

ISC/SCI Executive Meeting Minutes Approved

25 May 2024, 1 p.m. EST

Participants: Jolanta Komornicka, Alex Peace, Maggie Billard, Wendy Savage, JoAnne Burek, Christine Dudgeon, Emma W. Johnson, Tanvi Mohile, Jess Herdman, Céline Parent, Ronnie Seagren

Regrets: Judith Nylvek

1. Welcome (Jolanta Komornicka and Maggie Billard) and Roll Call (recording secretary Patti Phillips)

Jola called the meeting to order at 1:04pm EST.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the modified Agenda (Jess/Wendy). Carried.

Volunteer position discussion moved up.

3. Approval of Minutes: 9 March 2024 Executive Meeting

Motion to approve the March 9 Minutes (Emma/Maggie). Carried.

4. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve Consent Agenda (Joanne/Christine). Carried

Regional Updates:

- a) Central Canada (Ontario) | Centre du Canada (Ronnie Seagren and Emma Warnken Johnson)
- b) Prairies and Northern Canada | Prairies et Nord du Canada (Jess Herdman)
- c) British Columbia | Colombie-Britannique (Judith Nylvek) (no report)
- d) Eastern Canada | Est du Canada (Wendy Savage)

Committee Reports:

- a) Archives (Alexandra Peace for Christine Jacobs) (no report)
- b) Book and Periodical Council (Ronnie Seagren) (no report)
- c) Bulletin (Vicki Gregory) (no report)
- d) Communications (Céline Parent)
- e) Conference 2024 (Maggie Billard)
- f) Surveys (Wendy Savage)
- g) Publishers' Letter (Maggie Billard for Mercedes Brian) (no report)
- h) Outreach (Jess Herdman for Siusan Moffat) (no report)
- i) International Liaison (Margaret de Boer)
- j) Membership (Tanvi Mohile)
- k) Library (Margaret de Boer for Carlisle Froese) (no report)
- l) Mentorship (Margaret de Boer for Carlisle Froese)
- m) New Indexer Resources Committee (JoAnne Burek) (no report)
- n) President's Report (Maggie Billard and Jolanta Komornicka)

With the June 22 AGM date fast approaching, today marks four weeks away. We are just shy of getting things to members at the 30-day mark. The co-president needs to send out materials by tomorrow at the latest.

One of the things happening at the AGM is by-laws coming before members to be confirmed. Members who are wanting to see changes to by-laws can volunteer, but this is not our purpose right now. If members don't confirm, we'll be subject to general non-profit by-laws in the interim.

Also, executive committee members need to send their list of Thank Yous so handwritten notes can be sent.

- Is there anything needed before Jola sends these materials to the membership (on website; minutes; incorporation; proxy form; rsvp)?

- Can Jola do this tonight?
 - Where are the items?
 - The materials are under Executive items for review, and in two more folders: in AGM folder 2024 “for exec review” and “For Review folders.”
- NB. We have institutional members who don’t have email addresses.
 - Some get printed material, though institutional members don’t usually get all the documents. What about the Hansards for example?
 - They have email addresses.

Two things are being adjusted (Annual report; financial report).

Action: Jola will email materials to Christine and Tanvi.

Action: Christine will email Tanvi, who will then email things to members asap, putting them on the website 1st.

- o) Treasurer’s Report (JoAnne Burek)
- p) Web Administration (Christine Dudgeon) (no report)
- q) Webinars (Jolanta Komornicka for Matthew MacLellan) (no report)
- r) Co-Rep Voting (Jolanta Komornicka)

An FYI only. By-laws don’t stipulate which members can vote, meaning that Emma and Ronnie have full voting powers in these by-laws. We don’t need to bring it before members at the AGM and thereby confuse members.

So their (co-reps) right to vote is confirmed.

5. Items for Discussion

- a) ICRIS China Conference (Alexandra Peace)

Alex has been invited to the conference and brought forward a funding question.

Alex is attending the ASI conference next week. The previous policy brought forward by JoAnne and Stephen stipulated that the international liaison (or whomever is nominated as replacement) may apply for two conferences per year (to cover accommodation/airfare), for an average of \$1800, recognizing some years may cost more. This year, Alex is requesting more to go to the China conference.

