



**Minutes of CSCC Annual General Meeting** **FOR APPROVAL**

**Thursday, 22 June 2022 18:15**

**Permanent Mission of Canada, Rue de l'Ariane 5, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland**

As Notice of the Annual General Meeting with Agenda was sent more than ten days in advance to all members of the CSCC, the meeting was properly convened. With 12 members of the CSCC present and 4 proxies for a total of 16 the quorum required under the CSCC By-Laws is met. The AGM is also virtually attended by a couple of Board members via MS-Teams.

CSCC President Darren Downs serves as Chairman of the Annual General Meeting and Nathalie Bergeret serves as Secretary. The Secretary General, Nathalie Bergeret, will take the minutes.

The Annual General Meeting is called to order at 18:15.

**1. A word of welcome from President Darren Downs**

President D. Downs welcomes everyone to the Permanent Mission of Canada in Geneva. The President also extends a warm welcome to Ambassador Stephen de Boer and CSCC's corporate members in attendance (ABB, Air Canada and the Canadian Embassy).

This is the 5<sup>th</sup> time that D. Downs has come to speak to all as the president and the 3<sup>rd</sup> time since the start of the pandemic. In some ways, it feels like normal but the effect of the past 2 years on how we all operate will have lingering effects for a long time. For us, we will continue to organize high quality events for you and provide you with ways to interact. We thank all of you for your continued support.

As for our activities at the Chamber, 2021 was similar to 2020. We held 8 in person events 2 events online. This was around the same as 2020. We had around 350 attendees and considering the restrictions we operated within, this was reasonable and similar to 2020. For 2022, we expect to exceed this with more of our events coming back online and the removal of all event restrictions.

As a Chamber, we are committed to helping make connections for you our members between Canada and Switzerland. Our two countries have a long list of shared values including having a robust commercial relationship. We are both prosperous, multi-lingual countries and share French as one of our official languages. We share a free trade agreement and have two-way merchandise trade of around 5 billion francs. Switzerland is in the top ten for amounts invested in Canada and many of us are dual citizens or residing in each other's country. We also have a strong educational connection with many Swiss studying in Canada and continuing to keep a connection to the country that they studied in. Now, with travel restrictions largely loosened, we see capacity increases by Air Canada with all 3 of the routes now back operating as of the summer of 2022.

At the Chamber we are happy through the pandemic to have protected our financial legacy by addressing our operating budget strains as well as ensuring we benefit from available pandemic subsidies. As a result, we were able to operate above break-even in both years. Our new Website has been running since 2018 but now requires some maintenance to fix some of the small issues it currently has. We continue to maintain information on all of our corporate members. During 2021, we also published another magazine. For 2022, we will not publish but will aim to restart in 2023 or 2024.

A couple of special acknowledgements

- Anne Guimond – Today will be Anne's last day on the board. She will be moving away and will no longer continue her activities

The past year has been one of a return to normal. As of our last Annual Meeting, only a small percentage of the Swiss population had been fully vaccinated. Canada still required test and quarantine for travellers and travel continued to be very difficult. As international borders have mostly opened, most of the impediments to travel have been lifted but the restrictions still had a significant affect on our personal lives. We can all agree that in Switzerland, lighter restrictions meant we were particularly mobile. As many of us are global minded people with a strong connection to Canada, the closure of borders and travel restrictions affected us very significantly and the inflexibility of Canada on accommodating our travel needs was harshly criticized by many of our members.

Here at the Chamber, we have always supported the international movement of people and expect that countries such as Canada will now continue to have a framework for such travel that is measured and appropriate. Now with Canada being almost fully open, we again look forward to being able to continue to expand bilateral business opportunities – which were very difficult to expand with restrictions in place a year ago.

## **2. Approval of the Minutes of the CSCC 2021 Annual General Meeting**

President D. Downs asked for approval of the 2022 Annual General Meeting Agenda (circulated on June 10) and the Minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting.

Approval of 2022 agenda: Unanimously approved.

Minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting: Unanimously approved.

## **3. Report on CSCC Activities since last Annual General Meeting**

CSCC activities presented by D. Downs

In 2021, the CSCC held 15 events (previous year: 11 events).

The attendees were split equally between the French speaking and German speaking Switzerland.

