



# 2021 VRA BC Annual General Meeting

Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada - British Columbia

Tuesday November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 12pm PST/3pm EST  
Zoom Teleconference

Total Members in attendance: 15

Number of Voting Members in attendance: 15

By Proxy: 0

VRA BC Council Members: Laurie Hornsby, Pamela MacDonald, Linda Zervini, Renuka Goodapati, Olena Guseva, Kelly Karr (absent)

## 1. Meeting called to order 12:03pm Pacific Standard Time

- The president, Laurie Hornsby welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the 2021 Annual General Meeting and called the meeting to order.
- Housekeeping rules were shared by Vicky VanM.
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## 2. Confirmation of the Delivery of Notice of Meeting and Quorum

- Vicky VanM confirmed with Laurie Hornsby that quorum is met.

## 3. Approval of the Recording Secretary

- Motion to accept Vicky VanM from Megram as the recording secretary.

**Motioned by:** Laurie Hornsby

**Seconded by:** Pam MacDonald

11 votes in favour of approving the recording secretary.

**Motion carried.**

## 4. Declaration Re Conflict of Interest

- None were declared.

## 5. Approval of Agenda

- The reading of the agenda will be waived.

- Motion to approve the Agenda

**Motioned by:** Laurie Hornsby

**Seconded by:** None

11 votes in favour of approving the agenda.

**Motion carried.**

## 6. Approval of the 2020 Annual General Meeting Minutes on January 5, 2021

- Motion to approve the minutes shared of the AGM held on January 5, 2021.

**Motioned by:** Laurie Hornsby

**Seconded by:** None

12 votes in favour of approving the minutes.

**Motion carried.**

## **7. President's Report (Laurie Hornsby)**

- While 2020 brought in a plethora of interferences to the field of vocational services as a result of the pandemic, 2021 saw rise of the industry to create innovative ways to overcome barriers. The virtual world took centre stage in our communications with our clients and all stakeholders as we all learned how to conduct our work via virtual platforms - and discovered it can be done! Training institutions began to deliver their programs online. Many assessments relevant to vocational services were reworked to be conducted virtually. Employers resumed recruitment and hiring plans through video interviews and remote work options. As noted at our 2020 AGM, the professionals in our industry have adapted to continue to serve our clientele to overcome barriers to finding meaningful employment.
- The VRA Canada Annual Conference was also a great success, delivered virtually with keynote and expert speakers and even a networking portal. This was a fabulous opportunity for vocational rehabilitation professionals to update knowledge, meet and greet, and obtain CEU's. We may never need to travel to attend in person conferences again!
- The BC Society is formed by a small and dedicated board of directors. We have representation on several committees at the national level and are involved and provide our guidance where we can. We participate in the membership committee and governance discussions and participate on the national board monthly meetings and attended the annual planning retreat in September. During COVID we continue to virtually meet monthly, review the financial situation and work closely with Megram who assist with our board meeting minutes, planning for the year, and keeping track of activities of our members. We have continued to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of amalgamating with the Prairies or VRA Canada but continue to operate as a separate society to represent our BC VRA members at this time. We are seeking your guidance for VRA BC and welcome if you wish to attend in an advisory capacity or join us at the board level for important discussions in the months ahead.
- Thank you for attending today's AGM and we look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

## **8. Treasurer's Report (Pamela Macdonald)**

- The 2020 Fiscal Year Financial Review was carried out by Tompkins Wozny, Chartered Professional Accountants.
- Financial situation has been reviewed and appears to be pretty good. There is a little shift but not much, it's about membership coming in and same costs going out. We haven't done any training, or any special events that are either brought us in more money or cost us anymore. With that, if anyone has any questions, feel free to ask any at this time.

### **Approval of the 2020 Financial Review.**

- Motion to approve the 2020 Financial Review.  
**Motioned by:** Pamela MacDonald

**Seconded by:** None  
13 votes in favour of approving the 2020 financial review.  
**Motion carried.**

**Appointment of the 2021 Financial Reviewers, Tompkins Wozny Chartered Accountants.**

- Motion to approve the 2021 Financial Reviewer.  
**Motioned by:** Pamela MacDonald  
**Seconded by:** None  
11 votes in favour of approving the 2021 financial reviewer.  
**Motion carried.**

