



Alberta College of Occupational Therapists
Council Meeting Minutes
May 28, 2024

Attending:

Arwen Caines – Vice President, Regulated Member
Carrie Hait – Councillor, Regulated Member
Heidi Knupp – Councillor, Regulated Member
Joyce Vayalumkal – Councillor, Regulated Member
Kristin Ward – Councillor, Regulated Member
Dennis Fitzgerald – Councillor, Public Member
Christie Bergman – Councillor, Public Member

Marianne Baird – CEO and Registrar
Benny Mutoni – Recording Secretary

Regrets:

Jennifer Lee – President, Regulated Member

Voting Members for This Meeting – Joyce, Kristin, Dennis, & Christie

1. GATHERING

Council confirmed there was quorum in attendance, with two public members voting, and two regulated members voting. Arwen called the meeting to order at 6 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 May 28, 2024, ACOT Council meeting agenda as presented - Kristin (MOVED) Dennis (SECONDED). CARRIED.

3. STRATEGIC PLAN

Update on Strategic Plan

Marianne shared the following:

- ACOT continues making progress towards meeting its 2023-2025 strategic plan goals, including reaching out to key partners such as the Federation and University of Alberta (U of A), going to speak to U of A occupational therapy (OT) students about registration, and continuing competence requirements, etc.



- ACOT continues to meet deliverables, such as social media growth with our following inching up each month on various platforms.

Review of Action Items

Marianne shared the following updates:

- ACOT has reached out to schoolboards to offer AARI presentations.
- A funding application has been submitted to the Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI) to update ACOT's database to CIHI's new minimum dataset.
- There is ongoing ACOT production of video series answering frequently asked questions (FAQs) to be available on the website this summer.
- The Councillor's procedure manual has been updated reflecting changes in the attendance policy.

Practice Inquiries Activity

Marianne shared that registration queries have gone down while practice queries have gone up, adding that these numbers are typical during this season. Inquiries about ethical scenarios, key partners, and informed consent continue to be hot topics. Marianne restated that the video series is in the works to address frequent inquiries in another way for registrants.

MOTION: To accept the Update on Strategic Plan, Review of Action Items, and Practice Inquiries reports for information - Dennis (MOVED) Joyce (SECONDED). CARRIED.

4. GENERATIVE THINKING

Diagnosis Survey Update

Marianne shared that 16 OTs came together for two meetings in two days to refine the draft diagnosis survey.

Some of the initial feedback after review from the ACOT President included the following edits:

- reducing the text in the introduction,
- moving definitions from the first page,
- reducing the number of questions,
- a title change,
- and positive messaging to add.



The floor was opened for feedback and any questions from Council, and the following was discussed:

- A Council member maintained that condensing the survey needs to be done while honoring feedback from the OTs that provided volunteered input, suggesting ACOT creates two surveys: one being short and another being more in-depth.
- Another Council member suggested a giveaway that can be use as incentive to encourage survey participation.
- A Council member asked if the diagnosis topic was one likely to yield high participation and based on feedback from the volunteer OT focus group, Marianne shared that the topic was of high interest.
- Another Council member suggested that there needs to be clarity on what ACOT is looking to answer in the survey to make informed decisions – is it whether it is happening, where it is happening, the background people have for doing it, etc. Marianne explained that we have many unknowns, hence the need for a survey to determine some of these answers.
- Council also discussed the formatting of survey questions effectively for scenarios where respondents can skip questions based on their answers. A two-stage survey was suggested with a shorter and optional longer portion.
- Council members agreed that bringing safety to the public was still the focus for determining the questions and direction of the survey.

ACTION: Marianne to condense survey, edit as discussed, create a section with optional questions, create ability to skip some questions, and implement a survey draw for five \$100 Visa gift cards as an incentive to do the survey, then submit the revised version to Council for review.

Survey Timing

Marianne recommended the following times for ACOT’s two upcoming surveys:

- First two weeks of June – Acting Against Racism and Intolerance Inclusion (AARI) survey.
- Last two weeks of June - Diagnosis survey.

