



BC's Union for Professionals

# CONVENTION 2015

## **2015 Minutes**

*For Presentation to the 2017 Constitutional Convention*

**Minutes**  
of the  
**11<sup>th</sup> CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION**  
of the  
**PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**  
held at the  
**Hotel Grand Pacific**  
**Victoria, BC**

April 18, 2015

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CALL TO ORDER .....	1
CREDENTIALS REPORT .....	1
DELEGATES .....	1
STAFF.....	3
CONVENTION COMMITTEES .....	4
CONVENTION RULES OF ORDER .....	5
APPROVAL OF THE 9 <sup>th</sup> CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION MINUTES.....	6
INVESTMENT REPORT.....	6
ALLOCATION OF RESOLUTIONS .....	6
REPORT OF THE WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE.....	6
SECRETARY-TREASURER’S REPORT.....	7
APPROVAL OF THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS .....	7
APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS .....	7
REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE .....	7
PRESIDENT’S REPORT .....	8
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT .....	9
RESOLUTIONS .....	9
TABLE OFFICERS ELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT .....	10
UNFINISHED BUSINESS.....	11
NEW BUSINESS.....	11
ADJOURNMENT.....	13

**DRAFT MINUTES**  
of the  
**11<sup>th</sup> CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION**  
of the  
**PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**  
held at the  
Hotel Grand Pacific, Victoria, BC  
April 18, 2015

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**CALL TO ORDER**

President Frank Kohlberger called the 11<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Convention of the Professional Employees Association to order at 9:15 a.m. on Saturday, April 18, 2015.

The President welcomed the delegates to the PEA's eleventh constitutional convention.

**CREDENTIALS REPORT**

The President called on Susan Dempsey, Chairperson of the Credentials Committee, to give a report.

The Chairperson reported that there were 70 credentialed voting delegates for this convention. Of those delegates, 48 voting delegates were present. There was one observer, eight staff members, and one guest in attendance.

*M/S/C that these delegates be seated.*

*M/S/C that the Credentials Committee stand down, with thanks.*

**DELEGATES**

The following delegates were registered.

**Association Executive**

President	Frank Kohlberger
First Vice-President	Sheldon Martell
Second Vice-President	Susan Dempsey
Secretary-Treasurer	John Foxgord

<b>Education Chapters</b>	James Laitinen
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<b>Government Licensed Professionals</b>	Harry Jennings
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<b>Health Science Professionals</b>	Ronda Field
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**St. Margaret's School**

Natasha Carville

**UVic Administrative and Academic Professional Staff**

Melissa Doyle  
Kristen Ficke

**Chapter Representatives**

**Family Maintenance Enforcement Lawyers**

Veronica Beier

**Government Licensed Professionals**

John Babineau  
Todd Bresser  
Ken Chalmers  
Mike Dedels  
Beth Eagles  
Rene-Garcia Daguer  
Kristin Hendry  
Elizabeth Hunt  
Andrea Inwards  
Ian Johnston  
Pierre Johnstone  
Mark Louttit  
Bernie Peschke  
Enrique Sanchez  
Jeff Stone  
Judy Thomas  
Bruce Ward  
Brad White  
Patricia Wilson  
Carl Withler  
Darren Witt

**Health Science Professionals**

Joanne Montgomery

**Law Society Lawyers**

Camille Karlicki

**Legal Services Society**

Rolfe Horne

**Okanagan Regional Librarians**

Barbara Jo May

**Prince George School District**

Deborah Coxson  
Holly Kavanaugh

**St. Margaret's School**

Benjamin Pawlett

**UVic Administrative and Academic Professional Staff**

Chris Clausen  
Vincent Connor  
Ana Danut  
Sarwan Dillon  
Matt Greeno  
Sheryl Karras  
Bert Klatt  
Ling Li

**Observer**

Marcia Waller

**STAFF**

Executive Director  
Labour Relations Officer  
Labour Relations Officer  
Labour Relations Officer  
Financial Officer  
Senior Communications Officer  
Executive Assistant  
Administrative Assistant

Scott McCannell  
Rhiannon Bray  
Al Gallupe  
Melissa Moroz  
Jennifer Bond  
Brett Harper  
Toshie Arakawa  
Tammy Bouchard

**GUEST**

Parliamentarian

Barrie Lynch

## CONVENTION COMMITTEES

### Resolutions Committee

Sheldon Martell, Chair  
Natasha Carville  
Veronica Beier  
Julie Castonguay  
Sheryl Karras, Alternate  
My Lipton, Alternate  
Scott McCannell, Secretary

### Ways and Means Committee

John Foxgord, Chair  
Sheldon Martell  
John Babineau  
Elizabeth Hunt  
Brent Hird, Alternate  
Scott McCannell, Secretary

### Credentials Committee

Susan Dempsey, Chair  
Ronda Field  
Alina Carter  
Patricia Wilson  
Beth Eagles, Alternate  
Gillian Bartholomew, Alternate

### Sergeant-At-Arms Committee

Theo Knevel  
Jeff Stone  
Vincent Connor  
Brent Hird  
Deborah Coxson, Alternate  
Holly Kavanaugh, Alternate  
Al Gallupe, Secretary

### Table Officer Elections Committee

Melissa Doyle, Executive  
Harry Jennings, Executive

## CONVENTION RULES OF ORDER

The President introduced Barrie Lynch, registered parliamentarian, who is assisting with the convention proceedings.

