

**ROYAL CANADIAN INSTITUTE for Science**  
**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting and Conversazione - 166th Session**  
Media Room 179 and Croft Chapter House, University College, University of Toronto  
**Thursday May 19, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.**

**Welcome**

Welcome by President, Ms. Helle Tosine. Ms. Tosine acknowledged that the members elect the RCIS Council to deliver on the RCIS vision of bringing science to the public. She noted that each member is required to act in good faith and make decisions that are in the best interest of the Institute. Ms. Tosine explained how stories had been presented at each lecture outlining science from 165 years ago. She told the story of Frederick Scott Archer, discoverer of collodion. The substance was first used to cover wounds on soldiers, but it was discovered to be an alternative to egg white on glass photographic plates, allowing for one of the first high-quality duplication processes in photography: the negative. Making negatives required skill and time. By contrast, in 2016, we have photos at our fingertips with the Smartphone! Ms. Tosine noted that RCIScience is proud to be showcasing science to the public continuously for over 165 years and that she hoped it would be doing the same 165 years in the future.

**Minutes of the Previous Annual Meeting**

Honorary Secretary Ken Yoon presented the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held May 13, 2015 (circulated with the Notice of Meeting) and having done so it was

MOVED by John Johnston, seconded by Jock Fleming  
THAT the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Institute held on Wednesday, May 13, 2015 be accepted.  
All in favour CARRIED

**Annual Report of the President**

Ms. Helle Tosine presented the achievements of RCIS under her 2 years of leadership, with the theme, "Governance & Growth." She noted that RCIS is still not recognized by enough members of the public or figures in key science organizations. Referring to the strategic plan presented at last year's AGM, Ms. Tosine outlined the 5 objectives for growing the RCIS: growing our online audience, live audience, partnerships, types of events & the number of communities in which RCIS is active. The experiments and pilot projects from the past 2 years were outlined, including how these were analysed for effectiveness. Ms. Tosine then presented the work done on RCIS Governance. She outlined the measures undertaken to bring RCIS up to a higher level of governance, including finalising the Council Governance Guidelines into a comprehensive Manual, increasing the effectiveness of Council meetings & strengthening review activities in the area of policy adherence and strategic plan delivery. Ms. Tosine noted the organizational policies that had been implemented or updated, such as vetting a potential partner or sponsor to ensure value alignment with RCIS. She outlined the steps taken to ensure the financial situation was stable, including establishing an investment policy, establishing regular reviews of finances at Council meetings and making prudent financial decisions to achieve value for money. Ms. Tosine closed by noting that she was, "proud to say we are a well governed organization with a strong focused path for growth for the future."

**Treasurer's Report and Appointment of Auditors**

Treasurer, Mr. Ken Yoon outlined that RCIS is undergoing major transitions and growth, all in a low interest rate environment. It is taking some time to settle to a new staffing model, new and expanded programs, increased costs & revenue challenges. He provided a review of the managed investments and the investment portfolio performance and concluded that CGOV was managing the portfolio adequately in the current economic environment.

MOVED by John Johnston, seconded by Charles Boulakia  
THAT the Audited Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended February 29, 2016 be accepted.  
All in favour CARRIED

MOVED by John Johnston, seconded by John Percy  
THAT Tinkham and Associates, Chartered Accountants, be reappointed as our auditors for the 2016-17 fiscal year, with remuneration to be agreed upon by Council.  
All in favour CARRIED

The President thanked the Treasurer for his report.

### **Program Committee Chairman's Report**

Mr. Peter Love noted that it was a year of growth and new activities through new partnerships and building on existing ones, to enhance the reach of our programs. This included working with Toronto Public Libraries, Markham Libraries and hosting a Café Scientifique in downtown Toronto with Life Sciences Ontario and UK Science and Innovation Network. He spoke about the ambitious cross Canada Water panels with David Suzuki Foundation held at science centres, libraries and museums, and about Special Lectures, including the Foundation Lecture, the Fleming Medal public lecture and Friesen Prize Lecture. The new audience reached through these new programs represent approximately 25% of our overall attendance for 2015-16. For 2016 and beyond, the Program Committee proposes to build on existing successful partnerships and venues to continue to grow RCIS membership and audience, e.g. 'Science at Lunch', proposal for regular series in Ottawa in partnership with Carleton University.

### **Fundraising Committee Chairman's Report**

A fundamental RCIS principle in support of the vision (bring science to the public) is not to charge for science lectures and to keep membership fees low. Speakers do not receive an honorarium; but costs to maintain free lectures are increasing (e.g. venue, A/V) and competition for sponsorships (from universities and corporate) is high in this economy. RCIS has developed a multi-pronged fundraising strategy: seek corporate sponsorships of lectures (where there is a value alignment with RCIS), seek support from grants, maintain and expand RCIS membership and donations, continue with Science Gala Dinner (2015 most successful yet). We also seek to increase our profile among corporate and academic sponsors, with long-term loans of our historic artifacts, effective use of archived materials and also by creating the corporate William Logan Award for science outreach (2015 winner – Celestica)

### **Awards Committee Report**

Sandford Fleming Medal and Citation (November 2015): Dr. Molly Shoichet, University of Toronto, for outstanding communication of science to the public. William Edmund Logan Award (April 2015) to Celestica, for leading science outreach in the community. Two RCIS Scholarships, and Roy Pearson Bursary (June 2015) to youth entering university awarded to: Matthew Tulio, Rhia Bhatt and Sunaina Saadat .

### **Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Kirsten Vanstone provided details about RCIS Activities in 2015-16. Attendance dropped by 3% at live events, and increased by 35% online. There were 14 special lectures and events, a 64% increase from the year before. Online followers exceed 1000 now. Partnerships increased by 61% and locations for events increased by 67%. In addition, data was presented showing a continued decline in Toronto Sunday audiences, while special lecture attendance increased.

### **Election of Council & Officers**

Ms. Helle Tosine presented the slate of councillors and officers. She noted that the candidate for 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President had decided not to stand. She explained that the Executive would continue the search and noted that, in such a case, Executive had the power to appoint a Vice President, and that the Executive would do so and present the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President appointee at the earliest opportunity.

### **Questions and Answers:**

1. *What is the amount invested with CGOV? Is the return too low or are we in too risky a portfolio?*  
- John Johnston: *a long time horizon is what we have decided on. Our earlier 50-50 portfolio would have performed similarly to our more risky portfolio. There aren't "safe investments" that will give us a consistent 4% return.*
2. *Will we officially acknowledge the retirement of Kathy Carter?*  
- Helle Tosine: *Yes. At the Conversazione*
3. *Webcasts – they have not been reliable.*  
- Kirsten Vanstone: *The newer ones are more reliable now, but we are working to ensure that they are all more accessible in the future.*

### **Guest Speaker – Kamiel Gabriel**

Peter Love introduced the guest speaker Kamiel Gabriel and noted that Dr. Gabriel's book, *The Anatomy of Innovation* would be available for purchase after the meeting. Dr. Gabriel entertained the members with an engaging talk about innovation, a concept that is changing the way scientific research is viewed around the world.

**CONVERSAZIONE** - Following the talk Helle Tosine thanked Dr. Gabriel. She noted that at the Conversazione, we would be honouring Kathy Carter for her many years of service to RCIS. In addition, Ms. Tosine noted that it was Kathy's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday, which would be celebrated with a cake. Donations were solicited for Kathy's retirement gift.