She's has already spent \$761 for ASI, so in theory is eligible for \$1000. It costs \$3000 to get to China.

The Society's funds are meant to cover accommodation/registration, though she'll have to buy a gift (Christine Jacobs brought a gift in past).

- Will the executive consider funding half of the airfare?

They offered to give money to ICRIS reps to go to the conference (\$900) She hopes to use that for a seat upgrade.

Alex said she would like to keep that amount separate. She's still asking for 1/2 for airfare--for larger seat, given chronic condition..

Discussion:

Another executive member said the subsidy doesn't specify anything, which she interpreted it as half of the liaison's expenses and supports it.

- What about covering her entire fare?
 - That's not in our policy and Alex isn't asking for it.
 - It sets a precedent and we don't want to tie our hands. Though we have the money now, not sure about later; so covering 100% doesn't make sense.
- The policy was developed in 2020; so how often do we revisit this policy?

Alex noted this was the 3rd part of her question. Stephen and JoAnne are going to do so (revisit), but it doesn't have to happen this time. The funds would have to come out of Special funds anyway.

A decision was made to have a vote on this as ICRIS item, which could be changed later. Alex left the meeting temporarily for discussion and was recused from the vote.

- Any other questions? None!

Motion to pay half of the true/full cost of the flight for the ICRIS rep to attend conference in China (Maggie/Emma). Carried unanimously.

Motion That Alex be authorized to spend up to \$50 for gift (JoAnne/Jola). Carried.

b) Volunteer Coordinator (Jess Herdman)

The idea for a Volunteer Coordinator position came up in the National chat (see report).

Webinars were a related good idea--have to find the right match.

Idea being proposed is that the volunteer coordinator take on the role of connecting with new members and getting people into matching/volunteer roles, based on need and interest of potential volunteers.

Discussion:

Historically, presidents have done this outreach and matching. Perhaps, under a new plan, the membership secretary would send out an email that a new person has joined and then the volunteer coordinator could contact them.

The past president suggested this was a good idea, though we may want to wait and not contact people immediately upon joining.

Regional reps as well have taken this on, but on an ad hoc basis, so a more formal position is a good idea.

- Would the person also have a position on the board--a director position? We could also reach out to membership to ask them for ideas?

Jola has put this on the AGM as an agenda item. The challenge is having someone who knows what the volunteer openings are, typically communicated/known by regional reps. She doesn't think it has to be a new director. What about someone already on the board?

- Isn't Jola already sending out news items, monthly--is that a natural flow? Could it be done by adding "if you're interested . . . this is what we have going" or regional reps could maybe do it as added layer?
- In practical terms: are we really talking about a volunteer recruiter vs liaison with the board?
 - Jess said, the details hadn't been fleshed out at the National chat. It involves work for someone to do this -- to come to board meetings, etc. -- and more liaison work if they weren't on the board, since they'd have to find information from people serving on the executive.
- Another member agreed. A volunteer coordinator would need the ear of members on executive at meetings. Lots of other organizations do this stuff. Could we investigate how?

Limiting it to regional reps may not be as effective. If we're trying to strike a committee with multiple members, finding volunteers, a single person for all membership might eliminate friction. It could be more disjointed if central or co-presidents are doing it, not to mention workload.

The past president reminded us how hard it is to find volunteers already; having spent years doing it, she acknowledged it's a difficult position and not going to be a fun job.

One member felt it should be an executive not regional thing, because of the vast area regional reps cover, varying greatly depending where you live.

- Is the concern or position being proposed about reaching out to new members and letting them know what we do?
 - Yes, it is that plus (to do webinars for example).
 - Currently, Tanvi does send a welcome letter with information about the library, regional meetings, website, etc. We could add a line or two saying "we're always looking for volunteers," not asking them to volunteer, but letting them know they can ask about it (one line).

Maybe for regular members, at the six mos, and one year mark, we could email, remind/ask for volunteers, tell them what things we're looking for?

- Being in the organization awhile first is helpful said one member. The in-person NFLD encouraged her to volunteer.

