



Progress on CFPC governance

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Dear Colleagues,

As you read this column (hopefully before, during, or after a planned, well deserved summer break), the Nominating Committee, with board approval, has put forward the names of 5 board director candidates from the 16 applications received from engaged, experienced members. After a thorough review of applications and the interview process, the Nominating Committee is unanimous in its recommendations of individuals who best meet the competency matrix and other characteristics described in our call for interest in February. The ability for a member to self-nominate once the information on the 5 candidates being put forward is available will remain.

You will be invited in October to vote for 2 Directors-at-Large from among the 5 candidates. You will also be asked to ratify the President-Elect and Secretary-Treasurer nominees. In addition to the published information, a 2-minute, self-made video on each candidate will be available, and a couple of video conferences are scheduled to allow members to ask questions of candidates. Electronic voting will commence on October 24 and conclude on November 7.

As we move forward it is important to remember where we have come from. The governance of the CFPC has been robust since its inception. Over time, considering the breadth and depth of the organization, including the complexity of academic and practice environments, as well as evolving governance practices, it became important to consider the potential for a smaller, skills-based board to have the ability to delve more deeply into issues before making decisions. This was not possible with a board of 40 directors. It is possible with a board of 11. It is also possible for a smaller board to develop better continuity by meeting by videoconference a few times a year between face-to-face meetings. In addition to conducting the necessary business of the organization, we allocate some (little) time for generative discussion, and take into consideration the feedback provided by CFPC's constituent leaders (Chapter elected and staff leaders, committee and section chairs, family medicine department chairs) regarding the topics on the board agenda; we pay attention to avoiding groupthink, to allowing for respectful dissent, and to becoming a better governing board. Following each board meeting, we connect formally, in writing and by videoconference,


with CFPC's constituent leaders to inform them of the board decisions and to seek further feedback.

We now host an Annual Forum that includes the constituent leaders as well as others depending on the themes for the event. Two additional meetings with Chapter elected leaders and staff also take place each year.

The board listens to and reflects on members' input provided throughout the year, the results of ePanel surveys, and feedback provided at the Annual Meeting of Members. Having members truly vote for board directors (as opposed to approving a slate) is a result of feedback provided by members, with further discussions by the Governance Advisory Committee and the Nominating Committee.

Some future preoccupations include representation by the public; refinement of our process of selecting the Secretary-Treasurer (who, in our process, is on the path to becoming President); more refined, timely communications; electronic voting for an increasing number of resolutions, allowing all members to vote with less reliance on proxy voting; and whether the self-nomination opportunity within our election process is still in the best interest of the organization if members truly have a choice in whom they elect to serve on the board. These discussions are in the process of happening; no decisions have been made as of yet. Please rest assured that the committees you have delegated to consider these issues take their roles very seriously.

The CFPC will meet its fiduciary responsibilities in presenting our financial statements on our website at the appropriate time. In addition, we will include a more visual representation of CFPC finances in order for members to get a better appreciation of how their member dues are used.

I hope that you will appreciate the very important transformation in governance the organization is taking on. It is truly a journey. The board is in a good place to listen to its members, consider the many factors that influence our decisions as a standard-setting body, and make the decisions that will best serve our members, the discipline of family medicine, and the people of Canada, whom you care for in your practices every day. 

Acknowledgment

I thank Sarah Scott for her review of this article.

Cet article se trouve aussi en français à la page 551.