



## **Canadian Association for HIV Research**

### **Annual General Meeting**

Friday, May 1, 2015, 18:30 – 19:5h

Delta Toronto Hotel, Toronto, ON

## **MINUTES**

Chair: Andrew Matejcic

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Andrew Matejcic opened the meeting and gave words of welcome. There were 25 voting members in attendance. Andrew introduced the Board of Director's members in attendance: Bob Hogg, Jonathan Angel, Michael Grant, Curtis Cooper, Carol Strike, Matthias Gotte, Saara Greene, Shariq Haider, Terry Howard and Marissa Becker. Andrew also introduced the CAHR Staff team: Erin Love and Shelley Mineault. Andrew thanked the Conference Organizing Committee for their efforts in putting on a successful conference in 2015.

### **2. Approval of the Agenda**

Andrew Matejcic asked if there were any objections to the 2015 AGM Agenda. There were no objections and the Agenda was approved by Marina Klein and Gilbert Emond.

### **3. Approval of Minutes of AGM 2014**

Andrew Matejcic inquired if there were any objections to the 2014 AGM Minutes. There were no objections and the Minutes were approved by Saara Greene and Marissa Becker.

### **4. Year in Review**

Andrew Matejcic informed the members that CAHR continues to support the next generation of HIV/AIDS researchers through the support of Master's and Doctoral Research Awards. CAHR is currently supporting twelve Doctoral Research Awards and seven Master's awards. Four additional Master's awards will also be funded by CAHR in partnership with CANOC and Abbvie. CAHR has also increased the number of academic scholarships to attend

CAHR Conference. In addition, there are eight academic scholarships and eight vaccine scholarships. Andrew thanked the partner organizations for their continued support of CAHR scholarships.

CAHR has partnered with the CIHR and the OHTN Universities Without Walls (UWW) to publish an online learning practicum. This workshop series, as led by UWW, was launched September 2013. The Learning Place for CBR in HIV/AIDS works to enhance CBR understanding, support CBR skill development, encourage teams to apply to CBR grants and foster interest in CBR projects. Andrew encouraged the members to explore the online learning practicum modules ([http://www.cahr-acrv.ca/training/community-based-research-cbr/cbr\\_learningplace/](http://www.cahr-acrv.ca/training/community-based-research-cbr/cbr_learningplace/))

Andrew informed the membership that CAHR has further expanded its workshop series. A Workshop Committee was formed in 2013 by CAHR Board members (Cooper, Götte, Greene, Strike) to decide on workshop focus and locations. CAHR now offers workshops throughout the year. Workshops are now offered in both official languages, and the focus of the workshop series has been expanded to include sessions targeted towards Community Based Research and Mid-Career Level HIV Researchers. Reviews continue to be excellent.

In partnership with the CIHR and the CHVI ACO, CAHR has developed an HIV Researcher Database. This has been integrated into the Canadian Common CV (CCV) platform. The CCV has nearly 100,000 registered users, and is updated daily to capture past and current research projects. Andrew encouraged all members to use the database (<http://www.cahr-acrv.ca/researcher-database/>).

CAHR's communications efforts have also been significantly increased this year. A Communications Plan was developed in 2012 to guide all communications activities until 2015. CAHR's website was redeveloped, and is updated regularly in both official languages with new content. Profiles of CAHR's funded students, as well as research outcome stories continue to be featured on the website. Members were encouraged to submit names of potential researchers to profile in the future. CAHR's social media presence continues to grow (372 FaceBook likes, 398 Twitter followers, more YouTube subscribers), and digital media such as the CAHR Conference App continue to improve. CAHR continues regular communications with its members and the HIV research community through email list-serves, brochures, newsletters and other materials.

## **5. Look Ahead to Next Year**

### Update on Activities

Andrew informed the members that CAHR hopes to host five workshops in the upcoming year. CAHR will also host a Science Café in the fall of 2015. Members were encouraged to submit ideas for the topic of focus for future Cafes. CAHR will also expand the Learning Place online practicum in 2015.

The dates and location for CAHR 2016-2018 have been confirmed. CAHR will hold the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Canadian Conference on HIV/AIDS Research May 12-15, 2016 in Winnipeg, MB. The CAHR Conference in 2017 will be held April 24-27, 2017 in Montreal. The CAHR Conference in 2018 will be held April 26-29, 2018 in Vancouver.

## 6. Treasurer's Report

Curtis Cooper presented the 2014 CAHR Treasurer's Report. Curtis addressed the Members and informed them that for the first time ever, CAHR completed a full audit as opposed to a financial review. As part of the new rules that govern charitable organizations, the Federal Government now mandates that audits be done annually. Full audits cost nearly \$15,000.

The Financial Report reflects the findings of CAHR's annual review of activities from November 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 to October 31<sup>st</sup> 2014. As of October 31, 2014, CAHR had: \$164,370 in cash, \$55,085 in liabilities, \$1,445,347 in investments and net assets of \$1,812,664. CAHR Investments remain with MD Management in Ottawa. All CAHR financial accounts remain with a CIBC branch in Ottawa.

The bottom line for 2014-2015 is down because conference profits have fallen due to increased venue costs and decreased sponsorship revenue, and student costs have grown quickly over the last several years.

