

# Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 11, 2024 – 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

December 12, 2024 – 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Head Office Boardroom/MS Teams**

**Attendees:** Mel Norton (Chairperson), Adam Donnelly, Mike MacMullin, James Stanley, Denny Vautour, Jason Green, Gaetan Guerette, Chantal LaFleur, Tim Petersen (President and CEO)

**Regrets:** None.

**Staff Present for the Meeting:** Lee Bell-Smith (General Counsel & Corporate Secretary), Mike McGovern (Senior Legal Counsel), Carolyn MacDonald (Vice-President of Strategy & Finance), Laragh Dooley (Vice-President of People & Culture), Courtney St. Peter (Board Liaison), Jarrod Yeo (Communications Business Partner), Norma Doucette (Communications Secretary & IWAC)

**Guest:** Paula Garant (IWAC) (Item 15), Pam Baker (IWAC) (Item 15), Lecia Gahan (IWAC) (Item 15), Kirk Westfield (IWAC) (Item 15), Kelli Simmons (WCAT) (Item 16), Caitlin Crowley (MNP) (Item 18).

## 1. Adoption of Agenda

The Board of Directors reviewed the agenda for the meeting of December 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as provided in the meeting materials.

**On motion, duly made, and seconded it was unanimously resolved:**

*That the Board of Directors adopt the agenda dated December 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as presented.*

## 2. Safety Moment

The Board of Directors discussed the dangers of driving in the rain, snow, and slush especially on four-lane highways with passing vehicles and transport trucks.

## 3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The Chairperson asked if any Members had a declaration of Conflict of Interest. No conflicts were declared.

## 4. Approval of Minutes dated:

### a. September 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Board of Directors reviewed the minutes of the Board meeting dated September 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as provided in the meeting materials.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved:**

*That the Board of Directors approve the minutes of the meeting dated September 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as presented.*

## 5. Consent Agenda

### a. 2024 Workplan

The Board of Directors reviewed the 2024 workplan as provided in the meeting materials.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved:**

*That the Board of Directors receive the 2024 Workplan for information.*

### b. Mandate Letter Update

The Board of Directors reviewed the Mandate Letter update as provided in the meeting materials.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved:**  
*That the Board of Directors receive the Mandate Letter update for information.*

**6. 2025 Work plan & 2025 Board/Committee Meeting Schedule**

The Board of Directors reviewed the proposed 2025 workplan and 2025 meeting schedule as provided in the meeting materials.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved:**  
*That the Board of Directors approve the 2025 Board Workplan and 2025 Board and Committee meeting schedule.*

The President & CEO reminded the Board of the AWCBC event in June hosted by WorkSafeNB, and advised the Board it was an opportunity to meet and align with counterparts across the country.

**7. Policies:**

**a. Policy 37-110 NBIAE**

The Vice-President of Strategy & Finance gave the Board an overview of the proposed changes as provided in the meeting materials.

One Member asked where the number came from historically. Ms. MacDonald indicated that it was established in 1993 and was based the average wage. Each year, it is indexed to keep pace with the economy.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved:**  
*That the Board of Directors approve the proposed Policy 27-110 NBIAE, release 7, and rescind proposed Policy 27-110 NBIAE, release 6.*

**b. Indexation of Benefits**

The Board reviewed the indexation of benefits as provided in the meeting materials.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved:**  
*That the Board of Directors receive the Indexation of Benefits for information.*

**8. Fatality Review Committee Update**

**a. Chairperson's Report of the Fatality Review Committee Meeting dated November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

The Committee Chair gave the Board an overview of the meeting held on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as provided in the meeting materials.

The Committee Chair noted that most deaths were avoidable. He indicated that while the meetings are never pleasant, there are positive developments coming forward, and congratulated staff.

He told the Board he has been an advocate for pushing understanding the psychology behind incidents and accidents and is pleased to see that being prioritized, along with additional efforts to help small businesses develop safety plans.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved:**  
*That the Board of Directors receive the Chairperson's Report of the Fatality Review Committee Meeting dated November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 for information.*

**9. Governance, People & Culture Committee Update**

**a. Chairperson's Report of the Governance, People & Culture Committee meeting of November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024**

Mr. MacMullin gave an overview of the past Chair's report for the meeting on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024 as provided in the meeting materials.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried, it was unanimously resolved:**  
*The Board of Directors receive the Chairperson's report of the Governance, People & Culture Committee meeting of November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024 for information.*

**b. WHSCC & WCAT Act Review**

Mr. MacMullin provided an overview of the materials reviewed and the proposed topics for legislative amendment. He noted that there was to be a discussion on whether the Vice-chairperson's voting rights should be amended and whether this should be in legislation or policy.

