



PAC Autism Nova Scotia Society
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 29, 2022: Zoom Webinar

MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO BOARD MEMBERS – DAVE NICHOLSON, BOARD CHAIR

Dave Nicholson introduced himself as the Board Chair of PAC Autism Nova Scotia Society, commonly known as Autism Nova Scotia.

Dave called the meeting to order and announced that in accordance with the Society's By-laws, he will act as meeting chairperson and a pre-identified Autism Nova Scotia staff member shall act as secretary of this meeting and record the minutes.

He acknowledged that this event was broadcasted in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. Dave also acknowledged that people of African descent have been in Nova Scotia for over 400 years, and honoured and offered gratitude to those ancestors of African descent.

Dave asked Autism Nova Scotia Board Members to join him on screen, and welcomed virtually present Board members: Catherine Rahey, Ian Sutherland, Greg Smith, Ally Garber, Dr. Robert Strang, Janean Marshall, and Trace Avery.

Also recognized:

David Noel: Interim Board Member, Scotiabank's Senior Vice-President for the Atlantic Region.

Dave announced that David Noel has been offered a position at Scotiabank's head office in Toronto that requires him to move out of province, and therefore will be stepping down from the Board of Directors effective today.

On behalf of the entire Board, Dave congratulated David Noel on his new position, and wished him and his family all the best as they begin this new chapter.

Dave also acknowledged Joan Craig – Honorary Board Member and Founder, as well as Trustees of the Craig Foundation; Cynthia Carroll – Executive Director of Autism Nova and the staff of Autism Nova Scotia; all members of Autism Nova Scotia and the greater autism community.



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2. OVERVIEW OF EVENT

Dave provided a procedure overview for the Annual General Meeting.

3. REGISTRATION

All members were invited to register for the virtual meeting via Zoom webinar. All attendees were recorded during registration.

A link to the Agenda, 2021 Minutes, Financial Statements, and Autism Nova Scotia's 2022 Annual Report were emailed to all registered attendees.

Dave welcomed newcomers to view these items on the website, autismnovascotia.ca under 'events'.

4. VOTING

Dave announced that for motions; all attendees will have the opportunity to vote on a motion using the provided poll, which will remain open and on screen for 10 seconds. He stated that attendees are encouraged to vote, but it is not a requirement, and that a record of the votes will be kept.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Dave welcomed attendees to send in Questions or Comments to Autism Nova Scotia using the Q&A icon located at the bottom of the screen.

5. PROXIES

Dave requested all proxies be sent to him.

6. NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice of meeting was duly given on Tuesday, May 24th, 2022.

MOTION: Catherine Rahey moved to forego the reading of the Notice of Meeting, seconded by Ian Sutherland.

MOVED: Motion carried by a majority of the attendees of the Annual General Meeting by Zoom Poll.



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7. REGRETS

Dave delivered regrets from the following Board Members: Sarah Boyne, Bill Lahey, Stephanie McGrath, and Ally Garber.

QUORUM

Dave stated that quorum at a general meeting of members shall consist of those members virtually present or by proxy.

8. CHAIRPERSON'S DECLARATION

Dave stated that a quorum is present, the meeting is to be duly called and properly constituted for the transaction of business.

9. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Tracey Avery motioned to approve the Agenda, seconded by Greg Smith.

MOVED: Agenda approved by a majority of the attendees of the Annual General Meeting by Zoom poll.

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 17th, 2021

MOTION: Janean Marshall motioned to approve the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on June 17th 2021, seconded by Ian Sutherland.

Moved: Minutes approved by a majority of the attendees of the Annual General Meeting by Zoom Poll.

11. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Discussion of the Financial Statements ending March 31, 2022, were presented by Autism Nova Scotia Treasurer, Greg Smith.

MOTION: Greg Smith moved to approve the Financial Statements for the year ending March 31, 2022, seconded by Ian Sutherland.

MOVED: The Financial Statements for the year ending March 31, 2022, were approved by a majority of the attendees of the Annual General Meeting by a Zoom Poll.



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12. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

MOTION: Robert Strang moves to appoint Levy Carter Casey McLean as Auditors for 2022-2023, seconded by Tracey Avery.

MOVED: Levy Casey Carter MacLean were approved as Auditors for 2022-2023 by a majority of the attendees of the Annual General Meeting by a Zoom poll.

13. ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

Dave reminded attendees that David Noel is stepping down as a Director, and the spot will remain vacant until an appropriate representative is identified.

MOTION: Mariann Peters moved to approve the election of the board of Directors identified in the Annual Report with the above noted exception, seconded by Alissa Lysack.

MOVED: The Board of Directors identified in the Annual Report with the above noted exception were approved by a majority of the attendees of the Annual General Meeting by a Zoom poll.

14. BOARD REPORT

Dave provided the Board Report for the 2021-2022 Year, which was provided in full in the Annual Report:

What does it mean to have a place to belong?

If you pose this question to a group of individuals, chances are you'll receive a variety of unique answers.

For some people, having a place to belong is a tangible location: it is a physical home or structure where they feel safe and able to truly be themselves.

For others, it is a feeling of being understood, accepted, and included within their community.

And still for others, having a place to belong means having a sense of purpose, where they feel they are involved in their community and a valued part of something larger than themselves.

No matter how someone defines a place to belong – a structure, a feeling, a purpose, or something else entirely—Autism Nova Scotia is committed to fostering belonging and promoting acceptance in the community where we all live, work, learn, and play.



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With more than 30,000 Autistic individuals and their families living in Nova Scotia, there has never been a better time to advocate for belonging and ensure everyone can live full lives according to their own dreams and aspirations.

