



**Minutes of the
WFNS Annual General Meeting on Zoom
7:00 PM, June 17, 2024**

Board Members Attending: Carol Shillibeer, Kevin MacDonell, Danica Roache, Whitney Moran, Oriana Duinker (staff), Joanne Gallant, Robert de la Chevotiere, Alison DeLory, Andy Verboom (staff), Philip Moscovitch, Joe Britto, Jessica Scott Kerrin, Charlene Carr

Regrets: Tiffany Morris, Sean Bedell

1. Welcome, call to order, and territorial acknowledgement (Philip Moscovitch, President)

2. Adoption of Agenda for Annual General Meeting (***motion required to adopt***)

Whitney Moran moves to adopt the agenda. Cindy Littlefair seconds. Motion carries.

3. Approval of Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting (***motion required to approve***)

Joe Britto moves to approve the minutes. Chad Lucas seconds. Motion carries.

4. Presentation of 2023 - 2024 President's Report (Philip Moscovitch, President)

Marilyn Smulders retired. Oriana Duinker came into the role as Executive Director. Jampolis has been a real asset for the WFNS. We've been focused on fully funding (endowing) our prizes. Committees have been the backbone of our work and Philip thanks committee members. Anna Quon asks if they'll be an *in memoriam* moment at the end of the meeting. Philip thanks her for the idea and suggests we begin this practice at next year's AGM.

5. Presentation of 2023 - 2024 Annual Report (Oriana Duinker, Executive Director)

Ori thanks Marilyn. There's been a lot of growth in our programming. The residency programming at Jampolis has been the most significant addition. There were six residencies sponsored this year. We also offered two sponsored retreats. There have also been self-directed residencies. There have also been some challenges and renovation projects. The suite of book awards (Nova Scotia and Atlantic book awards) also keeps us busy. Nova Writes, Writers in the Schools and the Alistair McLeod Mentorship programs continue to roll out smoothly, and we are looking at ways to improve them, including fundraising for the Alistair McLeod Mentorship Program.

Members' Survey finding:

- Younger writers are under-represented. We are looking at ways to outreach.
- Cape Breton writers are under-represented.
- Efforts are underway but we have a ways to go to fully represent equity-deserving individuals.
- People are looking for more opportunities to get together. Silent Write, The Writing Rumble and other events do bring members together but we're looking for more opportunities and Ori invites

members to submit ideas for easy-to-plan get-together events.

Ori extends appreciation for the staff. Ori thanks the Board for their service, especially Philip and outgoing members.

a. Appreciation for directors retiring from Board of Directors

6. Presentation of 2023 - 2024 Financial Statements (Carol Shillibeer, Treasurer) ***(motion required to accept)***

Last year was a year of change, adding in all the new programming. We are doing well overall. Some key points: New programming brings in some financial uncertainty; we couldn't predict what owning Jampolis Cottage would bring. Nevertheless, we've weathered the last year extremely well. The overall balance of money we've brought in has gone up despite these things.

We're working to get all our programs sustainable so we're not dependent on funding.

Our investments are earning us approximately 7% per year.

2023 appears to be a year of higher income but that is explained by acquisition of Jampolis.

Expenses are pretty much in line with expectations. Staff costs up slightly due to well-deserved salary increases for staff.

Strategies for better cash flow management are part of what we intend to work on next year.

Our financial statements present fairly in all material aspects according to our auditors.

Member question: Are our investments ethical? Carol answers yes.

Carol moves that we approve the 2023-24 financial statements as presented. Charlene Carr seconds. Motion carries.

7. Appointment of independent auditor for 2024 - 2025 fiscal year (Carol Shillibeer, Treasurer) ***(motion required to appoint)***

Carol thanks Michael Sutherland and moves that he be approved as our chartered accountant for the 2024-25 financial year. Jessica Scott Kerrin seconds. Motion carries.

8. Election of candidates to Board of Directors for 2024 - 2025 governance year (Philip Moscovitch)
- a. Summary of written candidacy statements is offered in the AGM package.
 - b. Call for nominations (oral candidacy statements) from the floor. Philip calls three times. There are no nominations from the floor.
 - c. 10-minute recess for voting by digital ballot is not needed as there are eight candidates and eight vacancies. They are acclaimed.

9. Special Business

a. Presentation of Budget for 2024 - 2025 Fiscal Year (Carol Shillibeer, Treasurer)

To cover unknowns, we have put in a guard (an accessible bond). To keep up with increased programming, we have budgeted for another part-time position. We are still settling into an

expanded role in Canada's artistic world. We think this fiscal year will be as rewarding as the last.

Ori adds the good news that while some funding is down, monies we are receiving from Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage (N.S. Govt) went up.

- b. Special resolution to amend the By-Laws of the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia (Andy Verboom, Strategy & Policies Committee) ***(motion required; three-fourths majority required to pass a special resolution)***

Bylaws are different than policies; they are rules of law. We distilled down bylaws into those things governed by N.S. laws. Questions from the floor include how many people have honorary life memberships (~12), whether the changed bylaws were vetted with legal counsel (no, it's not required and costly), and whether this AGM had more attendees than usual (yes, at 57 it's about a 50% to 100% increase over other AGMs in recent memory), if we've considered offering a hybrid AGM (yes, considered but they are complicated and it's hard to make those joining virtually feel equal; we'll continue to offer the AGM virtually).

Joe Britto moves that the membership accept the special resolution; Kevin MacDonnell seconds, motion carries. Andy Verboom abstains as he feels too invested in the motion.

10. Adjournment

Philip adjourns the meeting at 8:08pm.