The General Counsel & Corporate Secretary told the Board that he didn't think this change would be required through legislative change and that it could be written into policy. Members voiced concern having this provision only added to policy making it too easy to remove it. Management indicated that currently the legislation doesn't have voting rights listed and if they were to add them it could open the door to a lot of unknown.

One Member suggested having the vice-chairperson's voting rights identified within policy but requiring a super majority to have it changed. The Board agreed with this.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved:**  
*The Board of Directors approve consultation on the recommended changes to the WHSCC and WCAT Acts and to have management begin the changes to the Governance Policy having it brought back to the Governance, People & Culture Committee for recommendation.*

**10. Audit Committee Update**

**a. Chairperson's Report of the Audit Committee meeting of November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

The Committee Chair gave the Board an overview of the meeting held on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as provided in the meeting materials.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried, it was unanimously resolved:**  
*The Board of Directors receive the Chairperson's report of the Audit Committee meeting of November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 for information.*

**11. Finance & Investment Committee Update**

**a. Chairperson's Report of the Finance & Investment Committee meeting of November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

Jason Green provided an overview of the past Chair's committee report for the Finance & Investment Committee meeting dated November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Mr. Green noted that the recommendations coming from the committee were based on input from the former advisor. He also mentioned that an in-camera Board meeting arose from this discussion, and as a result, it is uncertain whether the recommendation should still stand.

One Member of the Finance & Investment Committee said that the biggest item to move forward was the policy. The President & CEO noted that in Q1 staff will walk the Committee through the proposed changes along with the revised Terms of Reference.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried, it was unanimously resolved:**  
*The Board of Directors receive the Chairperson's report of the Finance & Investment Committee meeting of November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024 for information.*

**12. Committee Membership**

The Board Liaison indicated to the Board that the two recent resignations leave two committees with significant vacancies and asked the Board to discuss which Members will be placed in those positions.

After discussion the Board agreed that the committee memberships with the vacant position will be:

Governance, People & Culture Committee

- Chairperson - Jason Green

Finance & Investment Committee

- Chairperson - Jim Stanley, *pending legal memo addressing possible or perceived conflict with also serving on the Audit Committee.*
- Voting Employer Rep - Jason Green
- Alternate Employer Rep - Adam Donnelly
- Alternate Worker Rep - Mike MacMullin.

The Board also discussed having the vice-chair not able to serve as a committee member and that it should be added to the Committees' terms of reference at the next review.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved that:**

*The Board of Directors approve the new committee membership for the vacancies of the Governance, People & Culture Committee and Finance & Investment Committee.*

**13. Cybersecurity Follow-up from Board Learning Symposium**

The Director of Security, Architecture & Strategy presented to the Board a follow-up from the Learning Symposium held on October 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as provided in the meeting materials.

A Member asked if WorkSafeNB keeps statistics on the number of attacks that come in. Mr. Rees indicated that yes, WorkSafeNB is partnered with a 24/7 monitoring system.

Another Member asked if there was cybersecurity insurance available and if WorkSafeNB has any. Mr. Rees said that there is insurance, but that it is very costly with limited coverage and provides a lot of constraints. He said that is a weighty decision that needs to be made.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved that:**

*The Board of Directors receive the Cybersecurity follow-up for information.*

**14. Welcome Back & Continue Agenda**

The Chairperson provided welcome back remarks and called the meeting to motion.

**15. Stakeholder Presentation – Injured Worker Advisory Committee**

The Injured Worker Advisory Committee joined the Board to highlight the important work being done to help those who have suffered a workplace injury and families who have lost someone to a workplace incident.

Ms. Garant gave the Board a presentation on her past and what led her to be a part of the Injured Worker Advisory Committee. She was a nurse who suffered a serious knee injury while at work and was forced to be retired at 48 years old. She indicated that her income benefits have been based on a 2011 salary review and have not been adjusted. She said that while her story is one of hardship it is also a story of perseverance and strength. Behind every statistic there is a person who could be facing hardship.

Ms. Baker provided her experience of losing her husband, James Baker, and why she fights for

survivor benefits while being on the Injured Worker Advisory Committee. She said that Threads for Life gave them help with tools and support. Mr. Yeo added that Ms. Baker has been extremely helpful when it comes to helping families process workplace deaths.

Ms. Gahan spoke to the Board about the workplace death of her son Jordan Gahan. She wants to ensure that no other family must endure the tragedy of losing a loved one. She said that Thread of Life provided a lot of support and paired her with a woman who also lost her son in a workplace incident. She indicated that when she sees an unsafe workplace she reports it quickly and easily to WorkSafeNB thanks to the toll-free number.

Mr. Westfield shared his story of retiring as a paramedic and firefighter due to PTSD. He told the Board that he loved his career, even met his wife because of it. He knew he was crumbling and had to seek help, and in February of 2023 he was diagnosed with severe PTSD. He said that his case worker was there for him and truly helped save his life. He's learning and pushing forward every day. When he switched to long-term disability, he knew he couldn't sit down and stay silent, so he joined Injured Worker Advisory Committee to share his story and help those suffering from PTSD.