Council agreed to the timing proposed.

ACTION: Run the AARI survey from June 3-14 and the diagnosis survey from June 17-28.

President/Vice-President (VP) Voting Procedure for June Council Meeting

Arwen updated Council on the voting procedure for the President/VP positions. The vote will take place during the June 2024 Council meeting.

Marianne provided historic background including how candidates would provide summaries and qualifications along with their interest for the role. Marianne added that Jennifer will be moving into the Past President role.



Arwen shared that one of the roles of the VP is chairing the Governance Committee that meets at least four times a year. She added that Jennifer will ask Council members to express their interest in running for the positions to gauge the level of interest and identify potential candidates for these roles. Following this, a formal vote will be conducted, and to ensure a fair and unbiased election, the vote will take place with the candidates not present in the room.

The floor was opened for questions, comments, and feedback.

Questions: Who is this going to be open to?

Answer: The VP role is open to both regulated and public members, while the President role is only available to regulated members.

Canadian Network of Agencies for Regulation (CNAR) Conference Update

Marianne provided background for the discussion regarding the budget allocated for Council members to attend the conference in October. It was noted that an initial budget had been set for each member to cover conference-related expenses. However, the registration fee for the conference was higher than anticipated, excluding additional costs such as accommodation, travel, and other incidental expenses.

Marianne provided the following options to be considered:

- Opting Out: Councillors have the option to choose not to attend the pre-conference sessions, thereby staying within the initially allocated budget.
- Additional Funding: Council could consider a vote to allocate additional funds from Council's reserves to cover the pre-conference registration fee and other associated costs.

The floor was opened for discussion, with key points including:

- The upcoming conference features timely discussions that would be highly beneficial for many Council members; the topics are closely aligned with current Council priorities and could enhance the Councillors' ability to address key issues effectively.
- Adjusting the budget would enable Council members to travel from distant locations to attend the conference without financial strain. This inclusivity would also ensure that all Councillors, regardless of their geographical location, have equal opportunities to benefit from the conference.
- Recognizing the valuable time and energy Council members invest, it was considered more appropriate to adjust the budget rather than impose additional financial burdens on them.



- Adhering strictly to the initial budget might result in some members opting out of the conference. By adjusting the budget, Council can ensure broader participation and avoid the potential loss of valuable insights and contributions from those members.

In light of these considerations, there was a general consensus to fund the pre-conference and full conference sessions, which will require an addition of \$8,000 to the Council 2024-2025 Education budget.

MOTION: To approve \$8,000 temporary budget increase to fully cover Councillor education for the 2024-2025 year - Dennis (MOVED) Joyce (SECONDED). CARRIED.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Governance Committee (GC)

Arwen presented the GC Report with two main highlights:

- The GC reviewed and made changes to the onboarding plan as proposed by the Onboarding Committee. It was suggested that during the third and fourth months of the onboarding process, mentors and mentees discuss current vacancies in other committees to facilitate filling these positions.
- GC was tasked with reviewing and updating the GC booklet. The Terms of Reference approved in February of the previous year were used as a reference, particularly regarding membership requirements including:
 - i) GC must include at least three Council members; including the Vice President, and at least one public member. The current composition meets these requirements.
 - ii) GC meeting frequency, establishing that they will meet at least four times a year.

MOTION: To accept the GC Committee Report as presented - Christie (MOVED) Dennis (SECONDED). CARRIED.

Competence Committee - Updated Terms of Reference

Marianne shared there was no Competence Committee activity update, with the same ongoing activities reported in April continuing this summer.

Marianne added that Committee's Terms of Reference have been updated to reflect recent changes in legislation and regulation, so that our refreshed Standards of Practice point to the requirements in the new Continuing Competence Program (CCP) manual. This manual is currently under development.

MOTION: To approve the Competence Committee Terms of Reference as presented - Christie (MOVED) Dennis (SECONDED). CARRIED.



