
**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Licensees of the
College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants**

Held at 10:00 am ET, Thursday, November 30, 2023

At Ottawa Conference and Event Centre, Ottawa, Ontario and via Zoom

1. WELCOME AND MEETING INTRODUCTION

Stan Belevici, RCIC-IRB, Chair of the Board of Directors of the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (College) acted as chair of this Annual General Meeting (AGM) of licensees of the College (Meeting).

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Victoria Rumble, Corporate Secretary, acknowledged the land on which they gathered was part of traditional territories of many nations covered by 70 treaties and other agreements. She expressed gratitude to those who cared for these territories over time.

3. INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

Victoria Rumble welcomed licensees to the AGM and introduced the panel, which included John Murray, President & CEO and Stan Belevici, RCIC-IRB, Chair of the Board of Directors. She provided information regarding the meeting, voting and question and answer period.

4. CALL TO ORDER

Stan Belevici called the Annual General Meeting of licensees to order at 10:16 am Eastern Time (ET).

Stan Belevici advised that the Meeting would be webcasted live. He noted that attendance was restricted to College licensees In Good Standing, Directors, the Auditor, and College and event staff.

5. PROOF OF NOTICE OF MEETING

Victoria Rumble advised that the prescribed notice of the Annual General Meeting had been sent to all licensees In Good Standing as of the record date of November 1, 2023. She advised that the notice package included the meeting agenda, minutes of the previous Inaugural General Meeting held on December 1st, 2022, the Information Circular with details on the business to be considered, and the College's annual report containing the

audited financial statements. She stated that a form of proxy was included in the notice package allowing licensees who could not attend the meeting to appoint a proxy holder to vote on their behalf.

6. **SCRUTINEER'S REPORT – DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

Victoria Rumble received the scrutineer's report. She noted that 10 licensees In Good Standing, represented in person or by proxy, comprised the quorum necessary to transact business. She advised that the scrutineer's report indicated that there were 324 licensees in attendance in person, 1792 licensees attending and registered to vote online, and a further 21 licensees represented by proxy. She stated that a copy of the Scrutineer's report will be kept with the Minutes of the meeting.

With quorum having been met, Stan Belevici declared the meeting duly called and properly constituted for the transaction of business.

7. **INTRODUCTION TO AUDIENCE VOTING PROCEDURE**

Victoria Rumble provided detailed information on submitting votes for the resolutions outlined in the Information Circular. She stated that eligible licensees could vote in person, online, or by proxy on the agenda, previous meeting minutes, and the termination of the meeting.

8. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Stan Belevici reviewed the agenda for the Meeting with attendees to include:

- Approval of the Minutes of the Inaugural General Meeting on December 1, 2022
- Report of the President & Chief Executive Officer
- Report of the Chair of the Board of Directors
- Introduction of the transitional Board of Directors
- Question and Answer Period
- Remarks from the MP Paul Chiang, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

On a motion duly made and seconded the following motion was carried:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Agenda for the Annual General Meeting of licensees, be and is hereby approved as presented.

RESOLUTION PASSED (1044 votes – 97.4% in favour, 7 opposed, 21 abstaining)

9. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

A draft of the previous minutes had been circulated with the notice of the Meeting.

On motion duly made and seconded the following motion was carried:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the 2022 Inaugural General Meeting of licensees of the College held on December 1, 2022, be and are hereby approved, with immediate effect.

RESOLUTION PASSED (1047 votes – 94.4% in favour, 10 opposed, 52 abstaining)

10. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

John Murray reported that during the past year, the College had made significant progress in support of its operational and strategic objectives. He stated that much of the work was outlined in the Annual Report distributed electronically with the notice of meeting. He also noted that copies of the Annual Report were provided to all in-person meeting attendees.

He advised the Board Chair would discuss, the roll out of the College's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan in June 2023, the College's roadmap to gaining and maintaining the trust and respect of the public. He reiterated that the efforts of the College to date have focused on increasing public trust by creating a stronger foundation for the profession.

To this end, the College has implemented measures to raise the bar and improve the competency levels of licensees. He noted that during the past year, the College reinforced its commitment to excellence by aligning standards, education and policies with the Essential Competencies and the Code of Professional Conduct. The Entry-to-Practice Exams were transitioned to full, competency-based assessments, ensuring that all new licensees, both RCICs and RISIAs, possess the essential skills and knowledge to deliver competent and ethical immigration advice and services.

John Murray advised that effective July 1, 2023, the RCIC-IRB class of licence was recognized by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) as a mandatory requirement for licensees who choose to represent clients before IRB tribunals. He announced that in the past year, 704 licensees obtained the RCIC-IRB class of licence, and another 242 will write the January Specialization Exam.

He reported that the College's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities had been aligned with the Essential Competencies and an accreditation program for CPD providers had been put in place, offering licensees ample options to meet annual requirements.