The President read the Rules of Order:

1. A member of the Association may bring any matter before a convention for consideration by means of a resolution. The resolution must be signed by the member and at least one other member before it can be considered.
2. A resolution, except a resolution to amend the constitution, can be considered from the convention floor only if at least two-thirds of the delegates present, and voting, vote to accept the resolution for consideration.
3. Convention reports cannot be amended from the convention floor but a motion to refer the report back to the committee for reconsideration is in order. A motion to refer is not debatable. When a referral motion is properly seconded, it must be put to a vote immediately. A delegate cannot move referral after speaking on the issue.
4. If the recommendation of a committee is defeated, the matter is automatically referred back to the committee.
5. Once presented, a motion is the property of the convention. It may be withdrawn only by a majority vote of the delegates present and voting.
6. A motion to reconsider can only be made by a voter in the majority. Such a motion requires a majority to pass.
7. A delegate wishing to speak on a motion on the floor must be at a microphone and be recognized by the chair of the convention.
8. If a point of order is raised while a delegate is speaking, the delegate shall, at the request of the chair, stand down until the question of order has been decided.
9. If two or more delegates rise to speak at the same time the chair of the convention will determine the order of speakers.
10. Except when a delegate is speaking, a delegate can request that a motion be re-read for information.
11. No delegate can interrupt a delegate who has the floor except to raise a point of order.
12. A delegate may not speak more than once on an issue until all others who wish to speak have had an opportunity to do so.
13. A delegate who refuses to stand down when requested by the chair to do so shall be subject to suspension for the remainder of the session.
14. Speeches are limited to three minutes.
15. Except as set out above the convention will be governed by Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

*M/S/C to accept the Rules of Order.*

## **SERGEANT-AT-ARMS COMMITTEE INTRODUCTION**

The President introduced and thanked the members of the Sergeant-at-Arms Committee: Theo Knevel, Jeff Stone, Vincent Connor, Brent Hird, Deborah Coxson, Holly Kavanaugh and Al Gallupe.

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 10<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL CONVENTION**

*M/S/C to that the minutes of the 10<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Convention be adopted.*

## **DISPOSITION OF RESOLUTIONS REPORT**

The President referred delegates to the disposition of resolutions from the 2013 convention which was included with the convention materials.

## **INVESTMENT REPORT**

The President introduced Paul Siluch, PEA Investment Advisor, who reported on the investment portfolio's performance in 2014.

## **ALLOCATION OF RESOLUTIONS**

The President introduced Sheldon Martell, Chairperson of the Resolutions Committee, who referred the Secretary-Treasurer's Report and the 2013 and 2014 Audited Financial Statements to the Ways & Means Committee.

## **REPORT OF THE WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE**

The President called on John Foxgord, Chairperson of the Ways & Means Committee, to give his report.

The Chair introduced the members of the committee and PEA auditor Chris Cowland of the accounting firm Cowland & Associates.

Chris Cowland reported that the audit evidence they obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for a clean audit opinion. He noted that investments are now required to be reported at fair value.

## **SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT**

(full report printed at the end of minutes)

In his report to delegates, Secretary-Treasurer John Foxgord reviewed the 2013 and 2013 audited financial statements, highlighting the decrease in dues revenue, changes in operating expenses, and gains and losses in investment assets.

Over the past two years, the association has gained approximately seven members. The largest changes were experienced by the Government Licences Professionals (GLP) with losing 95 members through attrition, and University of Victoria (UVic) chapter growing by 50 members. On December 31, 2013 the PEA held an investment portfolio in equities, cash and cash equivalents and bonds for a total of \$9,002,376. Investment income, added to dues revenue, resulted in total revenue of \$2,030,303 for 2013. On December 31, 2014, the PEA held a total portfolio of \$9,460,599. Investment revenue and dues revenue resulted in a total of \$2,286,523 for 2014. Operating expenses for 2013 include day-to-day operations and defense of the union initiatives such as BC Federation of Labour membership fees, strike pay, arbitrations, and approved campaigns. In 2013 many of the expense categories showed little change from 2012; however, increases are seen in Communications, Executive and Constitution, Membership Services, and Convention/Conference as there was no conference in 2012. Negotiations and Staff Salaries and Benefits showed a decrease. In 2014 expenses show an increase in Communications (due to a two public awareness campaigns), 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary promotion, Convention/Conference, Negotiations, Staff Salaries and Benefits. Membership Services and Executive and Constitution showed a decrease. In 2013, there was deficiency of operating revenue over expenses of \$25,130; if other revenues and expenses are included, there was an excess of revenue over expenses of \$367,396. In 2014, was a deficiency of operating revenue over expenses of \$146,147; if other revenue and expenses are included, there was an excess of revenues over expenses of \$420,965.

John Foxgord concluded his report by thanking PEA's financial officers, investment advisor, auditor and members of the Finance & Investment and Ways & Means Committees.

*M/S/C to accept the Secretary-Treasurer's Report.*

## **APPROVAL OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

*M/S/C to accept the 2013 & 2014 Audited Financial Statements.*

## **APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS**

*M/S/C that the firm Cowland & Associates be reappointed as Association auditors for the 2015 & 2016 fiscal years.*

## **REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE**

The President called on Sheldon Martell, Chairperson of the Resolutions Committee who introduced committee members Natasha Carville, Veronica Beier and Scott McCannell, Secretary.