6. CONSENT ITEMS

Review of Last Meeting's Minutes

Council examined the April 25, 2024, ACOT Council meeting minutes. With no suggested changes, they moved forward with a motion.

MOTION: To approve the April 25, 2024, ACOT Council meeting minutes as presented - Dennis (MOVED) Kristin (SECONDED). CARRIED.

Annual Report 2nd Draft Review

Council viewed the unformatted draft of the Annual Report content page by page with minor changes suggested. Members agreed to review the final draft at the next meeting before it is delivered for final design and printing.

Registrar Limitation (RL) 6: Communication and Support to Council

Marianne shared a monitoring report which mentioned:

- Examples of communication and support to Council including briefing notes on diagnosis, the collection of race-based and Indigenous-focused equity data, and the provision of reports on practice inquiries and complaints.
- ACOT continues to meet its annual reporting obligations to Alberta Health through its annual report, and provides data to other ministries, including information on inter-provincial labor mobility and the number of internationally educated occupational therapists (IEOTs) entering Alberta.

Following the report Marianne inquired whether the information provided to Council was sufficiently clear and comprehensive for effective decision-making. All Council members participated in the discussion and unanimously agreed that the information being provided for meetings meets these criteria.

MOTION: To approve RL 6: Communication and Support to Council as presented - Dennis (MOVED) Kristin (SECONDED). CARRIED.

Key Partner Analysis

Marianne shared that the key partner analysis document has been updated to include new key partners identified in previous discussions. These new partners include the federal government, Indigenous communities, and racialized consumers of OT services. Marianne added that methods for engaging with these new partners are still to be determined, and the question of where to start remains open.



The floor was opened for discussion with an invitation for suggestions from Council on how to proceed with engaging these key partners.

One Council member inquired about health advocacy groups for racialized populations or communities that Council could potentially engage with. In response, it was suggested that agencies for newcomers to Canada might be interested in the College's activities.

Another Council member proposed setting up informational booths at Indigenous community events, such as powwows, to educate the public about the College's role in protecting the public including in Indigenous communities.

Regarding federal government engagement, a Council members suggested ACOT, keeping in mind its public protection role, could decide on a case-by-case basis whether to provide support to advocacy organizations such as the Society of Alberta Occupational Therapists (SAOT), based on the alignment with public protection. Examples included clarified that ACOT writing letters of confirmation, affirming the capabilities of occupational therapists, and addressing public interest-related questions during advocacy initiatives would be acceptable and within our mandate.

ACTION: Marianne to reach out to newcomers' organizations to initiate contact and explore collaboration opportunities.

Complaints Activity

Marianne reported a notable increase in activity within ACOT's complaints department sharing that there are 12 open complaints, compared to 10 total complaints last year. Some of these cases are pending outcomes from hearings, while others have hearings scheduled for later in the year.

Due to the severity and complexity of two specific complaints, interim conditions have been implemented to safeguard the public until the final hearing results are determined.

Additionally, we continue to receive inquiries about potential complaints, some of which lead to formal complaints being filed.

MOTION: To accept the Complaints Activity reports for information, as presented - Joyce (MOVED) Dennis (SECONDED). CARRIED.

7. REFLECTION ON GOVERNANCE

Council provided their input on whether the Ends Policy was met during this meeting:

- We did a great job thoroughly discussing the diagnosis issue, taking the necessary time to consider all perspectives thoughtfully.



- We are demonstrating diligence in our approach to data collection, fully recognizing its critical importance for the upcoming survey.
- Our conversations were highly productive, moving the agenda forward in a very effective and efficient manner.
- Everyone actively participated, ensuring that all members were able to contribute meaningfully to the discussions.
- Greatly appreciated the specific suggestions that were brought forward, particularly the idea of using a gift card as an incentive for the survey.

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 May 28, 2024, Council meeting to an in-camera session – Christie (MOVED), Dennis (SECONDED). CARRIED.

MOTION: To adjourn the May 28, 2024, Council meeting – Christie (MOVED), Joyce (SECONDED). CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.