



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

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**BCITRA  
Annual General Meeting 2025  
MINUTES**

**DATE: Tuesday March 11 2025 10:00am**

**LOCATION: Burnaby Campus, Town Square D**

**ATTENDING: 9 members onsite, two members online.**

<b>A</b>	<b>CALL TO ORDER:</b>
	President Gordon Farrell called the meeting to order at 10:18am, following some technical difficulties involving our streaming delivery. Gordon noted we were meeting on the unceded lands of the Coast Salish.
<b>B</b>	<b>APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:</b>
	Judith Hall moved, Dawna Mackay seconded the approval of the agenda. Carried.
<b>C</b>	<b>INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:</b>
	Gordon thanked everyone for joining our meeting, in a 'hybrid format', both in person and via streaming. He noted the growth in attendance at our Me'n'Ed's lunches. Lisa Jung from the Alumni Association thanked everyone for participating, and noted she'd been able to meet many members at our holiday meal before Christmas. She mentioned the impact our endowment has on students. She confirmed that she made the right choice to come to BCIT, and is so proud that our grads get jobs. The Alumni Association is 'here', and will continue to support us. She wished us all 'buckets of happiness' as we enjoy our retirements.
<b>D</b>	<b>ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:</b>
	Brian Antonson moved, Vic Martens seconded, that the minutes of the last meeting be adopted. Carried.
<b>E</b>	<b>REPORTS:</b>
<b>E1</b>	<b>FINANCIAL SERVICES:</b>
	Randy Robinson's report was as circulated. Randy noted we use 'cash based accounting' in providing our annual reports..."Where does our money come from, where does it go?". We have put \$1950 toward our endowment this year, raising it to over \$102,000, via donations and patronage., which results in \$3706 for students this year. We have very low operating costs, and Gordon noted our membership fees cover items like director's insurance, etc.
<b>E2</b>	<b>IT AND WEB SERVICES</b>
	Shari Monsma's report was as circulated. She noted our decision in spring 2024 to move to the BCIT main website, which resulted in a September 2024 launch. Thanks to Warren Mailley in IT for his assistance, and Betty Riddle in the Alumni Association for her publicity and editing support. We now enjoy easier access and security. We had two student projects this year, one to create a membership tool, and the other to enhance our email operations. Thanks to all for the many improvements which resulted. BCIT is moving from Zoom to Teams for group communications. We have discontinued our phone number.
<b>E3</b>	<b>MEMBERSHIP SERVICES:</b>
	Dawna Mackay's report was as circulated. We have 30 new members, 352 total, with 130 active, and

	<p>222 inactive. Her goal now is to bring more inactive members into the active group, and she is considering a survey to determine how to attract more active members. She worked with students on our membership tool, and reports it is much easier to work with now. Soon, home access will be in place. Dawna also strengthened our Cosco relationship, noting they work on behalf of elders and have some amazing mandates. She's had a busy 16 months on our board and hopes to continue connecting colleagues.</p>
<b>E4</b>	<b>PRESIDENT'S REPORT:</b>
	<p>Gordon Farrell noted we have achieved our 30th anniversary, and acknowledged Ernie Iannacone's involvement from the beginning, when Brian Gillespie invited him to start our association. Ernie was always active, and passed away at 98 in January, leaving behind a great legacy at BCIT. Gordon remarked on the many improvements we have attained on our IT side. Student project involvement was very good for us. Our path for the future is good. Our hand-me-down desktop computer is gone, and we have a very serviceable laptop in place now, with many thanks to Lisa for facilitating this. He asked members to look at our new website and provide any input they have on it, and to check any personal info and confirm it. Wearing his other hat as a representative on the CPPR Association (College Pension Plan Retirees), he notes we have access to valuable information from other institutions. Our pension plan influence has grown, and our COLA clause has grown. The original freeze on pension plan growth of 1.8% was lifted due to work by the CPPR, and now our funds stay within the pension plan and are not used by government for other purposes. Our most recent three years have seen raises totaling 13.5%, and inflationary dollars go to a 'rainy day fund' to protect our investments. Gordon is very pleased he joined the CPPR and encourages more members...and thus more voices...to do so. CPPR and BCITRA are coming closer. We have a great pension plan because both we and our employers contributed to it. And the people who are managing our plans are doing very well...our investments are healthy and diversified. He encouraged us to look at the pension plan website, and consider what we might do to improve our benefits. He is happy with our business systems to date, notes the good attendance at our luncheon events, notes new members are coming on, and trusts we will continue to have growth. Volunteers are always welcome.</p>
	<b>ADOPTION OF REPORTS:</b>
	Vic Martens moved, Bob Wagner seconded, that our reports be adopted. Carried.
<b>F</b>	<b>NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT:</b>
	<p>Brian Antonson reported that the following current members of the board are willing to continue: Gordon Farrell, Donna Foster, Frank Gruen, Dawna Mackay, Shari Monsma, Randy Robinson, and Brian Antonson. In addition, Eamon Hayden has volunteered to join our board. Brian called for any further nominations once, twice, and thrice, and declared the listed candidates standing for election to our board. Karen Cresswell moved, Dawna Mackay seconded that these folks be elected. Carried. Longtime member Bob Wagner is retiring from the board this year.</p>
<b>G</b>	<b>DOOR PRIZES:</b>
	We gave away door prizes to participants, and all were pleased with their wins.
<b>H</b>	<b>RECOGNITION:</b>
	President Gordon presented former president and longtime board member Bob Wagner with a plaque recognizing his dedication to the work of our association and support over many years.
<b>I</b>	<b>BELAIR INSURANCE PRESENTATION:</b>
	<p>Lisa Hansen of Belair Direct Insurance brought greetings from longtime Retirees Association supporters Johnson Insurance, which becomes Belair Direct Insurance as of July. She invited members to interact with Johnson/Belair, noting 12 \$2500 prizes are available. They're happy to quote on home insurance, group discounts, travel insurance, etc. She noted the many disasters around the globe are creating upward pressure on rates. She highlighted the advantages of Medoc travel insurance, with the annual plan and significant coverage, up to \$10 million medical and \$8000 cancellation, with no age or health restrictions. Gordon thanked Lisa for their long association with our group, and for the annual contribution which helps grow our endowment.</p>

