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**49th Annual General Meeting
Thursday, May 30th, 2019 11:45 AM PST
The Prince George Hotel, Windsor Room
Halifax, Nova Scotia
DRAFT Minutes**

MINUTES

1. Welcome

T. Gueulette, chair of the 2019 Annual General Meeting, called the meeting to order at 12:15 am PST.

2. Appointment of Recording Secretary

Moved by T. Delaney, seconded by S. Fitzgerald to appoint N. Lines as the Recording Secretary of the 2019 VRAC AGM.

MOTION CARRIED

3. Appointment of Scrutineers

Moved by E. Penner, seconded by C. Hadida to appoint S. Campbell and S. Hawkins as the scrutineers for the 2019 AGM.

MOTION CARRIED

4. Verification of Quorum

In accordance with by-law 4.7, 25 members represents quorum. With 51 voting members in attendance, including the Board and proxies, T. Gueulette verified quorum.

5. Approval of Adoption of AGM Agenda

Moved by E. Paquet, seconded by D. Anthony that the agenda be adopted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

6. Approval of Minutes of the 2018 AGM

Moved by R. Piccininni, seconded by W. Comeau to approve the Minutes of the 2018 AGM as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

7. Presidents Report

VRA's vision is to be the leading national organization committed to professional excellence of and for its multi-disciplinary members, who are recognized by stakeholders as experts in the provision of vocational and pre-vocational rehabilitation services. VRA Canada is the acknowledged Centre of Excellence providing education, research, and evidence-based best practices.



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It is my distinct honour and pleasure to report out today on the activities, events and accomplishments of your board for the past year as we continue to strive to move our profession forward.

I would like to highlight some of the ways that your board has sought to exemplify this purpose over the last year. Overall, there have been 4 main initiatives:

1. Education Programming Expansion
2. Partnership Expansion
3. Communication Strategy launch
4. By-Law Review

One of the biggest initiatives your board focused on this year is the continuing expansion of VRA's Online Learning Academy. Our goal has been to have 18 courses related to our profession's core competencies. The first nine have been uploaded and this January we pulled another group together to write the next nine. Those courses are now being finalized and we hope to have them online by September. In addition, VRA was very pleased to support CAVEWAS in the development of their assessment courses. Our vision is that the Learning Academy will become "The Place" for growing their knowledge base of vocational rehabilitation

Our partnership expansion has led us to some very interesting discussions with several organizations around the world, including VRA UK, the Australian Association of Rehabilitation Counsellors, and others. Our goal in these discussions is to find pathways to collaborate, as well as to work with the College to work towards an international VR designation.

Of interest has been our partnership conversations with the Work Wellness and Disability Prevention Institute on a project called "Harnessing Talent". The goal of this project is to specifically engage employers via senior human resource professionals and labour representatives with the goal to help employers prepare the workplace for the integration of persons with disabilities, and to support current employees with chronic health challenges that could limit work participation. VRA's role will be to participate in program development planning, will be represented on the steering committee, and will actively participate in the creation of evidence-based resources relevant to our members. We will also participate in curricular development and renewal activities as part of our accredited education and skill enhancement programs, and involve their Education Coordinator, Education Committee, and newly formed Research and Development Committee.

In January this year, VRA Canada contracted Armstrong Group to enact a communications strategy on behalf of VRA Canada aimed at growing our membership and building VRA's visibility across Canada. This has included several activities including government relations work, a social media campaign, and the creation of new communication tools. In addition, Armstrong has developed a strategic plan to reach out to those who work with people with disabilities to return to work, to join VRA Canada and to promote our new online learning academy. Armstrong Group has been tasked



with achieving several key performance indicators and we are excited to see where all this effort leads us. In concert with this work, our board members also spent time promoting VRA Canada through attending and having booths at the CASE Conference and Cannexus. We will also be at the CASE conference at the end of this month.

Finally, VRA has obtained a bylaw review completed gratis by a Joyce McGuiny of Blakes Law Firm. We will be voting on the results of all of Joyce's hard work today and we are grateful for all her hard work.