- The welcome letter from Tanvi is a place to begin, but regional reps are also supposed to send a welcome letter with information including here's when we meet, I'm your contact person, etc. There also used to be a section in every *Bulletin* with a list of volunteer roles.
- The place where it breaks down is getting people to volunteer.

The information is out there, including a link on the website "start here" (under Resources) #6 is "Volunteer" with link.

Members agreed that having the list of positions needing to be filled is helpful, but being personally approached and encouraged to volunteer is more effective and a good argument for creating a separate role, to reach out to people. This may also address potential imposter syndrome.

A number of people asked whether regional reps might reach out to new members within the first year, while people were still finding their feet but before their renewal date. Two current regional reps were less sure, based on previous experience and lack of response, even after personal emails.

The discussion returned to the fact that we'd already said we didn't think regional reps should be doing this; rather, we need one person to be that contact, a new person on the board.

- Do we need to vote about whether the position should be (1) Separate (2) Seat on the Board (3) Parameters/job description?
- It is a huge commitment; they'd have to go to all the meetings (regional, national, executive). Is it realistic or too much to ask?
- What about asking regional reps to send an email if at a meeting someone expressed interest in something? Because time zones are so varied, it could be hard to get someone to step up (to attend all).
- What would this person's role be in relation to succession committee?

The role also seems to fit well with mentorship.

Rather than it being the same person, there is always an element of delegation in other positions (*Bulletin*; *Archives*; etc.). People can direct people to appropriate roles.

Maybe we're not promoting our positions as well as we could.

JoAnne said she is willing to work with people to get ideas.

After more discussion about whether to form a committee, and/or bring the issue to the AGM, it was decided that we should put a question in the short Fall survey after the AGM.

- Do we need to do anything to enable that person; could that person attend our meetings or do we have to wait for AGM?

Jola's understanding from the by-laws is this: we can have up to 14 directors; we are not at that yet, so there is room to expand. We can appoint someone at any time as we see fit. If done outside election frame, then it has to come back before members to be confirmed.

Jola will bring this forward at later date. For example, the *Bulletin* editor is in an acting position until the 2025 election, within the constitution.

- Or is it "until next annual meeting vs election year"?

After checking, Jola found in the Constitution--#28--by-law --written "until next election," in our case 2025.

Action: Alex will meet with other executive members to come up with list of questions about volunteering for the short survey, then meet with Wendy.

Action: JoAnne and Wendy to meet in late summer before the short survey is sent out. They will bring it back to the executive for discussion at the next meeting in September before putting a question in the October short survey.

Action--Future: After the short survey has been tabulated, the board will revisit the question of a volunteer co-ordinator position (once we have more information).

c) Business Class Email Services (Christine Dudgeon)

Discussion:

As discussed, there are problems (see report).

After doing comparison research, Google workspace seems the best: it is familiar to most of us and there are features that will cancel out some of the others we have (i.e., video meetings; google drive would replace dropbox; Mailchimp we'll have to give up anyway). Priced for up to 15 email addresses, each additional one adds costs after that; so we need to be careful about adding new emails.

- Did you look at Google Workspace for non-profits?

- No.

The executive thanked Christine for her research. Members proceeded to voice concerns about putting all our eggs in one basket. Some preferred separate companies rather than a monopoly like Google: we become more dependent; if one service breaks down they aren't all affected; a monopoly can also dictate to us as it gets larger.

Christine said she understands, but right now things are all over the place. We have people accessing things differently. With Google there are pluses, such as forms and emails we already use.

- Is there an independent company? Even though it's not as efficient, it feels safer.
- Before switching, it may be a good idea to test meeting space changes first (switching from Zoom to google from Zoom for example).
 - Some other companies have lesser services, but we could use parts of Google.

Others felt strongly about not using Google Meet and Google Docs, the latter seen as problematic.

Christine outlined the cons of using different services. Members would have to learn a new interface, and we have two related problems: 1) regarding our generic addresses--not all are working--some are interpreted as spam/mail and not going through; Microsoft and Gmail are coming up with better spam filters, which is affecting us by our not receiving or sending out all our mail, and 2) if we continue to use Mail chimp, we need to upgrade our account.

One of these other services would provide better spam filters; right now, ours is poor.