**9. Recognition of Current Board of Directors for 2020 through 2021**

- Laurie Hornsby thanked all those who are on the current Board of Directors of the VRA BC Society:
  - i. Laurie Hornsby, President (term served)
  - ii. Linda Zervini, Vice President
  - iii. Pamela Macdonald, Treasurer (term served)
  - iv. Renuka Goodapati, Secretary (term served)
  - v. Kelly Karry, Director
  - vi. Olena Guseva, Director
  
- Laurie Hornsby presented the list of the Board of Directors for 2021 through 2022 of the VRA BC Society:
  - i. TBD, President
  - ii. Linda Zervini, Vice President
  - iii. Pamela Macdonald, Treasurer
  - iv. Renuka Goodapati, Secretary
  - v. Kelly Karry, Director
  - vi. Olena Guseva, Director
  - vii. Laurie Hornsby, Director.
  
- Motion to accept the Board of Directors as presented for the 2022 year.  
**Motioned:** Laurie Hornsby – wishing to be a Director at Large only  
**Seconded:** None  
13 votes in favour of accepting the Board of Directors as presented for the 2022 year.  
**Motion carried.**

**10. New Business (Laurie Hornsby)**

- Laurie Hornsby opened the floor for Call for Nominations for 2022. No nominations were called at this time.

The Annual General Meeting presentation was completed at 12:25 pm PST.

Discussions were held for the remaining of the hour booked.

Clair Benson-Mandl - It would be nice to connect with our members locally. What are other people's thoughts are on that.

Pam MacDonald –I cannot take anymore at this time between work and the volunteer role with the BC board. One of the conversations we need to have is, do we remain separate from National or do we become a committee under National and have some energy to have conversations as discussed? What are members looking for the year to come from the BC Society? (These are her comments, they do not represent the Board.)

Q: John Kim – How many currently BC members do we have registered?

A: Vicky VanM. – Confirmed we have 230 members with VRA BC.

Q: John Kim – As a follow up question, to the current conversation, has no idea what other societies have going on in terms of numbers and activities. In order to look at the various options that were discussed in this AGM, do we perhaps merge with the Prairie provinces.

Does anyone have any information on numbers of members in the Prairie provinces, etc?

A: Pam MacDonald confirms that Prairies are struggling like VRA BC is with not enough members involved to run it, who is it serving to have societies all over the place? These are conversations we need to have. Numbers? They are shared at the National board meetings. The Prairies are currently an advisory board, they looking to join with BC to represent western Canada. Or will BC maintain a role under National as an advisory board? What is the benefit/need to keep the current structure? We want to hear from our BC members, some must have an opinion as to what we do.

Patricia MacIntosh – VRA BC used to be a resourceful and active organization. What's changed is that people are busy, high case loads, leaving people overwhelmed, Covid has added additional challenges. Is recommending having a paid administrator to coordinate activities of the association. Laurie Hornsby responded that this is something to consider. Not sure if we want to be putting out funding to pay someone else when members can do this voluntarily. Patricia answered that the problem is people are saying they don't have time, and the alternative is to let the society dissolve, that is a significant outcome of people not being able to provide those services as a volunteer. Other organizations have recognized that and have stepped up with those supports so that those services, that the organization is mandated to provide, can still be offered in a consistent way. With a paid administrator, they can coordinate things that are of interest to the membership. Maybe a survey can go out, see what people are interested in learning about, what sort of collaborations or relationships that they are interested in building with the community. For example, we have a real opportunity around diversity, equity and inclusion, to build relationships with certain communities such as the indigenous first nations, we can go down that list and ask each other what we are doing to build those relationships and to stand up as an advocate for people with disabilities?

Sharon Smith – Was responding to the question John had earlier regarding numbers, for Ontario Society would have the greatest number of members, BC has the 2<sup>nd</sup> most members, CAVEWAS, then between the amalgamated Prairies and the Atlantic. John confirms that it appears to be that way for quite some time, Sharon confirms it's been consistent for the past

30 years. John finds it odd with 230ish members for BC that there is this much difficulty for members to attend the AGM with only 15 present. Vicky Van M confirmed according to the bylaws to hold the AGM, we need 15 members present, 19 was registered, 15 were in attendance at the beginning of the AGM.