One Member encouraged the Injured Worker Advisory Committee to think in broader terms what surviving families and WorkSafeNB need to help guide their way through life and to submit quarterly reports to the Board to review.

Another Member asked for clarity on how the Injured Worker Advisory Committee is funded and if there is a budget for educational activities. Mr. Yeo indicated that there is a budget for the Injured Worker Advisory Committee within the Communication department's overall budget. The President & CEO told the Board that WorkSafeNB would support any activities or education the Injured Worker Advisory Committee would like to do or have.

The Board thanked the Injured Worker Advisory Committee members for sharing their stories.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved:**

*That the Board of Directors receive the Injured Worker Advisory Committee presentation for information.*

## **16. President & CEO Accountability Report**

### **a. Accountability Report**

The President & CEO gave an overview of his accountability report as provided in the meeting materials.

Mr. Petersen told the Board that he was nominated by the CEO of WorkSafe Saskatchewan to chair the AWCBC Board of Directors in which he accepted. He noted that this is the first time the chair has been from New Brunswick. The Chairperson told the Board there were several compliments given to Mr. Petersen and said it was rewarding to see the little province that could do so well on a national level.

The President & CEO updated the Board on Ms. Dooley's change of position and indicated she has accepted the role as Vice-President of People & Culture.

The Board congratulated Mr. Petersen and Ms. Dooley on their accomplishments.

### **b. Employee Engagement Survey Results**

The President & CEO provided the Board with an overview of the Employee Engagement Results as provided in the meeting materials.

One Member asked if the Engagement Survey offered a chance for open comments. The President & CEO indicated yes and that each answer is reviewed for trends. One area

that remains a challenge is collaboration or the issue of silos, but WorkSafeNB is working to foster greater collaboration across divisions.

Another Member indicated that the score had jumped significantly and asked what the reason was for the jump. Mr. Petersen told the Board it was a direct result of the change in culture and leadership, as well as the people-first approach WorkSafeNB has been advocating for and implementing.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved:**

*That the Board of Directors receive the President & CEO Accountability Report for information.*

#### **17. Meet with WCAT Chair**

The Chair of WCAT provided an update to the Board with the work going on at the WCAT.

Ms. Simmons told the Board that currently the WCAT's biggest struggle is finding vice-chairs to serve for 6 months to year, but that the WCAT just appointed 3 new vice-chairs, and she is optimistic it will help clear the backlog. One Member asked what the challenges are with vice-chair retention/interest. Ms. Simmons indicated that per-diems seem to be the biggest deterrent as the Government rate is low.

**On motion duly made, seconded, and carried it was unanimously resolved:**

*That the Board of Directors receive the WCAT Chair update for information.*

#### **18. Modernization**

##### **a. Progress Report**

The Director of People & Culture and Caitlin Crowley, Partner with MNP, gave the Board an overview of the modernization progress report as provided in the meeting materials.

Ms. Dooley provided the Board with an update on the contract negotiation happening for the modernization system implementation.

##### **b. MNP Assessment Progress to Date**

Ms. Crowley provided the Board with an overview of an assessment of the modernization progress to date.

Members raised concern with the timing and worry progress may be rushed. Ms. Dooley assured the Board that the modernization progress is not being rushed and that it is a matter of finding the right balance. She said that it is important to remember that mistakes will happen and that employees should feel comfortable and have a psychologically safe workplace.

#### **19. New Business**

One Member said it may be important to keep in mind that the U.S. presidential election outcomes may have an effect on WorkSafeNB.

Another Member said the Board and WorkSafeNB should keep in mind Ms. Garant and to investigate her claim that has not been adjusted since 2011. The Member also suggested coming up with training to provide to young adults. The President & CEO told the Board that WorkSafeNB is currently working with the Advocate with Youth services to create a new "Step up for Safety" program being offered in high schools for grade 9.

A Member raised that it is important to have a process whereby WorkSafeNB follows up with families to help them understand the recommendations and to close the loop. Mr. Petersen assured the Board that when recommendations are provided to WorkSafeNB there is an individual who will meet with the family to provide assistance. He noted that there are

recommendations not provided to WorkSafe but understands how important it is for families to receive closure and consideration to find a way to achieve that can be looked at.

The Fatality Review Committee's name was raised and a member indicated they did not believe the committee's name fits with what the Committee does. The Chair of the Fatality Review Committee indicated that while the Committee is not the most comforting, reviewing the fatalities is what the Committee does. The Committee Chair noted that he is not stuck on the name if it aligns properly with the Committees responsibilities.

**20. In-camera**

No in-camera session was held.

**Adjourned**

Motion to adjourn at 11:39 a.m. on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024.