



2023 APEX Annual General Meeting Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, October 17th, 2023 – 12:00 p.m.
(by webinar and teleconference)**

1. Call to Order and Introduction

Daryell Nowlan, Chair of the APEX Board of Directors called the meeting to order, acknowledged the indigenous territory of the Anishinaabe from which he was joining the meeting and welcomed members. He welcomed the APEX CEO, Carl Trottier to the AGM and noted some of the APEX Board of Directors members present including Vice-Chair Genevieve Binet, Secretary Martin Béliveau, Treasurer Emilio Franco and Chair of the APEX Nominating Committee, Angela Bate.

Members were invited to participate in the language of their choice. The Chair turned to the Secretary, Martin Béliveau to lead participants through the agenda for the meeting.

2. Constitution of the Meeting

Martin Béliveau noted that as per the Association By-laws, there is a requirement for notice to be provided to members twenty-one (21) to thirty-five (35) calendar days in advance of the day a meeting will be held. A notification of the meeting was sent by e-mail to all members on September 15, 2022.

3. Establishment of Quorum

Martin Béliveau noted that as required in the by-laws, the active presence of a minimum of 40 regular members had been verified on the webinar/phone lines and therefore quorum had been achieved.

He reminded the membership of bylaw 15.06 which indicates that each regular member present shall have the right to exercise one vote and she also reminded Associate Members to abstain from voting as per bylaw 5.04 which states that Associate Members have full rights and privileges of membership with the exception of voting.

4. Approval of Agenda (*Resolution AGM-23-04*)

Martin Béliveau invited questions from members (none were raised) and then proposed that the agenda for the meeting be approved. The motion was moved by Paul Gaskin and seconded by Christian Bertelsen. The motion was carried, and the agenda was approved as submitted.

5. Approval of the 2022 Annual General Meeting Minutes (*Resolution AGM-23-05*)

Martin Béliveau invited questions from members (none were raised) and proposed that the minutes of the 2022 Annual General Meeting be approved. The motion was moved by JC Azar and seconded by Don Meilleur. The motion was carried, and the minutes were approved as presented.

6. 2022-23 APEX Annual Report

APEX Chair, Daryell Nowlan, confirmed that a copy of the 2022-23 APEX Annual Report was posted on the APEX website in advance of the meeting as part of the meeting materials. He shared the following highlights from the Report.

Membership:

- Since the last AGM we now have an APEX Executive in charge of Membership. This has meant that we have been better able to focus on what APEX members need and are interested in. As of August 1, 2023, APEX membership has grown to 3103 Members.
- During this year, the focus has been on New Executives and demonstrating APEX value to them. The 2022 cohort (those that became Executives between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022) was 794 individuals. This cohort, which had its induction ceremony in November 2022, was the largest cohort recorded for a single year.
- The perspective of these new Executives was collected in a survey conducted for APEX by Abacus Data in winter/spring 2023. This is part of APEX's ongoing efforts to make sure we're meeting the needs of our members both current and future.

- Adding to the value of our membership, in April 2023 APEX added a member benefits program, including APEX rates with GoodLife Fitness and TD insurance.
- **APEX Advisory Services** continues its highly valued service to executives by providing confidential guidance and advice on workplace issues.
- This year, 550 public service executives accessed our services. Over the past year we held over 1,700 sessions with new and recurring clients.
- We have seen an increase of executives reach out to APEX Advisory Services for Executives (ASE) for practical advice on career progression, performance and conflict management, and effective strategies to deal with harassment and toxic behaviours in the workplace, at all levels of the organization.
- This past year the team worked diligently to reach as many executives and organizations as possible to share the findings from the **Executive Work and Health Study** as well as to engage in a conversation about the impacts and implications.
- Executives told us that they are tired. It's been a tough couple of years. But one thing remains high and that is the pride in our work, at 88% satisfaction. The Chair congratulated the members for continued commitment and dedication.
- He also mentioned that as we examine the study and engage with members this year, we learned, not surprisingly, that organizational culture has the greatest impact on individual and organizational wellbeing.
- We engaged with executives and organizations to review the findings and calls to action. The focus was very much on ensuring executives have the facts and a better understanding of how those findings are shaped by leadership behaviour, work design and organizational structure.
- Our message to individual executives is clear. You are not alone. APEX is here to provide support and to bring your voice of concern to the attention of decision makers.
- Our messages to decision-makers and central agencies remains focused on the facts, and pointing out where current systems and structures might be out of step with current needs.
- To that end, APEX has been vigilantly using the findings to drive advocacy for positive change with decision-makers, the development of tools for individuals and we established a Deputy's Circle and engaged with the Public Service

Management Advisory Committee (PSMAC) to continue the exploration of best practices as well as system and process options for positive change at the highest levels.