Audrey Pons – Agrees in having a paid admin, our 230 members need to be aware that we are in jeopardy of losing the society. Audrey doesn't want to lose our the Chapter. Like many present, Audrey is overwhelmed with workload right now, got 2 jobs going, and lots of different things on the go, just don't have additional time to volunteer. It's time for new people, younger people to take up the challenge. We need to find a more lucrative way to attract people to get involved and to refresh our group and keep it going strong. Laurie Hornsby responded that this is certainly part of our discussions going forward for the next monthly meetings and further discussions with National and deciding what direction to go and how to engage the membership in order to provide their opinion and input and to the direction that they would like to see our society go. Patricia MacIntosh is asking if we are committing to a survey of the membership. Laurie Hornsby confirms that she doesn't know yet, like Pam said confirms that we are starting these ongoing discussions to determine next steps. Survey is a great idea in the hat, any other ideas we welcome them all. Patricia asked if it is up to VRA Canada to decide what happens to the BC society. Pam and Laurie both confirmed it's BC's decision. Vicky VanM confirms that the vote would have to be passed at the AGM. Pam is asking for members to take a little time to be part of an advisory and share input over the next little while to help with these discussions to know where to go from here. Patricia shares her concern that structurally we can't change the fact that CVRP exists, a lot of people are becoming CVRP members and not seeing the relevance of VRA membership anymore. So how does a decision that was made a long time ago and we are seeing the implications of it. CVRP is also looking for board members, they are having a hard time filling in their roles. Is there some larger conversation on how that is all playing out cause we all want to survive and thrive into the future?

Sharon Smith – Wanted to say that for CVRP they are not having those types of conversations about struggles getting board members, but what the issue is that we need to remember the difference between and association working as a regulatory college and an association. Important for people to not convolute the association and the college. The college is the police, they are not our friends, they are there to protect the public, they are not for us. The association is there for us and the members, and we really need to focus on what we can be doing to serve our members. Members need to see that it's important to be a member of an association, it feeds us as individual practitioners and it feeds us to be better practitioners. The college is not there to feed us, they are here to protect the public. Patricia expressed discomfort in the tone used to express this, must have own reasons for taking the position that Sharon has. The CCRC <https://cercertification.com/> in the United States, they are not taking that position at all. They are credentialing as well as association that does provide oversight and that works very well for them. Sharon confirms that CCRC did set up that way, that is not how the college is setup.

The association is a vital entity, it's really important to have the association.

Patricia MacIntosh recommended that we pull a survey with those present about some of the things we might be interested in learning more about, to enhance our profession, and increase our knowledge of our clients, and the diversity that exists in our community.

- Sharon: as a member of colour, it would be important to learn other areas of diversity and inclusion, culturally diversity and the LGBTQ2+ community
- Patricia: <https://vrassociationuk.com/> VRA UK did some excellent training in delivering services in a virtual environment
- Patricia: Anyone worried about burnout? Managing stress? Dealing with multiple demands?

Karen Reid was thanking the Board for all what is done, the weight carried. From what was shared, it has been challenging to encourage engagement, thanking each Board member for their support.

Claire Benson-Mandl – So much great training and online learning modules, National does a really great stuff. As a former board member locally, what differentiates the BC Society from National? Local knowledge, local connections, local referrals and local presence. When searching for a referral to someone for a client, National cannot help. It's not reasonable to think that someone in Ottawa or Toronto to know the waitlists, who's doing good work locally. Would like to see that the BC Society to develop and foster these local relationships and knowledge. Patricia shared the [VRA UK](https://vrassociationuk.com/) website, can search for a local provider, a vocational rehab services, there's a drop-down list of all the different specialties that a person can participate in. We can learn from other jurisdictions, not only their practice and how their marketing and kind of information shared to the public, but we do also have a really broad knowledge of employment services and supports. From the perspective of employers and persons with disabilities, the resources may be difficult to find. It would be great that it could be curated to make it easier to find and to really understand that information. As VR providers, we can go to it as well and work with our clients. It's good to be able to have the resources all in one place.

Linda Zervini – trouble with mic to be heard throughout the AGM meeting.

Patricia MacIntosh – Give other associations the opportunity to come in to talk with us about the services they're providing. We are familiar with Crew Development, and BCCDA is doing great work, there is also Supported Employment, and the Case Association for Supported Employment has launched a new program called Mentorability, this is an opportunity for people with disabilities to be engaged in mentorships with employers.

Laurie Hornsby thanked everyone for sharing their thoughts in this meeting, will be brought to the next meeting for further discussion. Offered to members to share any other ideas and send them to the board.

- Motion to adjourn the 2021 VRA BC Annual General Meeting.  
**Motioned by:** Laurie Hornsby  
**Seconded by:** Pam MacDonald  
12 votes in favour of adjourning the meeting.  
**Motion carried.**

**Meeting closed at 1pm PST.**