The Chairperson of the Resolutions Committee called on the President to present his report.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

(full report printed at the end of minutes)

The President reported on the Association's focus on PEA renewal throughout 2013 and 2014 in five major areas: member servicing, political awareness, strategic alliances, education, and the vision for the future. Member servicing is the most critical area for the union, and the PEA maintains a unique servicing model in which members can connect directly with labour relations officers. In addition, the PEA has settled a number of long-term agreements for members. The wage pattern set by other unions in the public sector this round is sub-standard; the PEA will endeavour to push back against these sub-inflation wage increases in the next round of bargaining. The PEA has prioritized communications with members through online voting, emails and surveys. In turn, the union has been recognized with awards from the Canadian Association of Labour Media and the International Labour Communications Association.

Unions continue to be attacked across the labour movement. Bill C-525 increases the difficulty for workers in federally regulated workplaces to become unionized. Bill C-377, if passed, is anti-union legislation that will impact how the union manages its finances. The PEA is a non-partisan organization but is working to increase political awareness by reaching out to politicians about members' issues and encouraging members to engage in discussion with them.

The PEA is building strategic alliances – the trial affiliation with the BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) elevated the union's involvement in the labour movement. Affiliation has allowed the PEA to have input into increasing the perception of the importance of public services and fair taxation, which is important for increasing our members' chances at the bargaining table. F. Kohlberger encouraged members to remain committed to BCFED affiliation.

The PEA identified education as a goal for PEA renewal. The PEA revised the local rep training program, delivered a successful education conference in 2014, and published *Duty with Dignity*, a history of the PEA. The PEA raised public awareness with the Endangered Experts campaign, the Okanagan Regional Librarians (ORL) campaign against cutbacks, and the advertisements in Victoria about post-secondary education funding cuts. In 2015, the PEA will be developing an education plan to increase members' training opportunities.

The PEA will continue to take member feedback into account. The union will strive to work towards a coordinated bargaining approach to increase the satisfaction of the membership. F. Kohlberger concluded his report by acknowledging the support of the members, local representatives, volunteers staff and the Association Executive

*M/S/C to accept the President's Report.*

The Chairperson of the Resolutions Committee called on the Executive Director to present his report.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

(full report printed at the end of minutes)

Executive Director Scott McCannell reported that PEA has focused on union renewal with effective member representation and strategic alliances, while ensuring democratic processes. Union renewal is necessary in the current anti-union environment. One strategic alliance, the affiliation with the BCFED, has led to relationships with other union leaders and Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) member workshop in 2014. The PEA further demonstrated its alliance with other unions by supporting the BC Teachers' Federation job action both financially and through coordinated dispute-related actions.

Bargaining has been the principal activity since the last convention. Two of the larger public sector unions acted unilaterally in 2013 and settled a five-year wage pattern. The PEA believes that coordinated public sector bargaining is the only way to secure fair and reasonable bargaining outcomes. The PEA submitted a resolution on coordinated bargaining at the November 2014 BCFED convention, which was strongly endorsed.

In 2013, agreements were reached in the St. Margaret's School (SMS) and Health Science Professionals (HSP) chapters. There were seven tables active in 2014 with agreements reached for the Okanagan Regional Librarians (ORL), Legal Services Society (LSS), University of Victoria (UVic), Oil and Gas Commission (OGC), and the SMS Residence Staff. The GLP has not yet reached an agreement, and the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program (FMEP) reached a tentative agreement in March 2015. The PEA has been committed to member engagement, transparency and democratic decision-making during bargaining.

The PEA and the chapters launched campaigns in response to the Mount Polley disaster and the reduction of professionals in the public service, the cuts to post-secondary funding, and the organizational changes for SMS Residence Staff and at the Okanagan Regional Library.

S. McCannell closed his remarks by acknowledging activists, members, the Association Executive and staff for their dedication to the union.

*M/S/C to accept the Executive Director's report.*

## **RESOLUTIONS**

The President called on the resolutions committee to present its report.

The Chairperson read the following resolutions to the delegates and made recommendations on behalf of the committee. The delegates either adopted, referred or defeated the resolutions as follows:

### **RESOLUTION #1**

**WHEREAS** BC's minimum wage is \$10.25 an hour, and some workers earn even less due to exemptions in the Employments Standards Act; and

**WHEREAS** minimum wage in BC has been frozen for more than two years and BC has one of the lowest minimum wages in Canada and one of the highest costs of living; and

**WHEREAS** full-time minimum-wage workers are living below the poverty line as measured by Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut off (LICO); and

**WHEREAS** the minimum wage should, as a matter of principle, bring people working 35 hours per week above the poverty line, so they can support themselves and their families;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the PEA support campaigns to increase the minimum wage to \$15.00/hour in 2015.

By unanimous consent the assembly approved B. Lynch to preside over this portion of the meeting. .

*M/S/C that the resolution be accepted.*

At this point B. Lynch turned the meeting over to F. Kohlberger to continue as Chair.

*M/S/C that the Resolutions Committee stand aside with thanks.*

## **TABLE OFFICERS ELECTON COMMITTEE REPORT**

The President thanked Melissa Doyle and Harry Jennings for participating on the Table Officer Elections Committee. F. Kohlberger turned the meeting over to Scott McCannell, Executive Director, who outlined the procedures for the election. S. McCannell called on the Chairperson of the Table Officer Nominating Committee to give his report.

Harry Jennings, Chair of the Table Officer Nominating Committee reported on the nominees for the table officer positions.

### **President**

Nominations were declared open for the position of President, for a two-year term. F. Kohlberger was nominated and no further nominations were made. After agreeing that he would stand for the position of President, F. Kohlberger was declared elected by acclamation.