He advised that during the past year, the College offered more than 600 PME course sessions to assist licensees in completing their PME course requirements essential in running a successful practice and understanding the Code of Professional Conduct.

Finally, he advised that beginning in July of last year, the New-Licentee Mentoring Program was launched, with 402 mentees participated in the first cohort.

Mentoring provides practical experience for new licensees, helping them to develop good habits that meet high standards and gives new licensees the opportunity to begin building a professional community, an important support network that will last throughout a professional's career. He thanked the 65 mentors who participated in the initial cohort of the New-licensee Mentoring Program. He recognized this key leadership role that helps to shape the professional careers of new licensees and encouraged other experienced licensees to consider being a mentor. He also encouraged licensees who received their Letter Of Approval on or after July 2022 to register for the program when the next enrolment is announced in 2024.

John Murray highlighted the College's commitment to strengthening stakeholder relations, to bolstering the College's government relations, to enhancing communications with licensees, to fostering meaningful connections with the broader community at conferences and events, and to deepening partnerships with educational institutions and regulators at home and abroad. All of these activities play an integral part in the College's initiatives.

John Murray reported that in the past year, the College actively engaged with Federal and Provincial government stakeholders; met with Ministers, individual Parliamentarians and Civil Servants, and conducted regular briefings with Members of Parliament, Senators and their constituency staff to advise them of the role of the College and the high standards met by the licensees. He stated that in October 2023, the College's Inaugural Research Symposium themed: *Safeguarding the Lifecycle of Immigration* was held. The event engaged diverse stakeholder groups, including academics and regulators from Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and focused, in part, on the global issue of combating unauthorized practitioners.

John Murray reiterated that the College had accomplished a great deal this past year. He stated that the College looks forward to working in partnership with all licenses to continue to drive progress in 2024 and beyond.

He also reported on the audited financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2023, which were included in the Annual Report. These statements included a "clean" opinion from the auditors, Goodman Mintz, LLP, verifying they present fairly, in all material respects, the College's financial position, results of operations and cash flows, in accordance with the appropriate Canadian accounting standards. He explained the financial highlights noting that the comparative information from 2022 does not reflect a full year of College operations. The College statements from 2022 reflect only the 7-month period from the Date of Continuance – November 23, 2021, to June 30, 2022. He reported that the statement of operations, confirms that Licensing and Examination fees remain the principal source of the College's Revenue.

John Murray reported that licensee numbers remained strong over the fiscal year with a net increase of more than 650 RCICs and more than a dozen RISIAs. He advised the growth had a corresponding positive impact on both licensing and examination fee revenues. He reported that additional fee revenue arose from the launch of the Mentoring Program, and the extension of the Specialization Program. He reported that there was a significant increase in interest income due to the general rise in interest rates.

On the expense side, he noted that salary and benefit costs increased as the College continued to take on additional staff to support the growth in licensees and support increased public awareness activities, the Mentoring Program, an increase in Professional Conduct investigations and prosecutions, and other strategic initiatives.

John Murray indicated that Professional fees also increased as the College dealt with new obligations under federal legislation.

He indicated that the Board maintained designated reserve funds to support IT infrastructure development and expenses relating from the Council to College transition; and to augment Directors' and Officers' Liability Insurance. He reported that, on the advice of the Auditors, the Board established another reserve fund in the amount of \$1.3 million to provide for expected expenses associated with current discipline cases. He referred to the notes to indicate that the College's investment portfolio has increased and that the investments are kept in safe, short-term instruments.

He reported that \$3.8 million of short-term investments and cash has been internally restricted to support future transition expenses, ongoing IT infrastructure development, and additional liability coverage and professional conduct activities. He advised that the unrestricted remainder will be used over time to fund development of new College programs and implementation of the forthcoming College Act regulations. He concluded his report, by stating that the College remains in a sound financial position and has the assets it needs to complete the transition process, and to continue to regulate the profession in the public interest.

11. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Stan Belevici, Chair of the Board, addressed the Meeting on behalf of the Board of Directors.

He started his address by reflecting on the College's journey as the regulator of immigration and citizenship consultants, indicating that the College marked its second anniversary just over a week ago. He commented that the College had progressed since transitioning from the Council, but there was still more to be done before the transition period was over. Today, more than ever, the College has a key role to play in Canada's growth by protecting the integrity of Canada's immigration system and those members of the global public who choose to engage with it.

He advised that over the past year, the Board of Directors, working with College staff, developed the College's 2023–2025 Strategic Plan titled 'Setting the Standard for Public Protection'.

Stan Belevici reported the purpose of the Strategic Plan was to help the College chart a course for the future that upholds the statutory purpose to regulate the immigration and citizenship consulting profession in the public interest. He advised that the Board articulated a new vision:

“Every person who seeks Canadian immigration and citizenship advice has informed choice and access to a College licensee who consistently offers professional services.”