The CAHR Board of Directors met on April 29 to discuss CAHR's financial situation. The Fiscal Plan as approved by the Board at that meeting was as follows:

- Conference registration fees will increase to more accurately reflect the costs of attending the conference. Considerations will be made to ensure that the increased fees do not make attendance prohibitively expensive.
- A moratorium on new Master's and DRA funding will be put in place. Current funding commitments will be honoured.
- CAHR office will explore options to keep costs low.

Curtis highlighted all sources of revenue and expenditure. Curtis will continue to provide comprehensive yet understandable reports for Board and Members.

A motion was put forward to accept the Treasurer's Report by Terry Howard. Motion was seconded by Marissa Becker, and approved with no objections.

## 7. Secretary's Report: CAHR Board Nominations

Carole Strike informed the attendees that CAHR now has 2,195 members. Carol also outlined the benefits of being a CAHR member, which can be found on the CAHR website (<http://www.cahr-acrv.ca/become-member/>).

Carol informed the members that six positions on the CAHR Board of Directors are available for nomination; President-Elect, Treasurer, Secretary, Epidemiology/Public Health Representative, Social Sciences Representative and Basic Sciences Representative. Requests for nomination were called for on the CAHR website, posted to CAHR social media, and sent by email to all CAHR members. No nominations were received prior to this AGM. Carol Strike asked for nominations from the members at the meeting. No nominations were received from the floor.

Carol presented the suggested nominations from the Board of Directors. The suggestions were as follows:

- **President-Elect**: Curtis Cooper completes term as Treasurer and takes on the role of President-Elect
- **Treasurer**: Carol Strike completes term as Secretary and takes on the role of Treasurer
- **Secretary**: Terry Howard leaves role as Community Representative and takes on role of Secretary
- **Epidemiology/Public Health**: Marissa Becker continues for a second term in role as Epidemiology/Public Health Representative
- **Social**: Stephanie Nixon takes on role of Social Sciences Representative given completion of Saara Greene's term
- **Basic**: H  l  ne C  t   takes on role of Basic Sciences Representative given completion of Matthias Gotte's term
- **Community**: Stephanie Smith takes on role of Community Representative given change in role for Terry Howard

There were no objections from the floor. The proposed members were elected to the Board of Directors.

## 8. Questions and Answers

- a) Q. The fact that CAHR has run a deficit this year is unfortunate. Did CAHR properly forecast the student costs from the past year?

A. Curtis Cooper answered and said that yes we did, but that CAHR did not anticipate that pharma support would drop as student commitments increased. Andrew Matejic clarified that CAHR is a "not for profit" and it is a positive to have a nest egg but the organization cannot keep collecting and not spending the money, which is why studentships were funded. Revenues dropped more than was anticipated when the increase in student support spending was approved.

- b) Q. How much will Conference registration increase? It seems appropriate that registration would increase for basic and clinical scientists, but it is too expensive for social sciences and community members.

A. Curtis Cooper answered that the Board seriously considered all implications of the increase of registration fees. Community registration will increase to \$75. Students will now pay \$250-300 dollars. Scientists will increase to \$700 per attendee.

- c) Q. Most medical conferences are facing the same issues with regards to decreasing revenue, and alternate sources of revenue should be examined. Has there been any discussion at CAHR to look at other sources? Also conferences held in smaller cities generate less revenue but has some thought been put into retreating to a model where the cities are considered for costs?

A. Curtis Cooper answered that those are both excellent points. CAHR's focus for future meetings will remain on Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver rotation. Andrew confirmed that CAHR has reached out to other pots of revenue for sponsors, and in fact this year (2015) has the most number of sponsors and supporters ever. The available pots of money, however, are significantly smaller, thus resulting in less revenue.

d) Q. CAHR should look at the outskirts of bigger cities for locations where there will be lots of people attending and lower venue fees.

A. Jonathan Angel and Erin Love responded that CAHR has considered many proposals from venues outside bigger centers. The space requirements that CAHR has, however, significantly reduce the number of possible venues to host CAHR Conferences. CAHR will continue to request bids from these venues where space requirements are met.

e) Q. CAHR should not raise registration fees for community members. CAHR should only raise fees for those who are affiliated with institutions and organizations.

A. Terry Howard responded that the original plan was to double registration fees for all classes of attendee, however, this was considered to be unreasonable by the Board of Directors. Terry further responded that the community groups should not be inflexible. A 50% fee increase was reduced to \$15.

f) Q. A moratorium on CAHR student funding is sad. Has CAHR looked at companies to partner with for scholarships?

A. Andrew responded that yes, CAHR has explored options with the Trillium Foundation, IDRC, CANOC, pharma, etc. Partnerships were formed with CANOC and Abbvie, however CAHR will continue this exploration.

g) Journals make lots of money now. BMC has approached a CAHR member to sponsor a conference and provide a publication. Would CAHR explore this opportunity to increase revenue and/or decrease expenses?

A. Andrew responded that CAHR has an agreement in place with Pulsus and CJIDMM. All CAHR members get a free subscription to the online journal, and reduced submission fees. However, CAHR is open to exploring options from other journals, and CAHR office will follow up on this suggestion.

## 9. Other Business

No other business was brought to the floor.

Curtis Cooper said that this deficit is far bigger than he anticipated. It is a result of an unfortunate combination of circumstances, but overall CAHR is in very good shape. We will “get back in black” and Curtis Cooper anticipates that we will be restoring the studentship program in the near future.

## 10. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was put forth by Gilbert Emond. This was seconded by Keith Fowke. The meeting adjourned at 19:50h