I would like to take an opportunity to give my sincere thanks to all our Directors who volunteered on the Board this year. This has been a very busy year with multiple projects on the go. Your board has volunteered many hours to deliver concrete offerings that we feel will support our members working in the vocational rehabilitation field, as well as which will promote and encourage new members to join our field. Thank you to each of you for your commitment to VRA and to our profession.

8. 2018 Audited Financial Statements

K. Davies presented the Audited Financial statements to the members. The 2018 audit was performed and VRA received a clean audit. There was a slight 1.5% drop in over-all revenue from last year however, we also saw a 3.3% drop in expenses from last year. VRA is reporting a surplus of just over \$60,000 for the 2018 fiscal year.

The main expenditures for 2018 were:

- Society Rebates
- Management Fees
- Marketing and Promotion (Armstrong Strategy Group)
- Insurance Program
- National Conference and
- Rehab Matters.

We also invested \$77,000 into the development of the online learning academy which will generate a sustainable source of revenue in future years.

**8.1. Approval of Appointment of Nephin Winter Bingley as 2018 Auditing Firm
Moved by K. Davies, seconded by R. Piccininni that *Nephin, Winter, Bingley Chartered Accountants* be appointed as the Auditor for 2019.
MOTION CARRIED**



8.2. Approval of Remuneration of the auditing firm

Moved by K. Davies, seconded by B. Martin to approve that the Board be authorized to approve the remuneration of the auditing firm for the 2019 audit.

MOTION CARRIED

9. Committee Reports

9.1. Education Committee

Since our previous AGM, the VRAC Online Learning Academy has gone live. Content has been divided into 9 sections / content areas, based on the CVRP exam content areas. Most sections will have 2-3 modules, with some only having one module to cover the related content.

Currently available for purchase: The CVRP Study Guide, Module 101 – Introduction to Vocational Rehabilitation, and Module 801 – Introduction to Ethical and Professional Conduct. These modules are priced at \$249 (9 pre-approved CEU hours), with an approximate 20% discount for VRA members. The intent is for upcoming and future modules to be priced at approximately \$20 / CEU hour, with a 20% discount for VRA members. Group discounts are available, and requests can be posed to the VRA Canada board for consideration.

Next month the following modules are anticipated to launch:

- Module 201 – Introduction to Disability
- Module 301 – Vocational Rehabilitation Interviewing
- Module 401 – Introduction to Vocational Rehabilitation Assessment and Evaluation
- Module 501 – Diversity & the Vocational Rehabilitation Professional
- Module 601 – Job Placement
- Module 701 – Disability Management
- Module 901 – Communication and Record Keeping

Subsequent modules to complete the CVRP exam content areas have already been developed by a devoted group of professionals, selected by the Education Committee, and overseen by Dr. Garry Corbett and reviewed by an astute group of professional peers. The modules are completed and now being professional edited, prior to online course development by VelSoft. It is anticipated these should launch in fall 2019.

The intent is to continue to build a robust learning platform, easily accessible by VRA members and a broader audience – those entering the field with limited training / experience, those preparing for the CVRP examination and those who are working abroad (we have already had interest from the UK, the US and Australia).

A committee member is collaborating with an outside partnership regarding the possibility of (free) online webinars, to add to our education offerings. We are also intending to add

additional content and collaborative offerings, with a “member” only section of free or highly discounted content.

This has certainly been an immense undertaking for the committee, but with the vision of Dr. Corbett, the patience of VelSoft and a steep learning curve, the ability to offer this to our members, and others, is coming to fruition. As an association, this is a strong priority in our advancement of current, peer reviewed, flexibly available continuing education opportunities for vocational rehabilitation in Canada and beyond.

9.2. Conference Committee

Thank you to the 2019 Conference Committee that was comprised of Roselle Piccininni; Lisa Timmons; Lynne Zagrodnik; Pamela MacDonald; Marg Smith; Renee Daudlin-Iacobelli; Tracey Kibble and Tricia Gueulette. Thank you also to Nanci Lines from the Office.

It’s a lot of work putting on the conference. We wanted to go with the theme of Education this year because we wanted to support the online learning academy. It’s an excellent source of learning and gaining CEUs.