- February 23rd, 2021: Webinar with Ambassador Susan Bincoletto; 62 participants
- February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021: Online Quizz Game; 20 participants
- May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021: Webinar “Immigration to Canada” presented by a member; 10 participants
- June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021: Patek Philippe Museum visit in Geneva; 14 participants
- June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021: General Assembly; 28 participants at the Dolder Grand Hotel in Zurich
- July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021: Canada Day picnic in Geneva; 13 participants
- August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021: Golf Tournament at Neuchâtel (with Swiss Global Enterprise) ; 9 participants
- August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021: 2<sup>nd</sup> Canada Day picnic in Geneva; 26 participants
- Sep 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021: Canada Day at the Bauschänzli (dinner); 56 participants
- Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021: Wine Tasting at Lavinia Geneva; 30 participants
- Nov 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021: AICC conference at Hilton Hotel Geneva; 8 participants
- Nov 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021: Webinar “CEO-series interview” with CCCSQ; 16 participants
- Nov 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021: Holiday Dinner at the Hotel d’Angleterre in Geneva; 37 participants
- Dec 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021: Apéro Ho-Ho networking event at the Kowalski Bar in ZH; 19 participants
- Dec 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021: Zurich Airport and Air Canada airplane visit; 20 participants

We obtained sponsorship primarily for the Canada Day event from RGLD Gold AG, and EY. We also held draws for 4 Air Canada tickets which come as part of their Gold member sponsorship.

## **Membership**

In 2021, the Chamber had 20 paid Corporate Members which includes our Gold Partner, Air Canada, and our Silver Partner, RGLD AG and 81 paid individual members. This number is already increasing since the beginning of 2022 and is now nearing 100.

There was a decrease of three corporate members and an increase of 2 individuals compared to 2020. It has been difficult to lose so many corporate members over the past 3 years. We have now embarked on a membership drive and believe we have an appropriate base to move forward. We also launched new individual member incentives and ended 2021 with 14 prepayments on new memberships. We want to thank each and every member for their continued support. Your support provides us the resources to run the chamber and pay our ongoing administrative costs.

#### **4. Treasurer's Presentation of the CSCC 2021 Financial Statement.**

The Treasurer, Harold Woolnough, being absent this year, the President D. Downs presents the Financial Statement on his behalf.

Consistent with 2020, PwC Zurich has performed a limited scope review of our financial statements for 2021. PwC was paid a nominal fee for their services.

During 2021, we faced some challenges with approximately 4,000 lower membership revenues and lower net income from the booklet. We did benefit from pandemic subsidies which lowered our administrative costs. This allowed us to preserve our equity and run slightly above break-even. We are now at the point where higher memberships are critical to continue to operate at our current structure.

Sponsorship revenues, which are primarily linked to events, were lower. As always, we continue to look for event sponsors who want to promote their company and get publicity. For all events, we look to have a prime event title sponsor. The 2021 magazine was very successful and operated at a breakeven level. Thanks especially to Anna Guimond and Tudor Iatan, our former board member for their efforts as well as all those who provided content.

The Chamber continues to have a strong financial position for its size and at the end of 2020 had accumulated surplus of 52,822 CHF. This has been achieved with 46 years of dedication from the board and gives us some cushion as we rebuild from the challenges faced over the previous two years.

As for the sponsorship revenues, these are linked to events and therefore, these were lower in 2021.

#### **5. Approval of CSCC 2021 Financial Statements**

Unanimously approved.

#### **6. Vote to discharge Directors and Officers of Liability for 2021**

In accordance with Swiss laws, the members need to approve the discharge of the directors and officers of liability on annual basis. Following this, we will vote to approve the new members of the board for 2022.

Unanimously approved.

#### **7. Election of Directors**

President D. Downs announces the following concerning changes to the Board of directors.

- a. The resignation from the board of Anne Guimond has been accepted.
- b. During the previous board term, two new members joined the board. (1) Michele Joanisse. She brings valuable experience especially in the not-for-profit sector and we are very privileged to have her. We also appointed (2) Nadja Scheuer, the new commercial consul in Bern at the Embassy.
- c. One new board member has been proposed – Andrew Keleher – Head of Neuchatel Junior College (school).
- d. That the board terms for Harold Woolnough, Normand Lemire and Marc Gibbons be extended for 3 years or until otherwise terminated if earlier.
- e. That the executive committee appointments be continued for one year.
  - a. The roles of Treasurer – Harold Woolnough,
  - b. VP Zurich – Daniel Breeze
  - c. VP of Member development – Jason Rempel

- d. VP Geneva – Mehdi Sentissi
- e. Secretary – Andree Wind

The following board members are not up for renewal and will continue their appointments: Darren Downs, Andree Wind, Jason Rempel, Paul Drouin, and Mehdi Sentissi.

## 8. Election of Officers

President D. Downs asks for the approval of the above.

Unanimously approved.

## 9. Re-Appointment of PWC as Auditor for 2022

PricewaterhouseCoopers AG, Zurich, have agreed to act as independent auditor for 2022. A nominal fee will be paid for the service.

Unanimously approved.

The banking access will be Darren Downs and Harold Woolnough for the UBS accounts, each with single signature access for e-banking transactions.

## 10. Other Business

None.

## 11. Close of the Annual General Meeting

President D. Downs asks if there are any additional comments and suggestions. Hearing none, he thanks the officers and members of the Board for their work throughout the last 12 months and all participants in the room.

He adjourns the Annual General Meeting at 18:50.

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Darren Downs  
CSCC President

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Andrée Wind  
Secretary

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Paul Drouin  
Acting Secretary General