He indicated that to help the College achieve this vision over the next 3 years, the plan set out 4 strategic objectives:

- Professional Standards and Compliance,
- Unauthorized Practitioners,
- Stakeholder Communication, and
- Sustainability.

He indicated that the College also developed various initiatives and concrete measures under each objective that will focus on efforts and indicate success. Those in attendance will hear more about the advances that the College has made in the areas of professional standards and sustainability.

He reported that the College had taken steps to address the issue of unauthorized practitioners by strengthening partnerships with key agencies both domestically and internationally. He advised that the College had been working closely with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada as part of these efforts. He mentioned that Parliamentary Secretary Paul Chiang would address this work further during his address to the meeting.

He stated the College had made it a priority to enhance engagement and communication with licensees. He reported that the College had increased capacity in this area over the past year, with significant growth in both Registration and Communications and Stakeholder Relations Departments. He reported on the expanded presence on social media to provide licensees with relevant and timely updates and to raise public awareness about the role of the College and the value that licensees bring to prospective immigrants.

Stan Belevici reported on the College’s innovative approach to licensee engagement. He stated the College hosted its first-ever Ask Me Anything on Instagram during which John Murray fielded licensee questions on the new College Portal. He commented that in total, Ask Me Anything earned 1,300 unique views.

Stan Belevici reported on the upcoming launch of the new college portal, an innovative all-in-one platform to streamline various administrative functions for licensees. He stated that through this platform, licensees would be able to access courses and programs, report their continuing professional development activities, make payments and communicate with the College using a single sign on.

He stated that the College continues to have significant growth as more than 12,000 RCICs, and 400 RISIAs are now licensed by the College. He indicated that pride can be taken in the growing size, influence, and reputation of the profession, and in the work that the College does to support the country’s future growth and success.

He emphasized that while it was important to recognize the achievements, it was also important to acknowledge the challenges that lie ahead. He stated the immigration landscape evolves continuously, affected by global events and policy changes. He reiterated that the College remains committed to continuous learning and improvement

to adapt to these challenges. He thanked everyone for their support during the past year and informed them that the College is looking forward to the exciting year ahead.

12. INTRODUCTION OF TRANSITIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Stan Belevici noted the College Act provides for the College to be governed by a transitional Board of nine Directors: four College licensees and five non-licensees appointed by the Minister. These appointments were completed in May of 2022.

He reported that the licensee Directors are the Chair and Vice-Chair, and two other Directors chosen from the Council Board in office immediately before the date of continuance. The following individuals comprise the transitional Board:

- Stan Belevici, RCIC-IRB, Chair
- John Burke, RCIC, Vice Chair
- Marty Baram, RCIC
- Normand Beaudry
- Richard Dennis, RCIC
- Tim D'Souza
- Jennifer Henry
- Ben Rempel
- Jyoti Singh

13. Q&A PERIOD

Stan Belevici, the Chair of the Board of Directors, and John Murray, the President & CEO, answered over 40 questions posed by licensees. The questions covered a range of topics, and the responses were grouped into categories to address the common concerns raised by the licensees. While some questions were outside the scope of the College's mandate, such as those related to IRCC, the College made every effort to provide comprehensive answers to the questions within its purview.

14. REMARKS FROM MP PAUL CHIANG, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Paul Chiang, the parliamentary secretary, addressed the licensees. He spoke about the College's strengthened partnerships with key government agencies, including IRCC, to tackle the issue of unauthorized practitioners. He commended the College's efforts and emphasized the importance of protecting the public from unregulated services.

He discussed the College's role in supporting Canada's future growth and success noting the significant growth and the number of RCIC and RISIA's licensed by the College. He acknowledged the challenges posed by the evolving immigration landscape and the need for continuous learning and improvement to adapt to these changes.

Further, he highlighted the College's commitment to effective communication and addressing the needs of its licensees. He praised the launch of the new college portal to

simplify regulatory tasks and help licensee stays informed. He reiterated the government support for the College's work and its role in ensuring the integrity of the immigration consulting profession. He encouraged the licensees to continue their dedication to providing high quality services to clients and to work closely with the College to navigate the complexities of the immigration system.

Stan Belevici thanked Parliamentary Secretary Chiang for his thoughtful remarks.

15. CLOSING REMARKS

Stan Belevici thanked the licensees present at the Annual General Meeting both in person and those participating online. He expressed gratitude to the licensees for their attendance and active engagement during the Q&A session. He thanked the licensees for their ongoing commitment to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and ethical conduct. He stated that he looked forward to working together in the year ahead.

16. TERMINATION

There being no further business before the meeting, on motion duly made and, seconded the following motion was carried:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Annual General Meeting of licensees of the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants be and is hereby terminated.

RESOLUTION PASSED (854 votes – 92.0% in favour, 44 opposed, 30 abstaining)

Stan Belevici, RCIC-IRB
Chair

Nithiya Paheerathan
Recording Secretary