### **First Vice-President**

Nominations were declared open for the position of First Vice-President, for a two-year term. Sheldon Martell was nominated and no further nominations were made. After agreeing that he would stand for the opposition of First Vice-President, Sheldon Martell was declared elected by acclamation.

### **Second Vice-President**

Nominations were declared open for the position of Second Vice-President, for a two-year term. Warren McCormick was nominated for the election. Warren McCormick was declared elected by acclamation.

### **Secretary-Treasurer**

Nominations were declared open for the position of Secretary-Treasurer, for a two-year term. John Foxgord was nominated and no further nominations were made. After agreeing that he would stand for the position of Secretary-Treasurer, John Foxgord was declared elected by acclamation.

At this point S. McCannell turned the meeting over to F. Kohlberger to continue as Chair.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Resolutions from the Floor**

The President reviewed the convention rules for resolutions from the floor.

By unanimous consent the assembly approved B. Lynch to preside over this portion of the meeting.

The delegates voted to allow the following four resolutions from the floor for debate. The resolutions were referred to the Resolutions Committee.

#### **RESOLUTION #1 FROM THE FLOOR**

**WHEREAS** the Federal Government's Bill C51 has the potential to diminish individual privacy rights; and,

**WHEREAS** Bill C51 could lead to systemic disclosure of a broad range of information about Canadian citizens,

**THEREFORE** be it resolved that the PEA work with other unions to oppose Bill C51 and that the PEA encourages members to make their concerns known to Members of Parliament.

A debate arose thereon.

*M/S/C that the resolution be accepted.*

#### **RESOLUTION #2 FROM THE FLOOR**

**WHEREAS** the PEA seeks to create youth awareness of the value of unions and actively engage youth workers, and

**WHEREAS** engaging and integrating students into the union movement has educational (student benefit) and productivity (employer benefit) components,

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the PEA supports the concept of employing co-operative education students within the PEA office.

*M/S/C to accept the amendment, “BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA ~~supports~~ explores the concept of employing co-operative education students within the PEA office.*

A debate arose thereon.

*M/S/C to accept the amendment, “BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA explores the concept of employing ~~co-operative education~~ students within the PEA office.”*

*M/S to accept the amendment, “BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA explores the concept of employing paid students within the PEA office.”*

The motion was defeated.

The question was put on the motion, as amended.

*M/S/C that the resolution be accepted.*

### **RESOLUTION #3 FROM THE FLOOR**

**WHEREAS** the PEA is financially sound,

**WHEREAS** the employer allowance for lunch is greater than ours,

**WHEREAS** PEA will wish to engage and inform members into future (i.e. BCFED, CLC, etc.),

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that “pizza lunch” allowances be raised to at least recognized per diems in respective collective agreements”.

*M/S/C to accept the amendment, “THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the PEA review “pizza lunch” allowance rates.*

A debate arose thereon.

The question was put on the motion, as amended.

*M/S/C that the resolution be accepted.*

### **RESOLUTION #4 FROM THE FLOOR**

**WHEREAS** the PEA has limited resources to give back to organizations through the Giving Back Program

**WHEREAS** the Grants and Donations can be directed to areas where it matters the most

**WHEREAS** the PEA Membership is focused in the South Coast and Vancouver Island at the cost of support to the remainder of the Province

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Grants and Donations Committee explore opportunities to regionally distribute donations where they are supported by the membership and have the greatest overall impact.

A debate arose thereon.

*M/S/C that the resolution be accepted.*

At this point B. Lynch turned the meeting over to F. Kohlberger to continue as Chair.

*M/S/C to dismiss the Resolutions Committee with thanks.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair thanked B. Lynch for his contributions.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Convention of the Professional Employees Association adjourned at 3:00 p.m., Saturday, April 18, 2015.

## **President's Report**

I would like to welcome all delegates to the PEA's eleventh constitutional convention and thank you for your commitment to your union. Over the past two years since we convened we have made significant steps in moving our union forward. There are five areas that summarize a majority of our work on PEA renewal: member servicing, political awareness, strategic alliances, education, and our vision for the future.

### **Member Servicing**

The core of our work at the PEA is member servicing. While we strive to increase our effectiveness in a number of other areas, member servicing will always remain the most critical area of the work we do. Our commitment to excellent service encompasses our unique servicing model, a friendly voice at the other end of the phone and hands-on assistance for our members. We are proud of our ability to connect our members with professional labour relations officers. Included in member servicing is our key role of bargaining. This report would not be complete without referencing the time and resources committed to the most recent bargaining cycle. From preparations to bargaining itself, we have settled a number of long-term agreements for our members. We will be the first to admit that the wage pattern set by other union in the public sector this round is sub-standard. We will endeavour to push back against these sub-inflation wage increases in the next round of bargaining.

In addition to the ongoing member servicing, we have undertaken a number of initiatives over the past two years. As a result of member-driven requests, we are now using online voting for all elections, referendums and ratifications. This not only saves money, but has increased voter turnout when compared to paper ballot votes. We have continued to emphasize communications with our membership. From our website to our magazine, to emails and surveys, we continue to prioritize communications with our members. I'm happy to report that 2014 was a substantial year for validation of our communications work. *The Professional* received awards from both the Canadian Association of Labour Media and the International Labour Communications Association. Our Endangered Experts campaign and our celebratory video exploring our union's history also received awards in 2014.