Professional Development

- APEX has responded to the need to create more opportunities for learning and dialogue on the current issues facing executives, those both new to the role and experienced executives. APEX focused on delivering valuable insights and tools from experienced leaders and knowledge experts related to the priorities and challenges and more than doubled its participation in the speaker and signature events with impressive event evaluations.
- Over the last year, APEX has provided new partnerships with corporate organizations and academic institutions to maximize its support to the executive community and public service and increase the number and type of learning interventions available. The professional development opportunities will continue to address executive priorities on many topics including global perspectives, the hybrid workplace, mental health, compensation, leadership, and inclusion. Please continue to visit the APEX website for ongoing events and to view resources and videos from past events.

2022 Induction:

- We've returned to delivering an in-person event with a virtual participation option. This is always a highlight of our year and was deemed a huge success.

2023 Summit:

- The 2023 summit was delivered in person with a virtual option. With 1160 participants it was the most attended APEX Leadership Summit. We had the pleasure of saying goodbye to our outgoing Clerk and welcoming our new, current Clerk.

Engagement

- Outreach has always been a key element of the work of APEX, it is embedded in all of our initiatives, and conducted across the Centers of Expertise and the corporate services of APEX.
- In October of 2022, APEX engaged an APEX Executive (AE) to improve coordination and consistency in our engagement efforts. In addition to helping to coordinate and track engagement activities, specific attention was paid to:

- 1) Growing and stabilizing the APEX Organizational Ambassador Network

- 2) Regional tours (APEX presence in regions to learn more about needs of regional EXs.) and share APEX tools and information - Fall 2022 – Prairie (Edmonton); North – Yellowknife; Spring 2023 – Ontario (GTA) and Atlantic (Moncton).
 - 3) The third major area of focus was on other EX Networks, in the EDI domain. APEX has partnered with Indigenous, Black and Pride 2SLGBTQ EX networks.
 - 4) APEX also continues to work with other networks, including the National Managers Community and extensive engagement with individual organizations, on health and wellness.
- APEX continued to successfully advocate the interests of the executive community, successfully influencing government decisions on executive salary increases until April 30, 2024. The Chair mentioned that the CEO would speak more about this in his presentation, but he thanked the CEO and APEX team for their tremendous efforts in this area.

Marketing and Communications.

- Over the period 2022-2023, we completed an Integrated Marketing Plan to help drive the APEX business.
- We know that an enhanced marketing focus will strengthen the APEX brand and ‘up our game’ in all aspects of the business, and with our positioning with executives, partners, and funders.
- This fulfilled our commitment to a framework that consists of three plans: a Strategic Plan, a Research Plan and now, a Marketing Plan. This work positions APEX well as we are more than halfway through our current 5-year Strategic Plan.
- APEX rebranded with a new sleek and modern APEX logo, while of course maintaining our brand name APEX.
- This work was followed by launching an integrated new APEX Website with registration capabilities. Members are now able to register and update their membership information on-line; executives can also easily register for APEX programming events on-line as well!
- APEX’s social media, our newsletter and our website are all being improved and seeing increased traffic and engagement.

- Members, it has been another incredible year at APEX. On behalf of my fellow Board Members and the APEX CEO and staff, I would like to thank all of you for your continued involvement and support in regions and here in the NCR.
- The Chair thanked the APEX CEO and the APEX team for their tremendous efforts in this area and turned things over to the APEX CEO to highlight some of our exciting accomplishments so far, this fiscal year.

The Chair invited the APEX CEO to highlight some of the Association's significant accomplishments in the current fiscal year.

