understand that this is a plan, not a commitment, and it is vital that FACTBC continue to vigorously work with political authorities to keep this plan in place.

FACTBC made a start at creating a committee to respond to the BC Ministry of Health’s request for input about health care priorities. This, along with input to other ministry committees, will be considered at the next FACTBC meeting. Thanks go to Natasha for stepping up to help with this process. We were pleased to note that, as part of the invitation from Ministry of Health, counselling was listed as an allied health profession in Ministry of Health documents.

Working with Political Authorities

John described how our consultants, Hill & Knowlton (H+K) Strategies, have created an engagement plan for visiting select MLAs who have influence over creation of a College of Counselling Therapy. As we were not scheduled to meet with the government caucus this spring, and there is doubt as to whether the legislature will sit in the fall, it is important to line up visits to MLAs over the summer, and then to visit them at their constituency offices in September 2015. You will recall that John assembles teams made up of volunteers from FACTBC associations, and then coordinates the work of H+K in preparing, rehearsing, and debriefing the teams.

The contract with H+K was approved, and John assured the group that he would be moving forward with the Engagement Plan as circulated.

Rosemary briefed the board about the Caucus Presentation Team's preparations. Rosemary, Duncan, Michelle, Phillip, and Glen are standing by to respond to any invitation that may be forthcoming.

AGM Housekeeping:

The following roles were filled by acclamation: President: Glen Grigg, of the B.C. Association of Clinical Counsellors, Vice President: Michelle Ouchare-Deo, of the British Columbia Art Therapy Association,

Treasurer: Susan Summers, of the Music Therapy Association of B.C and Secretary: Joanie Tara, of the Association of Cooperative Counselling Therapists of Canada. In accordance with our by-laws the 2014/2015 Financial Reports were filled with the Government of Canada.

Spending Wisely to Create Public Safety

Susan reported on the impressive volume of work she has done in the past year to create and maintain a financial structure for FACTBC. The board approved financials for 2014, adopted a reimbursement policy, set up forms and protocols for transparent and accountable financial operations, set limits on discretionary spending, and set a standard for ongoing financial reporting.

We had a very brief look ahead to possible 2016 budget requirements, and time pressures left us with only a start on this item. Similarly, the question of honoraria to support participation in project work was deferred to the next FACTBC meeting.

Revisiting the FACTBC Core Principles

Rosemary led a discussion of a motion to amend FACTBC core principles, especially with respect to how FACTBC makes recommendations to government on the authority to regulate the use of certifications, designations, and credentials. Rosemary's proposal was that FACTBC should recommend that a college not have authority over these items. Discussion went in two directions. One was the implications and merits of the proposal for the many interests that would be affected. The other was whether it is possible, under the HPA, to limit the authority of a professional regulatory college in this way. The motion was tabled, and Glen agreed to seek consultation from our legal counsel, George Bryce, as to the legal viability of such a position.

Competency Profile Update

Roger brought forward the work of the update planning committee and a comprehensive plan to update and validate the Competency Profile. The plan is for four days of working group effort plus between-meeting reading and editing, followed by a board workshop, association

board approval of a validation draft, a validation process, and final board approval was adopted by the Board. Blythe, Joanie, Rosemary, Randy, and Cathleen stepped up to join Roger, Jacqueline, and Glen on the working group. The contract with David Cane was approved.

A discussion item to introduce the FACTBC board to the CPCA's Compass Centre for Examination Development was left without time for consideration, and therefore carried forward to the next FACTBC meeting.

Meeting Process and Adjournment

There appeared to be deep and mixed feelings about the process of this meeting. While it is a matter of record that a lot of important work at an operational level was completed, the group was also unsettled by an absence of core agreement about decision-making processes; an absence of agreement about key elements of the FACTBC core principles; and about leaving important agenda items unfinished. The FACTBC community has work to do where these issues are concerned.

We ended the day at 3:00 PM with wishes for safe journeys home!

FACTBC summary of financial statements for 2014

Prepared by Susan Summers, PhD, MTA
Treasurer, FACTBC

Bank balance as of December 31, 2014 is \$32,657.77

Total income came from two sources: contributions from nine member associations and bank interest, totaling \$77,429.19.

Total expenses encompassed fees for contractor and consulting services, meetings costs, office expenses and board insurance, and website development and maintenance totaling \$44,771.42.

Consultants/contractors	\$ 35,700.53
Meeting costs	5,810.57
Office expenses and board insurance	1,020.26
Website development and maintenance	2,240.06

FACTBC was able to come in under budget for 2014 in two major areas: reduction in meeting costs, and in response to the effectiveness of the first phase of our lobbying project, FACTBC was able to move the budget for the second phase to 2015. The remaining funds in our account are held as a contingency fund for the time when the government asks FACTBC to prepare the groundwork for aspects of the College of Counseling Therapists.

A financial statement and balance sheet was prepared by an accounting firm and was approved by the board on May 29, 2015 at the AGM in Vancouver, BC.