### **Political Awareness**

Across the labour movement Canada's democratic unions continue to be attacked. Late last year the House of Commons passed Bill C-525. This legislation does not impact us directly. It increases the level of difficulty for workers in federally regulated workplaces to become unionized. It also makes it easier for a minority of workers to lead a decertification campaign. What this legislation represents is more important to us than its direct impact on our union. This legislation symbolizes an ongoing battle between the federal government and unions in Canada. There are more anti-union bills in play. Bill C-377 is another private members' bill that if passed, will impact all unions in Canada. It will dramatically impact how our union manages our finances. It will force onerous and exhaustive public reporting of our financials. These examples of anti-union legislation demonstrate that this federal government is not friendly to unions in our country. We are a non-partisan organization; however, we must make it clear to our members where a political party will further hinder and impede our efforts to work on our members' behalf. With an election fast approaching we must remind our members, friends and family that this federal government will not support unions and our goal of achieving fair and reasonable gains for members. There is potential for further, US-style union bashing legislation if the Federal Government is re-elected and this would most likely set precedent for future provincial labour laws. Our non-partisan approach to politics means that we will not endorse or financially support any political parties. We do believe that it is in the best interest of our members to highlight the policies of each party in

areas that relate directly to our members' employment. We did this in the 2014 municipal elections and the 2013 provincial election. We pointed out key issues relating to our members and how each party stood on those issues. Letting our members making their own choice on how to vote is critical. Our political awareness also includes reaching out to politicians of all colours to talk about the issues that directly impact our members. This is important for several reasons: it increases our profile amongst the politicians and it gives us a chance to talk about our issues with the policy makers. We also encourage our members to engage in discussions with politicians locally and most importantly to make sure they vote.

## **Strategic Alliances**

Two years ago our members voted 77 per cent in favour of a full affiliation with the BC Federation of Labour (BCFED). This full has allowed us to become involved with the labour movement in a variety of ways. We sent five delegates to the BCFED convention this past fall, where a number of resolutions were discussed with direct impact on our members. The PEA's own resolution at the convention called for a coordinated and resourced strategy in the next round of public sector bargaining. Our goal was to minimize the disappointing results we saw in the 2013/2014 round of collective bargaining in the public sector. Our resolution was endorsed by the delegates and I'm proud to tell you, from a personal perspective, that the support our resolution received on the floor of convention signified to me that our affiliation is critical. As a small union sitting at the BCFED table, we can continue to push for a coordinated, researched and strategic approach to bargaining in the public sector that will bring our members fair and reasonable deals in the 2019 round of bargaining. If we don't have the ability to sit at the table, and push other public sector unions for the sort of coordinated approach to collective bargaining that we saw in 2012, we will not improve the working conditions, wages and benefits for our members.

The other significance of our affiliation to the BCFED is our ability to provide input into some significant issues that directly impact our members. Confronting the misinformation surrounding the value of public services and taxes is another key fight the labour movement has to address in order to increase our members' chances at the bargaining table. The PEA attended a public services summit in January, where unions from across our province started putting concrete steps into action to increase the positive perception of public services and fair taxation. If we are not sitting at the BCFED table, we can't shape the direction of these important issues on a larger scale. The value we receive from affiliation is the ability to be involved in a broader movement that will continue to fight back against anti-union legislation – I strongly encourage each of you to support our move to full affiliation to the BCFED and Canadian Labour Congress in 2016. In the months ahead you will begin to hear more about the importance of remaining affiliated to the BCFED and I encourage you to talk to your coworkers about the value of this alliance and the need to remain committed to affiliation.

## **Education**

Your Executive has identified education as a key component of union renewal. Since our last convention we have revised our local rep training program. This was done to increase our local reps' understanding of areas like human rights and membership engagement. We also held a very successful education conference last year that earned rave reviews from members. Finally, we invested in better understanding our history during 2014 to mark our 40th anniversary. This included the publication of a book, *Duty with Dignity*, the creation of a history video and a number of other things. All of these enhancements to our education program are the start of a coordinated, strategic review of our education offerings. Throughout this year we will be developing a new education plan to enhance our members' opportunities for education and training to perform the various roles they perform in the service of their union.

We have been able to send PEA members to training provided by the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and invite the CLC to provide our members training with the Together Fairness Works program. I was fortunate to be able to attend this CLC training in the winter of 2014 and can attest to the value of the curriculum and to the excellent opportunities to network and strengthen relationships with other union leaders.

Education is not limited to what we can do to inform our members, it's also about what we can do to educate the public about our union and the issues that impact our members. In 2014 we undertook a number of campaigns to raise awareness about issues that impact our members. Endangered Experts was a campaign that highlighted the ongoing reductions in the number of licensed science officers in the provincial government. The subsequent tailings pond failure at Mount Polley urged us to continue to highlight our earlier work with the Endangered Experts campaign. This event also led to a substantial amount of media awareness for our organization. We also ran an advertising campaign in Victoria to talk about the priorities of government in funding post-secondary education. We ran advertising campaigns in the Okanagan after management threatened cuts to librarians. These are all examples of our work to inform the public about the value of our members' work. Our work to make the public aware of our union includes increasing our presence in the community. We've done this over the past two years by attending community events including the Pride Parade and the UVic Days of Welcome.

### **Our Vision for the Future**

My colleagues on the Association Executive continue to prioritize the needs of our members through the ongoing development of our strategic plan. Our process for developing a strategic plan takes into account the feedback our membership provides us through surveys. In the 2014 membership survey members reported an increasing level of overall satisfaction with our union. The survey results were very positive; however, they also identified areas that our members want improvements in. Our members have to do more with fewer resources, shrinking staff and increased demands on their time. Our collective agreements aren't providing wage increases that match inflation. Our benefits aren't keeping up. We need to continue to work towards increasing these key provisions of our members' collective agreements through a coordinated, strategic bargaining approach to increase the satisfaction of our membership.