APEX CEO 2023-24 Key Accomplishments

The APEX CEO, Carl Trottier indicated that much had been accomplished since April 1st as follows:

Executive Compensation

- This fiscal year, APEX reiterated to Treasury Board officials the need for a different approach to determine economic increases for executives, and, in the meantime, recommended not waiting until the end of the bargaining cycle to announce increases for executives. We were thrilled when economic increases for 2022 to 2024 were announced in July.
- We have seen an increase in the number and complexity of requests for information and assistance on terms and conditions of employment. In our first six months this fiscal, we have received almost as many requests as for the entire previous year. Many of them were about compensation and leave provisions.
- We continue to work with OCHRO and have provided input and feedback on initiatives such as the Leadership Profile, the Organizational Wellness Leadership and a needs analysis for executives with lived experience of disability. And through our ambassadors' network, our newsletters, and social media, we have promoted opportunities for executives to provide feedback and take part in OCHRO consultation sessions.

With regards to executive mental health and well-being...

- Following on the release of the Executive Work and Health Study, we held 73 engagement sessions to discuss the implications of the findings and calls to action. We engaged over 3,000 executives including in-person sessions outside of the National Capital region (NCR) in Yellowknife, Edmonton, Moncton, Montreal, and Toronto.
- We maintained a series of sessions with a Deputies' Circle along with a researchers' roundtable with Statistics Canada, academics and experts in the

field of workplace health to maintain the momentum for positive change. The findings and sessions helped to shape guidance for hybrid workplaces and professional development events.

- In addition to ensuring access to the findings through sessions, posting on our website we tailored tools for executives to take action such as:
 - 3 best practice guides and toolkits
 - 6 professional development sessions on health and wellbeing
 - 3 secondary research and think pieces related to health and wellbeing.

We are also making progress on the APEX research front.

- APEX produced a document outlining seven critical gaps in Federal total compensation, which serves as a benchmark for further research and advocacy on these issues. Our work with OCHRO continues, including advocating a different approach to determining total compensation for senior executives. In February, APEX sent the President of the Treasury Board its proposal for the terms of reference of a possible external committee on executive compensation.
- APEX has completed the analysis of its ambiguity management research, the results of which will be released in October 2023.
- APEX also advocated faster implementation of economic increases, which contributed to the automation of certain elements, and regularly published implementation updates.
- Beginning this fall, APEX will be publishing some interesting leadership research to help inform the executive community of the latest trends, issues, and best practices in areas including talent management, managing ambiguity, and executive readiness to adopt the future of work.

Our mentoring efforts continue

- Our Mentoring Circles pilot project with the Canada School of Public Service continued, proving to be a huge success. Over the winter and spring, close to 200 seasoned and new senior executives came together to passionately discuss their experiences and learn from each other about the realities of working as a senior executive in the federal public service.
- We are finalizing a coaching pilot project, carried out in partnership with the Black Executives Network and the Canada School of Public Service, enabling 24 senior executives to participate in individual and small group coaching sessions.

- And finally, we concluded the second phase of the listening sessions. Six seasoned APEX members volunteered to facilitate these sessions, making inclusion part of the integration experience for some 20 new senior executives at DND and EDSC.

Marketing and Communications.

- The CEO indicated he is pleased to share with members that our year-over-year efforts to raise the bar on marketing at APEX has been steadily improving.
- We have taken steps to further systemize and embed the function into the APEX business.
- We leveraged best practices to develop unique value statements to improve our messaging to executives and sought to improve our understanding of what our executives value. A favourite tagline from this work is *“At APEX, We Influence & Go Beyond Service – We Care!*
- Lastly, APEX initiated a comprehensive and foundational marketing research, to be completed by the executive community every 2-3 years. We look forward to the tremendous impact of this work, increasing the power of our brand; expanding our community engagement and executive care; and our continued influence of public service decisions. An exciting year ahead!

And last but not least, another successful Summit event took place from May 17th to 19th.