While we have run in deficits in previous years, last year we were able to make a little bit of a profit. In order to not run into another deficit next year, we would like to piggyback on some other associations. We’re looking at some of the Universities and Workers Comp Boards. We want to keep doing the annual conference as it’s a benefit to the members and the people that attend appreciate it, but we need to look ahead and make it more financially feasible.

The Committee would like to thank the 2019 Sponsors. Pearson Canada; WCB SK; Altius Group; Optimum Tutoring; ProLink; CBI Health; CAVEWAS; Agilec and Discover Halifax.

Next years conference is the 50th Anniversary of VRA and we will be celebrating in Victoria, BC.

9.3. Communications Committee

The Communications Committee has worked on several important issues in 2018 and the Board continues to make communications to members a priority.

An RFP went out in 2018 and the Armstrong Strategy Group (ASG) was chosen to assist the National Board in several initiatives to broaden membership; update advertising materials; pursue French translation of documents, policies, etc.

The Communications Committee works with ASG to assist them in their work by making recommendations and reviewing draft communications material. These include:

- Assisting ASG in the development of a national stakeholder list to advertise the services provided by our members. These include private rehabilitation and disability management

- companies, insurance companies, government departments and crown corporations, WCB/WSIB, not-for-profit organizations, etc.
- Reviewing policy documents and the marketing strategy on an ongoing basis.
 - Assisting when appropriate in the discussion regarding translation of VRA written materials. ASG has applied for a Heritage Grant to assist with this undertaking.
 - Reviewed the updated brochures, business cards, and one-page information sheets prepared by ASG to ensure that correct information was provided
 - Reviewed social media content that can be found on Facebook, Linked-In and Twitter
 - Assist in recommendations for a series of 6 webinar programs offered by the ASG for e-learning and networking purposes and for which CEUs have been approved
 - Attend bi-weekly meetings with the ASG and to discuss on-going developments and issues.

I would like to thank the members of the Communications Committee: Tricia Gueulette, Sean Fitzgerald, Diana Vissers, Sylvie Desjardins and Jamie Suderman whose assistance in the committee work has been invaluable.

9.4. BC Society Update

The BC Society has a Save the Date for their annual AGM and Training Day, which is November 8th. The topics this year are going to be on sleep. If you can't make it out to BC to join in person, they will be offering the option to live stream it.

There have been some changes to the insurance in BC that rolled out April 1st, 2019. Vocational Rehabilitation professionals have been left in the dust with some of these changes. VRA BC plans to have some discussions with WCB BC and get their faces in front of some other stakeholders to try and show them the advantages of working with VR Professionals.

The VRA BC Board would like to encourage more member participation with the Board and their Committees. They're the 2nd largest society with VRA and they're constantly looking for Board and Committee members. They going to start some incentives to encourage members to join and get more involved.

9.5. MB Society Update

The Manitoba Society increased its membership this past year. There are currently 34 members of the MB Society and 6 members of CAVEWAS.

A workshop and AGM were held on May 7, 2019 and Sue Allardyce was re-elected as President, Michelle Paterson was re-elected as Treasurer and Jo-Ann Trudeau was elected as Secretary. Anne MacGregor will continue in her role as Board Member.



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In 2018, we held a half-day workshop on managing addictions in the workplace but for 2019, with additional volunteers, we hope to be holding a second workshop in the fall.

We are also considering sending out a survey to members to learn what specific initiatives they are interested in as well as the workshops which have been our primary focus for several years. We have volunteers who have agreed to assist us in with the survey and the more volunteers we have, the more we can do. We are looking forward to a productive year for our members in Manitoba.

9.6. Prairie Society Update

Saskatchewan has been working towards merging with Alberta and becoming the Prairie Society.

We are exploring ways to provide our members with opportunities to obtain continuing education credits through online learning, webinars and any other learning opportunities that meet the CEU requirements.

I am confident these two societies can move forward and beginning working towards building and growing this group into an active and viable society.

9.7. Ontario Society Update

VRA ON has been surveying their membership and the members told them that they wanted more local networking opportunities. In listening to them, VRA ON set up activities across the Province from Windsor to Ottawa for their members to participate in. They have also started a long-term membership incentive program and having been working closely with Ontario colleges to try and get more students involved with VRA.