- Who else is out there (independent) for email?
 - Zoho and Fastmail are two independent services.
- One member speaking in favour of Google asked what our concerns are?

Christine noted that it does make it easier for the administrator if we deal with one account.

Others were ambivalent, wanting more clarity on smaller companies and whether they offer any discounts for non-profits. We should take advantage of that status, which JoAnne did all the work for.

- JoAnne clarified that discounts are for *charitable* non-profits, which is not what we are.
- Does Zoom take up a lot of your time (as administrator)?
 - No. New people come on or others off; it takes a bit, but not a lot of time.

Someone noted that Editors Canada has multiple individuals using the same login for Zoom and, to date, Zoom doesn't have a problem with it. So we should be able to share one account as they are bigger than us.

Christine said she occasionally gets security emails from members when they are travelling, but has turned off a lot of those alerts.

Members noted that Zoom is designed for working anywhere and it has become an industry standard now. One person said they'd love to keep Dropbox and find an email solution.

Action: Alex offered to look into alternatives.

- What else does dropbox offer? It seems useful to have one place where we can share information (e.g. list of member names) between two people in different locations.
 - If we aren't synched on dropbox and have to go into Browser, it's harder to edit, as not everyone can read it.
 - Could we consider Google workspace/drive as a primary file backup; it doesn't mean you have to work in Google docs? Better compatibility than years ago.
 - We don't know anything about the new platforms (Zoho, etc.)

Many members use gmail already, so using Google workspace wouldn't be so far from what we're doing. Since people are resistant to downloading new apps, independent services are also an unknown.

- One of the co-presidents asked, since this is time sensitive, how much research do we want to do? What else do you hope to learn, Alex?

- Alex asked members what we are looking for (before she goes looking/researching).
- Someone else asked, Why do we have to learn anything?
 - JoAnne explained that we can't simply use our Thunderbird account; we have to use the app to maintain spam protection. We can't simply cc to other accounts.
 - Jola added a point about signature lines. We aren't switching these with anything we send as a society; we'd have to log in from our new email client to send messages.
- Isn't it only a problem for people sending from Big groups (TIDE, Conference, etc.)? Why can't other executive members just cc?
 - One member had a similar thing happen with her own business.
- Alex asked for a clarification: Can she no longer send from A. Peace business email and then cc ICRIS?
 - JoAnne said it may still work. It's about our being recognized as a trusted domain.

Using Editors Canada as a model, one member said she gets some mail from a regional rep and for National meetings (it's one of the 'unsubscribe type emails'); but personal emails are still being used.

[The "unsubscribe" option on the bottom of emails appeared to be the important thing here.]

Alex asked what we need to know about a new (independent) email service:

- it shouldn't affect other services (Zoom, Dropbox, etc.)
- it should have browser and desktop compatibility
- it can get through spam filters and keep up with filter updates

She will take the recommendation of the group, particularly the people who have to administer it.

The issue of using personal email address and official legitimacy was also discussed.

We'd have to stop sending from our personal address and go to the official address. We can still get email forwarded to our personal address, to know we have to deal with something, though it could be harder with older accounts.

A quick check of reviews about the two independent providers showed that they exist in the tech knowledge sphere (PC magazine, Forbes, Gizmoto) and both providers offer free trials.

- Does one of the independents have advantages? See table
- Do we go with Standard vs professional? Yes to latter.

Since the executive was not ready to vote on the issue, a decision was made to do our homework first, recognizing it as time sensitive.

Action: Alex will do research on the independent alternatives. Within a month, members will take a vote over the executive listserv.

Motion to carry this forward via email (Maggie/Jola). Carried.

6. Action Items

Reviewed List

7. New Business

a) Bulletin Editor (Jolanta Komornicka)

Maggie and I put out a call for new editor and interviewed the two candidates who came forward. After meeting with both of them over Zoom, we decided to offer the position to Alexis, pursuant to the approval of the executive.

Both have experience and are extremely qualified. The decision was made (see report) to appoint Alexis Anderson.

Motion to approve that Alexis Anderson be appointed to fill out Vicki's term as managing editor (Jola/Alex) Carried unanimously.

8. Next Meeting

September 7th, 1pm

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (Maggie/Emma). Carried.