



Alberta College of Occupational Therapists

Council Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2024

Attending:

Jennifer Lee – President, Regulated Member
Arwen Caines – Vice President, Regulated Member
Carrie Hait – Councillor, Regulated Member
Joyce Vayalumkal – Councillor, Regulated Member
Kristin Ward – Councillor, Regulated Member
Heidi Knupp – Councillor, Regulated Member
Dr. Tom Smith – Councillor, Public Member
Christie Bergman – Councillor, Public Member
Dennis Fitzgerald – Councillor, Public Member

Marianne Baird – CEO and Registrar
Benny Mutoni – Recording Secretary

1. GATHERING

Council confirmed there was quorum in attendance. The three Public Members voting today are Tom, Christie and Dennis. The three Regulated Members voting today are Arwen, Heidi and Joyce.

Jennifer called the meeting to order at 5:55 p.m.

A roundtable was held to check-in with all attending.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

With no suggested changes to the agenda, Council brought forward a motion.

MOTION: To approve the February 20, 2024, ACOT Council meeting agenda as presented - Arwen (MOVED) Tom (SECONDED). CARRIED.

3. PREPARE FOR MEETING WITH THE ACTING AGAINST RACISM AND INTOLERANCE (AARI) COMMITTEE

Marianne and Jennifer provided Council with a summary of previous discussions relating to Council and AARI Committee interactions.

4. Meeting with AARI Committee

Marianne welcomed AARI guests, Faiza and Louis, and invited all attendees to introduce themselves.

Jennifer provided some background for the meeting and shared key insights based on feedback from Council and AARI relating to past interactions.

Discussion Summary:

Participants discussed the potential revision of Registrar Limitations and Governance Policies in light of AARI considerations. Concerns were raised about the Committee's workload and potential for burnout. A Committee member highlighted the positive impact of AARI's work in a recent rehabilitation project. The discussion also touched on the source of public complaints, noting racism-related issues have not been a source of complaints to date.

Acknowledging the personal nature of this work, a member emphasized the importance of creating a supportive environment for sharing personal stories, emphasizing the need for explicit statements about emotional safety and vulnerability.

Suggestions were made to enhance future meetings, including incorporating structured slides to establish a safer space, and reviewing the AARI recommendations/deliverables tracker at each meeting with Council. The importance of Council expressing appreciation and creating a safer space was discussed, with an emphasis on "being comfortable with discomfort." The possibility of different Council representatives attending AARI meetings was considered to foster authentic conversations.

Participants urged Council to view AARI's work beyond a legal framework, emphasizing the importance of passion in understanding and serving the public better. Reflections on the discussion were shared, such as the desire to move the relationship between Council and the Committee forward, and the need to listen and absorb information. The Committee members thanked Council for their input, and Council expressed its appreciation for the Committee's ongoing work.

5. Generative Thinking

2024 Council Meeting Schedule

Jennifer opened the floor for a quick discussion with a focus on optimizing Council meeting dates to accommodate everyone's schedule and adjust for better alignment with participants' availability.

The revised 2024 meeting schedule includes changes to two dates: April 20th, 2024, which will now be an in-person meeting, and May 28th, 2024, which has been shifted to a virtual format.

ACTION: Marianne to send out the revised Council meeting schedule to reflect changes.

Canadian Network of Agencies for Regulation (CNAR), Council on Licensure Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR), and Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) Conference Schedule

Council discussed three upcoming conferences Canadian Network of Agencies for Regulation, Council on Licensure, Enforcement, and Regulation, and the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists.

The CNAR Conference, scheduled for October 7-9, 2024, in Ottawa garnered the most interest from the council members. Jennifer was tasked with gauging the number of attendees to facilitate future planning. While there is still ample time, it was emphasized that having a better idea of attendance numbers would be beneficial by the next meeting.

ACTION: Marianne to add CNAR attendance to the agenda for the March 2024 Council meeting.

Role of Public Members and OT Members on Council

Marianne provided previous meeting background that led to a discussion of roles and the distinction between public members and OT members of Council.

The following key points were raised during the conversation:

- Each team member, public and regulated member, brings a different perspective and area of expertise, like a multidisciplinary team.
- Public Members have a role to play in anticipating problems and finding the best way to protect the public and keep them safe; ACOT is taking steps to prepare for any potential issues.
- One council member shared valuable insight gained through interactions with a fellow Council member from another college. The experience provided additional understanding and validation regarding the crucial role played by Public Members within the Councils.
- Marianne expressed appreciation for the diversity within the council and the global initiative to have 50% Public Members. This representation underscores the importance of the Public Members' role in maintaining a focus on the public interest, highlighting this as a key factor enabling the council to uphold self-regulation within the profession.

6. Consent Items

Review of Last Meeting's Minutes

Council examined the January 27, 2024, ACOT Council Meeting Minutes and requested three adjustments:

Page 1: Update to clearly identify voting members and illustrate quorum formation.

Page 2: Note that the document was not received by all attendees.

Page 4: Modify the second-to-last bullet to add another primary role of OTs as assessing function “based on environment”.

ACTION: Going forward, the Recording Secretary to clearly identify whether there is quorum at each Council meeting, and also identify who the voting Public Members and Regulated Member are at each meeting.

MOTION: To approve the January 27, 2024, Council meeting minutes with changes as discussed on pages 1, 2, and 4 – Heidi (MOVED) Tom (SECONDED). CARRIED

Registrar Limitation (RL) 1: Treatment of Staff and Volunteers

Marianne shared ways through which ACOT monitors the engagement and experience of staff and volunteers, including:

- Surveys about committee members’ experiences while volunteering with ACOT, with feedback that has been very positive.
- Staff engagement survey with results in 2023 consistent with the staff turnover ACOT saw – two staff members left for advancement opportunities in other sectors. This survey will be redone in 2024.
- Employee policy handbook and team charter are up to date, with the latter due for review later 2024.

RL 4: Treatment of Public and Registrants

Marianne shared some of the ways through which ACOT provides adequate information and courteous service to the public and registrants consistently with values in the strategic plan. These included:

- Offering interpreter services for those who want to know about the complaints process in any language.
- Submitting an annual report to the Minister of Health that follows submission guidelines outlined by Alberta Health.

MOTION: To approve RL1 and RL4 as presented – Dennis (MOVED) Joyce (SECONDED). CARRIED.

7. Reflection on Governance

Councillors provided their reflection on governance with comparison to the Ends Policy:

- Discussions were thorough with good participation from all members and guests.

- It is good to see everyone maintain focus on the public even during difficult conversations.
- There was space to be vulnerable and open which made the meeting more effective.
- It is always refreshing having AARI members present and offer their perspective.
- AARI's work lies within ethical standards, which was a big focus of the conversation. Very proud of Council and the AARI Committee's commitment to serve the public interest.
- It was a great opportunity for the AARI Committee and Council to feel heard and appreciated by one another.
- There is a desire for clearer guidance on interactions between the AARI Committee and Council.
- Despite difficult conversations, there was space for everyone to be equal, themselves, frank and clear in communication showing commitment to each other's work.

8. Meeting Survey

Council took three minutes to complete the Council meeting survey.

9. In Camera

Council agreed to move into an in-camera session.

MOTION: To move the February 20, 2024, Council meeting to an in-camera session – Christie (MOVED), Joyce (SECONDED). CARRIED.

10. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the February 20, 2024, Council meeting – Heidi (MOVED), Arwen (SECONDED). CARRIED.