- This year, APEX hosted its annual APEX Leadership Summit at the Shaw Centre in Ottawa. The hybrid 2023 Summit was well designed and delivered in collaboration with an APEX extended team.
- The theme of the 2-day hybrid event, “Serve with Purpose, Lead with Clarity, Drive Positive Change”, invited participants to be committed to the mission of service, navigate their leadership journey with a clear vision, and leave their mark during a time of extraordinary change.
- Attendance reached 1,160 executives, including over 800 in person and nearly 300 online, demonstrating our trend of solid public service executive community interest and support. Summaries were written and distributed to the participants afterward to reinforce key learnings and takeaways. The virtual / hybrid approach led to solid participation from all regions in Canada and some international locations.

- In work and life, we are amid accelerated change due to the pandemic and its rippling effects. Public service executives are being challenged to meet new dynamics that include disruption in the workplace: shifts in productivity, collaboration, meaningful connections, learning, and well-being.
- Framed by our theme and building on the success and participant feedback of recent Summits, APEX brought 13 external world-class thought leaders and practitioners to inform and inspire executive leaders; and, we also successfully had strong support from our Sponsors and Exhibitors - all this contributed to a successful world-class event. We set record for revenue and sponsorships leading to a positive funding return to APEX for the efforts.
- Evaluation results indicate a high success for this Summit with 95% of respondents have rated their experience good to excellent. The thirst for executives to be together and network was very evident on-site, and the evaluations comments also indicated this fact. 70% of all on-site participants gave their experience the highest evaluation score.
- APEX is pleased to announce that the dates for the much anticipated in-person APEX Summit 2024 have been set to take place in Ottawa at the Shaw Centre on May 14th and 15th. (<https://apex.gc.ca/summit-program/>)

7. Report of the Treasurer

APEX Treasurer Emilio Franco noted that the APEX Auditor for this year is Baker Tilly and a copy of the Auditor's Report and the Financial Statements for the year ending March 31st, 2023 were posted on the APEX website as part of the AGM meeting materials. He then provided a few financial highlights related to the 2022-23 fiscal year.

These included:

- That APEX ended the year with an approximate decrease in total assets of \$280,000 over last year, and a deficiency in revenue over expenses of approximately \$392,000. The decrease in total assets is part of a planned expenditure from the association's reserve to support investments and increase internal capacity aligned with the association's strategic plan and priorities for the executive community. As well, the association experienced increased expenses primarily due to post-pandemic inflation, the return to in-person events and increased operating costs related to IT and cyber protection.
- The Summit event continues to be the most significant revenue generating activity for the organization, contributing \$629,000 in net revenue in 2022-23.

- The Association continues to maintain a sound overall financial position, with net assets exceeding \$2.1 million, of which \$2.0 million is in cash and investments. In recognition of this, and with the oversight and approval of the Board, the Association continues to look for strategic investment opportunities from its reserve to support priorities for the executive community.
- Based on the financial stability established over the past several years and the current overall financial position of the Association, APEX has sufficient management practices and asset reserves to navigate periods of financial uncertainty and cover the operating costs of the organization should an unexpected funding shortfall occur. Notwithstanding, the Association is proactively assessing the potential impact of inflation and any future mitigation or adjustment required.
- The Treasurer indicated that M. Benoit Giroux from the Auditing Firm, and the APEX management team were available to answer any specific questions that members may have. No questions were presented, and the Treasurer excused M. Giroux from Baker Tilly from the meeting.

The APEX Board of Directors Secretary, Martin Béliveau, outlined the “virtual” voting process for the approval of two motions, and reminded Associate Members not to vote.

The APEX Secretariat launched the polling window confirming the number of regular members present at the meeting and announced that there were 63 regular members present.

7.1 Auditor’s Report: Motion to Approve the Audited Financial Statements for the period ending March 31, 2022 *(Resolution AGM-23-7.1)*

A motion to approve the audited Financial Statements for the period of April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023 was proposed by Martin Béliveau. The motion was moved by Tabitha Stubbs and seconded by JC Azar.

The APEX Secretariat launched the polling window seeking member approval. The simple majority of votes was confirmed, and the Secretary declared that the motion was carried.