Fortunately, this year has seen some truly incredible strides towards inclusion in the province.

In fulfillment of our promise to support Autistic individuals both across the province and the lifespan, Autism Nova Scotia was very pleased to expand our suite of services this year in a variety of areas as well as offer many virtual or hybrid resource options.

With the support of the provincial government, QuickStart Nova Scotia – our parent-mediated coaching program for toddlers on the spectrum– will be expanding across the province.

Since the launch of QuickStart Nova Scotia in 2018, 195 children in the Halifax Regional Municipality have been enrolled to astounding success.

With the new expansion, QuickStart will now support more than 100 children in the coming year alone.

Another critical area of support we are expanding into is mental health. Earlier this year, Autism Nova Scotia opened Pinwheel Wellness Centre to support Autistic adults with mild-to-moderate mental health needs.

Not only will these necessary services address the immediate mental health requirements of the autism community, but our hope is that over time they will lead to more accessible community health.

In our employment division, we have experienced some incredible growth, particularly in the Ready, Willing and Able (RWA) program, a highly successful employment initiative for individuals on the autism spectrum or with an intellectual disability, of which Autism Nova Scotia is a local delivery partner in Halifax.

Nationally, RWA has facilitated over 2,900 employment outcomes within the disability community to date. Thanks to a recent federal investment into the program, Autism Nova Scotia is expanding our RWA delivery to include the rural region of Sydney, Cape Breton.

Finally, we are extremely pleased to announce that in 2022, Autism Nova Scotia is becoming an Independent Living Support (ILS) provider. As an ILS provider, Autism Nova Scotia will promote independence, self-reliance, security, and social inclusion and help individuals achieve their personal goals.

The addition of the ILS service means that Autism Nova Scotia is now providing programming for preschool-aged children all the way to independent adulthood.

While we continue to move toward inclusion across the province, there remains much work to be done to ensure individuals and families don't fall through the cracks.



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With the federal government’s prioritization of a National Autism Strategy—and the anticipated development and rollout of that strategy over the next 12-18 months—Autism Nova Scotia’s advocacy efforts are focused on the need for a Provincial Autism Strategy as identified in the Student’s First Report.

It is our sincere hope that the provincial government will prioritize this strategy and continue to collaborate with Autism Nova Scotia to ensure it is action-based, sustainable, and meets the needs and wants of the autism community.

Autism Nova Scotia couldn’t do all that we do without the incredible support of our autism community, donors, volunteers, staff, businesses and corporations, foundations, and various levels of government who believe in our mission and work tirelessly to improve the lives of Autistic individuals and their families.

Together, we are propelling Nova Scotia to be a leader in inclusion and helping improve the lives of Autistic individuals for generations to come.

From my family to yours, thank you for your continued commitment to the autism community and for helping to create a place to belong for us all.

Thank-you.

Dave invited Cynthia Carroll, Executive Director of Autism Nova Scotia, to present her report.

Cynthia thanked everyone for joining Autism Nova Scotia’s 2022 Annual General Meeting from across the province.

Cynthia shared that 2022 marked Autism Nova Scotia’s 20-year anniversary as an established organization. Since 2002, staff and volunteers across the province have worked tirelessly to provide programs and services to Autistic individuals and their families in their communities. She highlighted some of the program growth the organization has experienced this past year and encouraged all attendees to read the 2022 Annual Report for a full review.

Cynthia ended by stating that she is aware that while more work needs to be done, particularly regarding the need for a Provincial Autism Strategy, the future for Autistic individuals and their families in the province is looking stronger and brighter by the day.

Cynthia thanked attendees and passed the virtual mic back to Dave.

15. TERMINATION

Dave thanked Cynthia and invited all Board Members to join him on the screen.



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MOTION: Robert Strang moved that the 2022 Annual General Meeting now be adjourned, seconded by Catherine Rahey.

MOVED: The adjournment of the 2022 Annual General Meeting was approved by the majority of the attendees of the Annual General Meeting by a Zoom poll.

16. MEETING CLOSED

Dave thanked Board Members for joining him on screen and introduced the presentation portion of the Annual General Meeting.

17. PRESENTATIONS

The first special presentation of the evening exhibited the talents of Autism Nova Scotia's Video Project members. Despite the challenges and delays caused by COVID-19, the Video Project team persevered and created this year's production about an alien invasion, which they aptly named "Brain-Drain". A preview of "Brain-Drain" was shown to attendees.

The final presentation of the evening was a one-of-a-kind video that told the story of Autism Nova Scotia through the members of the autism community. This video was shown to attendees.

Dave extended his sincere thanks to the many Autistic individuals, family members, caregivers, board members, volunteers, staff, and community members from across the province who contributed their time and energy to create this special feature video.

Dave invited Executive Director Cynthia Carroll back on screen one last time to give the closing remarks.

18. CLOSING REMARKS – CYNTHIA CARROLL

Cynthia thanked members for joining and shared that Autism Arts was the recipient of the Canadian Museum Association's Award of Outstanding Achievement in the Audience Outreach Category, and shared that the *Autism Arts* book received an honourable mention for the Award of Outstanding Achievement in the Research category.

Cynthia concluded the meeting by thanking Board-Chair Dave Nicholson for hosting the AGM, Board Members, Founder and Honorary Board Member: Joan Craig, staff at all chapters, volunteers, students, donors, participants, and everyone who worked tirelessly to support individuals and families on the autism spectrum. Finally, Cynthia thanks the autism community for their various contributions to the Annual General Meeting and outstanding efforts for the past year.

15. MEETING ADJOURNMENT