As the governing body for our union, your association executive has undertaken a substantial policy review in order to enhance our effectiveness and to increase our capacity. While not glamorous, this work is critical to ensuring our organization is efficient and prepared for the future. I would like to thank my current Association Executive members: Sheldon Martell, Natasha Carville, Susan Dempsey, Melissa Doyle, Kristen Ficke, Ronda Field, John Foxgord, Harry Jennings, Theo Knevel, James Laitinen, Warren McCormick and Marcia Waller. Your contributions towards our union are significant. I would also like to thank all those individuals who have stepped away the Association Executive since our last convention. Finally, I would like to thank all of the local reps and volunteers who work to build our union.

Our convention is an opportunity to celebrate our successes, outline our goals for the next two years and continue the work of fighting to increase working conditions and wages for our members. Renewal is not an easy task, but together we can make the changes we need to move our union forward.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Kohlberger  
President

## **Executive Director's Report**

Welcome to Convention 2015. The last two years have passed quickly with our continued efforts to evolve and strengthen the PEA.

This report will provide a chronological overview of some of the PEA's key initiatives and outcomes in the context of our overall strategic direction. We have been talking about "PEA Renewal" over the last few years. Renewal has focused on effective member representation and education, building strategic alliances and enhancing our collective capacity to take action in various forums relating to members' interests. Renewal is predicated on the understanding that the PEA must focus on more than collective bargaining and member grievances if it is to be effective in the current complex and threatening environment. We operate in an environment where the Federal Government has passed anti-union legislation and we face the spectre of further US-style right-to-work initiatives, where the Provincial Government continues to downsize BC's public sector under an austerity mandate and where fair and reasonable collective bargaining is the exception and not the norm.

In the spring of 2013, after thorough consultation, 77 per cent of voting members supported the PEA joining the BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) on a three-year trial affiliation. This may be the single most significant example of PEA strategic alliance-building to date. Now that we are affiliated, we have had access to various education opportunities including Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) Winter School; elected PEA leaders were able to attend in 2014 and 2015. Attendees found the learning important and the opportunity to build relationships with the elected leadership of other unions to be invaluable. The CLC also facilitated a Together Fairness Works workshop in January of 2014 for about 40 PEA members. This session outlined the very real threats of diminished labour law protection in Canada along with strategies to oppose such changes. The PEA has attended two BCFED-sponsored summits over that last twelve months that have focused on strategies for protecting public services. This is extremely relevant given that 92 per cent of our members work in the public sector. Our public sector members are facing increasing threats to existing service levels across almost all PEA chapters.

Building strategic alliances has extended to working closely with other unions. In 2014 we supported the BC Teachers' Federation job action financially and coordinated dispute-related actions in the Prince George School District. We have also worked closely with unions where we share the same employer. The PEA has also continued to dialogue, share information and build common approaches on issues with a variety of organizations that have overlapping interests with our members including the BC Wildlife Federation, the Forest Practices Board, the Auditor General, the Merit Commissioner, various reporters, professional licensing bodies, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and the Environmental Law Centre.

Bargaining preparations and bargaining have been front and centre since our last convention. The PEA has fully participated in the BCFED's public sector bargaining committee that is tasked with coordinating bargaining across unions that represent public sector workers in BC. Unfortunately, two of the larger public sector unions acted unilaterally in late 2013 and settled a five-year wage pattern (5.5 per cent increase over

five years). This contrasts to 2012, where BC's public sector unions were able to work together to achieve a much better mandate pattern (4 per cent over two years).

The PEA attended the BCFED Convention for the first time in November 2014. The PEA submitted a resolution calling for a thorough study of how efforts can be coordinated well in advance of the next round of public sector bargaining. This resolution was strongly endorsed and will hopefully contribute to better public sector bargaining outcomes in the future. Our belief is that the only way to secure fair and reasonable collective bargaining outcomes is through solidarity and coordination with other unions. The government has enjoyed more than two decades of dictating public sector bargaining outcomes as they have a tightly controlled statutory structure under the Public Sector Employers' Council framework. This has resulted in wages falling below inflation.

Agreements were reached in the St. Margaret's School and the Health Science Professionals chapters in 2013. There were seven additional tables active in 2014, with settlements achieved for Okanagan Regional Librarians (ORL), Legal Services Society (LSS), University of Victoria (UVic), Oil and Gas Commission (OGC) and St. Margaret's School (SMS) residence staff. The Government Licensed Professionals chapter continued bargaining in January of 2015 but has not yet reached an agreement. The Family Maintenance Enforcement Program (FMEP) chapter reached a tentative agreement in March 2015. While PEA members have made clear their disdain for the government's five-year, 5.5 per cent public sector wage mandate, bargaining committees' efforts to focus on member engagement, transparency and democratic decision making have contributed to all-time high membership survey approval ratings for how the PEA approached bargaining in 2013 and 2014.

The HSP, UVic, OGC and LSS chapters are now settled under the 5.5 per cent mandate along with 220,000 public sector workers from other unions.