7.2 Motion to appoint the Auditors *(Resolution AGM-23-7.2)*

Martin Béliveau read the following motion:

- *Baker Tilly* was the successful audit firm based on the request for proposals conducted in 2023 by the APEX Secretariat for Audit Services for a period of 1 year (financial year 2023-24), with a one year option for the 2024-25 financial year and a one year option for the 2025-26 financial year. Based on recommendation by the APEX Audit Committee (and subsequent endorsement by the Board of Directors in September 2023) the Association is recommending that the firm *Baker Tilly* be retained for the 2023-24 financial year (with two additional one-year options for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 financial years).

The motion to retain Baker Tilly as the Association's audit services provider for the 2022-23 financial year was proposed by Martin Béliveau, moved by Robert Sheldon and seconded by Tabitha Stubbs.

The APEX Secretariat launched the polling window seeking member approval. The simple majority of votes was confirmed, and the Secretary declared that the motion was carried.

8. New Director for the North on APEX Board of Directors (*Resolution AGM-23-08*)

- Daryell Nowlan, Chair of APEX Board of Directors, explained that in order to align with government priorities for Canada's Arctic and the North and elevate the representation of the Executive workforce in this region, a dedicated Director for the North is being proposed for the APEX Board of Directors. The new Director for the North will comprise the Yukon, Northwest and Nunavut Territories.
- Voting for the new Director for the North occurred between September 22nd, 2023, and October 13th, 2023, with a total of 127 members voting and 116 voting in favour (91.3% of the total votes cast). As a result, the introduction of a new Director for the North on the APEX Board of Directors has been deemed approved by the members of APEX.
- Daryell thanked all of members who took the time to vote.

9. Election of Directors (*Resolution AGM-23-09*)

- Angela Bate, Chair of the APEX Nominating Committee, identified the members of this year's Nominating Committee including: Genevieve Binet, Martin Beliveau, Doug Zolinsky and Bojana Zizic.
- Angela outlined that three Board members whose terms were expiring in October 2023, indicated their intention to seek re-election to an additional term

through a written submission outlining their past contributions to APEX as a member of the Board. Their submissions to the Nominating Committee were received and evaluated, and the three candidates were added to the proposed slate of candidates.

- Three other Board Members completed their 2nd term and were therefore ineligible for re-election. There were two additional vacancies on the Board including the Quebec Region position (occupied on an ex officio basis for the past year) and the new Northern Director position.
- A call for applications was launched in May 2023, closing on June 16th, to fill the five vacant positions.
- The formal report of the 2023 Nominating Committee was provided as part of today's meeting materials.
- Voting for the slate occurred between September 22nd, 2023 and October 13th, 2023 with a total of 127 members voting on the proposed slate and 124 voting in favour (97.6% of the total votes cast). As a result, the slate has been deemed approved by the members of APEX.
- Angela congratulated returning members Darlène deGravina, Anthony Sheehan and Lilia Trombetti and new members Patrick Barthold, Christian Bertelsen, Karim Fala, Liane Sauer and Julie Thorpe.

Board Secretary, Martin Béliveau, also congratulated the elected Board members and thanks the Nominating Committee for its work in overseeing the process.

10. Amended APEX By-Laws (*Resolution AGM-23-10*)

Daryell Nowlan, Chair of APEX Board of Directors, explained that it is good practice to review and periodically update the Association By-Laws, and that the APEX By-Laws were last amended in 2019.

The proposed By-Laws have been amended and modernized in collaboration with legal counsel to address the new virtual/hybrid work environment, ongoing alignment with the *Canada Not for Profit Act*, and removal of obsolete references. The guiding principle of maximizing flexibility while ensuring clarity and accuracy of interpretation was also considered.

Voting for the amended By-Laws occurred between September 22nd, 2023, and October 13th, 2023 with a total of 125 members voting and 124 voting in favour (99.2% of the total votes cast). As a result, the introduction of the proposed amended APEX By-Laws has been deemed approved by the members of APEX. Daryell thanked all of members who took the time to vote.

11. Other Business and Adjournment

Martin Béliveau invited final questions and comments from participants. None were raised.

Daryell Nowlan thanked all participants for attending, giving a special thanks to the departing Board Members and APEX staff for their efforts and contributions.

The meeting was formally adjourned at approximately 12:52 p.m.

Geneviève Binet
Chair / présidente

Martin Béliveau
Secretary / secrétaire

Approved: Dec 22nd, 2023 (pending membership approval)