

Canadian Association of Professional Employees

Special General Meeting

June 6, 2007
Crowne Plaza Hotel
Ottawa, Ontario
5:30 p.m.

Summary of Discussion

Purpose

The meeting was convened to discuss the recommended Constitutional amendments to clauses 17.4 and 17.5 of the CAPE Constitution regarding terms of office for the National Executive Committee.

Attendance

There were 37 members in attendance.

Introduction

J. Aggrey introduced the members of the National Executive Committee and the members of the Governance Review Committee who were in attendance.

J. Aggrey reminded the meeting that a Special General Meeting can only deal with the issue for which it was called.

He provided background and the rationale for the proposed amendment recommended by the National Executive Committee and then opened the floor for questions and comments.

Comments

P. Rosen reminded members that while the National Executive Committee's recommended Constitutional amendment, which if passed would mean there will be no elections this year, the National Office has sent out the call for nominations and resolutions as required by the Constitution. He again reminded the meeting that other recommendations proposed by the Governance Review Committee will be part of the consultation meeting with the Local leadership on June 13, 2007. That the Governance Review Committee will be proposing further amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws to be presented to the members in the fall.

Questions

T. Beauregard said she supports the three years term of office but wanted to know if the Executive Committee members whose term would be extended for another year were being imposed upon as they may not wish to continue and inquired if any thought was given to those members who may have wished to run for office this year.

Response

J. Aggrey explained that in order to change to a three year term it was necessary to have a transitional process as there was at the time of the merger. He said that if a member of the current National Executive Committee did not wish to extend their term for another year they have the option to resign and the National Executive Committee could fill the vacant position by appointment.

A. Picotte commented that no National Executive Committee member indicated a wish to resign at the National Executive Committee meeting when they approved this amendment.

Question

T. Beauregard asked about the members who may have wished to run in 2007 for a one year term.

Response

P. Rosen responded that this vote may not pass and if so then elections will proceed. He also mentioned that the Governance Review Committee had lengthy discussions on this issue.

C. Card also responded that the extension will help to reduce costs for the Association as it is always in an elections mode every year.

P. Rosen further added that the Constitutional amendment process is the practical way to move to non-staggered elections.

Question

A member asked what the cost savings for the Association would be.

Response

J. Aggrey advised that it costs the Association over \$70,000 to hold an election. This includes all costs for printing materials, postage, rental of hotel room, interpretation services, and etc...

Question

A member asked if there were any downsides to changing to a three year term of office and what about continuity.

Response

C. Card replied that the Governance Review Committee spent several hours on these issues. The Committee debated at its meetings whether the Association would be out of step with the terms of office for other unions. She said that the issue was researched and the Committee compared CAPE's governance structure with four other unions. Having longer terms of office, she argued, will allow the Executive Committee members to move forward on important issues and see the end results as opposed to focusing on elections. She also mentioned that certain or several board members would continue to seek re-election so the continuity would be there.

J. Aggrey informed the meeting that the Association of Canadian Financial Officers has just changed their terms of office from two to four years.

R. Rosen also noted that this will save the Association costs and the burden on staff.

Question

T. Lips inquired about the democratic responsiveness and whether the National Executive Committee did consider that it may become less responsive if they had longer terms of office and whether members would be less enthusiastic to run for three year terms.

Response

J. Aggrey stated that he did not think it would limit the democratic process. He said that in the past 10 -15 years, members had to be, literally, begged to run for office but that this is not the case anymore. That recently, more and more members are showing interest and willing to serve on the National Executive.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.