The PEA and the GLP chapter have been working hard to turn around the BC government's policies relating to professionals that work in the BC public service. In March 2014, a public awareness campaign, Endangered Experts, was developed with outside consultants. This campaign documented the 15 per cent reduction in professionals since 2009 and warned of potential disasters. Both the release of the report and the August 2014 Mount Polley tailings pond failure generated significant and varied print and radio media interest and allowed the PEA to increase public awareness about the risks and costs of the government's actions. The PEA made a submission calling for a review of government policy to the Mount Polley Review Panel. We also had a series of meetings in 2013 and 2014 under a joint process with senior level Government Executives to examine the role of public service professionals. Along with building awareness at the senior level, a handful of modest joint recommendations were agreed upon.

In an effort to raise awareness about the provincial government's decision to impose ongoing cuts to post-secondary funding, a second significant campaign was launched in late 2014. Other campaigns to generate members and public awareness were launched at the SMS where PEA residence staff faced significant

organizational change and at the ORL, where management is threatening to drastically reduce library services.

Another aspect of renewal and strategic alliance-building has been to ensure the PEA is active in the political realm. The PEA takes a non-partisan approach and emphasizes the benefits of members engaging in the political process around their workplace issues, regardless of the party they support. Various reference materials were provided to members in the lead-up to the May 2013 provincial election and the 2014 municipal elections. The PEA sought meetings with cabinet ministers and opposition party members with the release of the Endangered Experts report. Both opposition parties agreed to meet, while the government declined. The PEA also took advantage of opportunities to meet and network with politicians of all stripes at the March 2014 BCFED-sponsored reception in Victoria.

2014 was the year of the PEA's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, as BC's union for professionals. A video, the book *Duty with Dignity*, and the inclusion of a number of PEA past presidents at the 2014 Education Conference were some of the ways this milestone was recognized. The PEA was recognized with three international awards for communications initiatives (*The Professional* magazine, the Endangered Experts campaign and 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary video). Communicating openly with members is a priority and the members' survey results in 2014 showed the highest satisfaction levels with PEA communication to date.

Local representatives play an integral role in almost every aspect of the PEA's operations. They continue to assist with member engagement, representation of members and are a source of invaluable intelligence for PEA staff. A new advanced local rep training curriculum was developed and delivered in 2013 and 2014 to enhance skills and knowledge and build capacity to increase member engagement.

The PEA Executive continues to make transparency, member engagement and accountability priorities. The annual member survey results, including comments, were reviewed by the executive prior to a two-day planning session in September that has led to a two-year strategic plan for 2015 and 2016 and re-confirmation that all the activities of the PEA must be focused on achieving our members' interests. PEA strategic plans are shared with all members and the PEA annual report details progress under those plans. Key areas that will be a focus under the current plan include further enhancement of education and training with a longer term perspective, creating a more inclusive union, ensuring our approach to governance is democratic and reflecting members' needs, engaging members in a vote about permanent affiliation in the BC Federation of Labour and building capacity for local action. With longer-term settlements, the PEA will engage in a concerted effort to grow our union and we will continue to engage in non-partisan political outreach and public awareness campaigns. Members will see a new PEA logo in 2015.

I would like to express appreciation for the PEA activists and members that continue to engage with their union. Our membership has a tremendous wealth of intelligence, commitment and passion to draw on and your engagement is directly proportional to the PEA's effectiveness. The PEA Executive's ongoing support of the PEA staff also contributes to our success. Lastly, I feel extremely fortunate to work with a dedicated and cohesive PEA staff team.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott McCannell  
Executive Director

## Secretary-Treasurer's Report

This report covers the fiscal years 2013 and 2014. First, sources of revenue from dues and investments are examined, and then an overview of operating expenses is presented.

The Professional Employees Association's revenue comes from members' dues and investment income. Dues totaled \$1,637,829 in 2013, an increase of \$53,344 from 2012, while our budget anticipated dues of \$1,589,345. In 2014, actual dues totaled \$1,638,299, an increase of \$470 from 2013, while our budget anticipated dues of \$1,650,964. The budget for 2013 projected increased dues revenue of \$33,379, and the budget for 2014 projected a further increase of \$61,620.

Over the past two years, the association has gained approximately seven members. The largest changes were experienced by the GLP and UVic. The GLP chapter experienced a loss of 95 members, through attrition, whereas the UVic chapter has grown by 50 members. Changes for all chapters are summarized in the following table:

	<b>Dec 2012</b>	<b>Dec 2014</b>	<b>Change</b>
FMEP	12	13	1
GLP	1236	1141	-95
HSP	135	158	23
LSL	42	42	0
LSS	7	9	2
OGC	30	35	5
ORL	19	23	4
PGSD	30	34	4
SMS	127	140	13
UVic	883	933	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>2521</b>	<b>2528</b>	<b>7</b>

The PEA's investment policy calls for a minimum of 50 per cent of our portfolio to be held in bonds, with no more than 50 per cent to be held in equities. At present, the policy restricts the PEA from holding shares in companies whose major activity is the manufacture of guns or weapons of war, tobacco products, or those companies that use exploitive labour practices, engage in human rights abuses, or contribute to carbon emissions. Policy also mandates that our reserves always be sufficient to support members of the PEA's largest bargaining unit through a two-month dispute, as well as costs associated with a grievance going through the courts to the Supreme Court of Canada. Investment performance is evaluated quarterly and to ensure that performance matches or surpasses benchmarks measured over four year rolling periods.

