

Organic Council of Ontario  
**Annual General Meeting 2020 - Minutes**  
March 11th, 2020 | Central YMCA | Toronto, ON

**1. Call to Order**

- Chair Rob Wallbridge (Chair)- officially called the AGM to order at 8:22am

**2. Motion to approve the Agenda**

- Jenn Pfenning (individual) motioned to approve the agenda as presented
- Norm Hansen (board member) seconded the motion
- No discussion was held
- Motion was carried unanimously

**3. Motion to approve 2019 AGM Minutes**

- Joel Aitkin (board member) motioned to approve the 2019 AGM minutes as presented
- Jill Baxter (board member) seconded the motion
- No discussion was held
- Motion was carried unanimously

**4. Election of Directors**

- The following were the 2020 nominees
  - i. Producer:
    1. Bill Redilmeier, Southbrook Organic Vineyards (standing for re-election)
    2. Justin Bell, Organic Farmer
  - ii. Value Chain (certified):
    1. Krysten Cooper, Yorkshire Valley Farms (standing for re-election)
    2. Ben Cullen, Cullen Foods
  - iii. Supporter:
    1. David Cohlmeier, David Cohlmeier Consulting (standing for re-election)
    2. Ruth Knight, PAg Organic Consultant
  - iv. At -Large:
    1. Rob Wallbridge, Greenbridge Agriculture (standing for re-election)
    2. Joel Aitken, Ecocert (standing for re-election)
    3. Simon Jacques, Ecocert (standing for re-election)
- **Producer (certified)**
  - No nominations from the floor were presented
  - **Bill Redilmeier & Justin Bell** were appointed as the Producer representatives
- **Value Chain (certified)**

- No nominations from the floor were presented
- **Ben Cullen** was appointed as the Value Chain (certified) representative
- **Supporter**
  - No nominations from the floor were presented
  - **Ruth Knight** was appointed as the Supporter representative
- **At-Large**
  - No nominations from the floor were presented
  - **Rob Wallbridge, Joel Aitken, Krysten Cooper, Simon Jacques and David Cohlmeier** were appointed as the At-Large representatives

## 5. Membership & Communications

- Laura shared membership and communications update
- Thanked Dora for leading this work
- Mostly steady increase in engagement, last couple of months more website traffic.
- Audiences more engaged with campaigns
- New approach to membership and member benefits in 2018 is a success so far
- Basic Members = all organic operators | Supporting = paid members who receive additional benefits | Leading members collect a “voluntary check-off” or levy on behalf of OCO. Intent is to increase these in the future
- By opening up membership, have drastically increased the number of producers who are represented by OCO
- Have changed our accounting process to show revenues collected in November - December to be deferred revenues allocated to 2019. With this view, we’ve already surpassed last year’s revenues
- Still working to slowly improve the directory but it’s tough to do that properly without dedicated funding for maintenance
- Continuing to see interest in Directory. Working to improve all of the glitches. In the last two months pageviews had increased significantly

## 6. Activities Report - Projects

- Cassandra shared the activities report
- Organic Data Strategy
  - Developed Organic Data Portal with a pilot Grain Data Report - to be published shortly
  - Cost of Production Analyses underway for 5 crops
- Organic Data #YourStandardsYourSay webinars
  - Hosted seven webinars with 4-5 panelists over 2018-19
  - Total attendees: 134
  - Offered surveys for Standards review: 156 responses
- Inputs Database Feasibility Study
  - Held focus groups with certifying bodies, producers and input manufacturers
  - Industry survey with over 380 responses

- Final report provides recommendations on the creation of a national inputs database
- Organic Business Week Tours
  - First time we've tried these kinds of tours and we learned a lot
  - 10 participants on the walking tour in Roncesvalles, and visited five businesses
  - Roughly 40 participants on the wine tour in Niagara region (especially successful)
- #LoveOntarioOrganic contest
  - To celebrate #OrganicWeek, we partnered with local organic retailers and farmers' markets on a special giveaway
- Looking forward to 2020
  - Regenerative Organic | Check-Off Development | Inputs II Solution | BRM Programs | Knowledge Hub | Improve Directory | Organic Tours | Partnerships Collection Program
- Addressed the importance of stable funding, which Becca will address later in the morning

## 7. Treasurer's Report

- Presented by Treasurer Joel Aitken
  - Membership Revenues for 2019 exceeded goal, projected to increase in 2020 - Leading Membership very important but not growing at rate we would like to see
  - Sponsorships did well in 2019, and have increased the target for 2020
  - Good year for partnership/matching funds and grant funding
  - Expenses - Biggest change on administrative budget, significantly increased this year (due to increase in staff)
  - Targeted for \$12,000 spend in 2019 for Check-off proposal, has been bumped to 2020
  - Audited financials for 2019
    - Accounts receivable - grants that will be coming in, or invoices for membership that have not yet been paid
    - Deferred Revenue - grant funding that we've received that we have not yet completed deliverables (to be completed in 2020)
    - Revenue Sources - membership fees - discrepancy in accounting in 2018 (shows less on this report) due to shift in accounting of memberships in 2018
- Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report
  - Norm Hansen (board member) motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report
  - Ruvena Buslovich (board member) seconded the motion
  - Motion was passed unanimously
- Motion to re-appoint the auditor, Bruce Hawkins, for the 2020 fiscal year
  - Bill Redilmeier (board member) motioned to re-appoint the auditor, Bruce

Hawkins, for the 2020 fiscal year

- Yassir (individual) seconded the motion
- Motion was passed unanimously

**8. Announcement of Elected Directors**

- Producer (Certified): Bill Redilmeier & Justin Bell
- Value Chain (Certified): Ben Cullen
- Supporter: Ruth Knight
- At-Large: Rob Wallbridge, Joel Aitken, Krysten Cooper, Simon Jacques and David Cohlmeier

**9. Any New Business**

- Rob Wallbridge (Chair) thanked the OCO staff for their hard work and dedication

**10. Chair Rob Wallbridge adjourned AGM at 9:25am**