9.8. Atlantic Society Update

VRA Atlantic currently has 41 members (17 in NS, 14 in NB, 7 in NL and 3 in PE), not including local members who are associated with CAVEWAS.

In 2018, a successful education event was held at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and well attended by over 30 people – members and non-members. Sessions included Marijuana in the Workplace, Entrepreneurship as a Viable Vocational Option and Vocational Strategies for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Our 2018 AGM was also held during this event.

Our 2019 AGM was held yesterday, given that we will not hold an education event in the region in 2019, having had the national conference here this week. At our 2019 AGM, our 2019 – 2021 board members were confirmed to be myself (Tracey Kibble), Sumaiya Hawkins, Sharron Phillips, Beverly Grasse, Sabrina DeWolfe, Sean Fitzgerald, Wade Prior and Mike Summers. As I have resigned from the role of VRA Atlantic President, Sean Fitzgerald has agreed to represent



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our Society on the national board until January 2020, at which time a new VRA Atlantic President will be confirmed.

It has been an absolute pleasure to be a part of this board for the past 6 years, the last four of which I served as Society President. This is truly wonderful group of people who are committed to ongoing support and growth of the field of vocational rehabilitation in this region.

9.9. CAVEWAS Society Update

CAVEWAS was represented in discussions with VECAAP regarding the US colleagues' interest in maintaining the CVE Designation or developing an International Designation through CVRP. This initiative remains an interest for our Society and the Association, given the synergies and mutually beneficial collaboration. To this end, CAVEWAS jointly presented at the North Carolina Beach Conference in October. The US contingent will present in Halifax this year.

CAVEWAS continues to represent members and explore the criteria that CVRP has indicated regarding those seeking the CCVE designation. We continue to encourage those seeking the CCVE to join VRA and CAVEWAS. We are likewise promoting CCVE to current RVP members who do not already hold the designation.

This year, it was decided that the CAVEWAS conference would be blended into the VRA conference for joint marketing and registration purposes. A 2.5-day conference is more valuable than a single day for those registering.

This past year was an active year for the Education Committee. Four new modules are being launched shortly that will provide members with access to quality learning opportunities.

10. By-Law Review

After an extensive revision by the By-Law Committee, and in consultation with Blakes Law Firm, a revised set of By-laws were presented to the Board on March 21st, 2019. The Board discussed the proposed changes and voted to approve the changes to the By-laws. They were then circulated to the membership for ratification. T. Kibble reviewed the changes to them with the members in attendance.

**T. Kibble moved that the By-laws be accepted as approved by the Board on March 21st, 2019 and that they take effect immediately. Seconded by V. Lougheed.
Motion Carried.**



11. Elections

The Nominations Committee received four nominations through the Call for Nominations that were sent out to the members through the weekly e-blast.

Tracey Kibble
Paul Holtby
Eric Paquet and
Valerie Lougheed

No further nominations were received from the floor.

As per section 5.3 of the newly ratified by-laws, the Board can have up to fifteen Directors. As such, no election will be required, and the nominated members will be added to the Board by acclamation.

2019/2020 Board of Directors:

Tricia Gueulette – Director at Large
Jennifer Chladny – Director at Large
Kim Davies – Director at Large
Tracey Kibble – Director at Large
Valerie Lougheed – Director at Large
Eric Paquet – Director at Large
Paul Holtby – Director at Large
Roselle Piccininni – CVRP Rep to VRA
Pamela MacDonald – BC Society Rep
Kathy Potts – Prairies Society Rep
Sue Allardyce – MB Society Rep
Marcel Quenneville – ON Society Rep
Sean Fitzgerald – Interim Atlantic Rep
Renee Daudlin-Iacobelli – CAVEWAS Society Rep

The Officers of the Association will be elected at the first organization meeting as per by-law 8.2(a).

12. Awards

The following award(s) was presented:

Service Award
Tracey Kibble

The Chair declared that the Annual General Meeting be adjourned at 1:30 pm PST.