	<b>BCIT FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VISIT:</b>
	<p>New BCIT Foundation executive director Joanna Tong brought greetings, having joined the Foundation four months ago. She finds the Foundation and its work 'mind blowing' and noted the Inspire Campaign which is bearing great results and will wrap up at the end of March. All Foundation work is designed to set up students for success. She reported she's heard students say "Somebody believes in me!" She noted the new construction for student housing on campus, expected to be completed by May. Gordon repeated that our endowment contribution is \$102,000 to date.</p>
	<b>PHOTO OP AND BRIEF BOARD MEETING:</b>
	<p>We gathered as a group in front of the BCIT RETIREES banner for a photo, and then board members met for a brief board meeting to agree Gordon would continue as our president (Dawna Mackay moved, Shari Monsma seconded, carried), and we will meet again in April to discuss other appointments and ongoing business.</p>
	<b>PERKS:</b>
	<p>Lisa Jung noted that henceforth Retirees Association members will be eligible for the perks currently available to Alumni Association members, with thanks to Frank Gruen for the work he has done in this area. We now have over 50 partners. We simply need to send our emails to Lisa to confirm. She will provide a link to the Alumni page so we can submit our information, or we can email her direct at <a href="mailto:lisa_jung@bcit.ca">lisa_jung@bcit.ca</a> to register.</p>
	<b>BCIT PRESIDENT VISIT:</b>
	<p>BCIT president Dr. Jeff Zabudsky joined us, noting he's coming up on two years in the position. He reports it's wonderful to have the history and knowledge in our BCIT Retirees group. He met with us first when he was brand new in his position. It's a very busy role, and he acknowledged the work done by Kathy Kinloch and Paul McCullough prior to him assuming the position. A new strategic plan has been approved by the board. He will make a presentation to the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade on May 1. Built in to this will be BCIT's strong focus on student success, and on current students getting through their programs. We're experiencing increased retention, and strengthening our partnerships with industry. Skills learned at BCIT allow students to hit the ground running upon graduation. We continue to see 96 to 97% grad employment. UBC and SFU are somewhat lower, and all other institutions are much lower.</p> <p>Our new strategic plan will see us leveraging our land base...we can and will develop our land assets with new facilities. We can welcome our community. Height rezoning will allow for housing, more services, retail, recreation centres, etc., to create new revenue streams. The City of Burnaby is helping. North Vancouver properties offer opportunities. We can expand our Downtown Centre as well. We can better leverage our provincial mandate. We are unique in BC, and we are intended to be a provincial organization. All BC needs BCIT. New campuses are a possibility, as is involvement with other colleges.</p> <p>Jeff noted the reduction in international student numbers has hit some areas hard, notably Ontario. That province had been directed to get as many international students as possible, so the federal government reduction has hit them particularly hard. The reduction was done abruptly with no consultation and now, international students know they are not welcome, so they're going elsewhere. They will come back, but it IS affecting us at the moment, but not as severely as some others. Our international student component is around 10%, whereas some others are as high as 40%.</p> <p>Our fall enrollment is looking good already, a positive thing as we launch into our five year strategic plan.</p> <p>Jeff was open to questions. One was "How do you scale up building needs?" He noted we need to build housing, and we can build builders! We'll have a new trades and technology centre coming on stream in the northeast corner of our Burnaby campus, for which the private sector raised some \$35 million. We will partner with other institutions and use our faculty in other areas of the province, for example, Okanagan College. We can expand in other locations. Our new student housing facility will provide 470 beds starting in the fall 2025 semester. This is a mass timber concept, a new form of construction, much</p>

	<p>like LEGO! He noted there is huge growth happening directly across Willingdon, with some 4000 new residences planned. We live in 'Sleepy Hollow', between Metrotown and Brentwood, but all that is about to change. Another question came about the possibility of multi-level parking. Jeff noted that with expansion on the northwest corner of campus, by the Canada Way/Willingdon intersection, parking there will have to be replaced, so more parking will be needed, and public transit can provide part of the answer to our demands. Is there room for a parking partnership? We're looking at options...and must ensure demand for parking is there. Another question asked if the trades' Red Seal might open opportunities for degrees, as trades training and roles have changed. Jeff noted we can migrate from a diploma to a degree, and building pathways for Red Seal holders might warrant consideration. International expectations make this point. A number of students from other institutions have come to BCIT because they don't necessarily do the 'applied' work that we do. Industry frequently tells us our grads are able to hit the ground running. Jeff remains hopeful, as 40% of all trades training in BC is at BCIT, 20% is in union shops, 40% is spread over others.</p> <p>And, soup and sandwiches arrived as Jeff was wrapping his presentation, as well as BIRTHDAY CAKE for our 30th year in operation!</p>
	<p><b>ADJOURNMENT:</b></p>
	<p>Dawna Mackay moved adjournment, Randy Robinson seconded. Carried.</p>
	<p><b>NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE AND TIME:</b></p>
	<p>Our next AGM will be held in 2026.</p>