On December 31, 2013 the PEA held an investment portfolio consisting of \$4,277,477 in equities, \$547,551 in cash and cash equivalents, and \$4,177,348 in bonds for a total of \$9,002,376. Our equities were managed by three professional fund managers for which the PEA was charged an average rate of 0.753 per cent of the market value of the portfolio. Our entire portfolio returned 4.60 per cent for 2013, more than our benchmark which yielded 3.99 per cent. Investment income for 2013 totaled \$392,474 after expenses; that investment income, added to dues revenue, resulted in total revenue of \$2,030,303 for 2013.

On December 31, 2014 the PEA held an investment portfolio consisting of \$2,633,090 in equities, \$429,873 in cash, and cash equivalents, and \$6,397,636 in bonds for a total of \$9,460,599. Our equities are managed by three professional fund managers for which the PEA was charged an average of rate of 0.635 per cent of the market value of the portfolio. Our entire portfolio returned 7.34 per cent for 2014, more than our benchmark which yielded 7.30 per cent. Investment revenue for 2014 totaled \$648,224 after expenses; that investment income, added to dues revenue, resulted in total revenue of \$2,286,523 for 2014.

Investment reserves of \$37,527 were held in 2013 to fund retirement leave costs for PEA staff. For 2014, these reserves increased to \$52,384.

Our operating expenses for 2013 totaled \$1,634,948, an increase of \$72,419 from 2012.

These operating expenses fund two areas of union activities: \$1,560,530 for day-to-day operations and \$74,418 for defense of the union initiatives. These defense of the union initiatives are beyond our regular operating expenses; they include BC Federation of Labour Membership fees, strike pay, in some cases arbitrations and the campaigns and projects approved by the association executive. Many of our expense categories showed little change from 2012; however, there were several exceptions. Communication showed an increase of \$12,495 due to development of materials to promote and celebrate the PEA's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2013. Convention/conference expenses showed an increase of \$79,378 as there was no education conference in 2012; Executive and constitution showed an increase of \$39,902 due to chapter expenses (union leave) being much lower than in 2012; the Membership services category showed an increase of \$143,672 due to higher locals rep training costs (one additional session from 2012) and new curriculum development, BC Federation of Labour dues starting in May, an increase in chapter grant costs from 2012 (note: these costs vary from year to year based on the timing of chapter applications) and defense of the union costs, primarily related to the GLP dual postings issue. Negotiations showed a decrease of \$121,563 as 2013 was not a heavy bargaining year; and Staff salaries and benefits showed a decrease of \$77,888 due to two maternity leaves and related backfill costs accrued in 2012.

Our operating expenses for 2014 totaled \$1,758,881, an increase of \$123,933 over 2013. These operating expenses funded two areas of union activities: \$1,511,056 for day-to-day operations and \$247,825 for defense of the union initiatives. These defense of the union initiatives are beyond our regular operating expenses; they include BC Federation of Labour Membership fees, strike pay, in some cases arbitrations and the campaigns and projects approved by the association executive. Many of our expense categories showed little change from 2013, with some exceptions: Communications showed an increase of \$122,827 due to two significant public awareness campaigns that addressed ongoing cuts to GLP licensed professionals and reductions in funding for postsecondary education that have impacted UVic and costs relating to promoting the PEA's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary; Convention/conference expenses showed an increase of \$15,983 due to increased costs for room accommodations and other expenses. Executive and constitution showed a decrease of \$35,776 due to lower chapter expenses (e.g. union leave). Membership services showed a decrease of \$54,711 due to the fact there were not the same one- time costs as in 2013 (e.g. no new local rep curriculum) and because chapter grant expenses were lower than in 2013. Negotiations showed an increase of \$44,651 due to heavy bargaining activities; and Staff salaries and benefits showed an increase of \$27,087 due to negotiated wage increases and extended absence costs for a PEA staff member that was eventually accepted on long term disability. All strike expenses, other than strike pay, totaled \$1,772. Strike pay totaled \$79,340.

In 2013, our operating expenses exceeded the dues we collected, resulting in an operating deficit, after amortization, of \$25,130. If we include other expenses and revenues, we achieved an excess of revenues over expenses of \$367,396. In 2014 our operating expenses exceeded the dues we collected, resulting in an operating deficit, after amortization, of \$146,147. If we include other expenses and revenues, including strike expenses and strike pay, we achieved an excess of revenues over expenses of \$420,965. In both years, our defense of the union spending was responsible for pushing us into operating deficits. Our association executive approved these expenditures as the health of our chapters is a critical priority. The **endangeredexperts.ca** and **bcpriorities.ca** campaigns are examples of the public awareness work done in defense of the union.

Since the 2013 convention, there have been two separate financial officers working to keep our operations running smoothly. We were sorry to see Teresa Husband leave her role in December 2013, but we were fortunate to have Jennifer Bond join us in April 2014. In addition to maintaining the financial operations within the organization, Teresa and now Jennifer continue to evolve our processes which improve efficiencies, enhance analytics, and simplify our reporting and audits.

Thanks also to our portfolio manager Paul Siluch, of Raymond James, for being very attentive to our needs and providing us with continuous strategic advice which positions our investments within an ever-changing environment of risks and rewards, and also to our auditor, Chris Cowland, of Cowland & Associates, for providing us with an independent assessment of our accounting practices. Thanks to the recent members of the PEA Finance & Investment Committee, Susan Dempsey, Sheldon Martell, Joanne Montgomery, along with ex officio members Frank Kohlberger and Scott McCannell, and finally our Convention Ways & Means Committee members, John Babineau, Elizabeth Hunt, Sheldon Martell and Scott McCannell.

Respectfully submitted,

John Foxgord  
Secretary-Treasurer