

The National Executive Committee meets in Montreal

During the weekend of May 4, 2019, the APS National Executive Committee proceeded to one of the two yearly mandatory face-to-face meetings it has to hold in opposition to the usual teleconference meetings used by the group. The By-laws of the Association provide for this format with the other face-to-face meeting is invariably held during the APS National Council in autumn. The National Executive has determined that this year's Council will be held in Montreal during the weekend of November 2, 2019.

With a fully loaded agenda, the Executive dealt mainly with activity reports from the various committees operating in the APS universe as well as personnel replacements.

At the head of the latter topic came the departure of Marcel Arsenault, the long-standing Director of the Eastern Region for APS. As with his predecessor, Donald Leblanc, Marcel was the victim of a job suppression in Moncton after almost 30 years of service with the CBC. APS is thus losing a powerful and respected voice always representing with passion the interests of our members in the Maritimes as well as those of the membership at large. In that capacity, Marcel was at the head of the National Health and Safety Committee for APS.

Marcel's mandate for representation was terminating this year, hence the need to appoint an interim replacement. To this end, the Executive appointed **Pascal Baczyk** from Moncton to complete the mandate as Regional Director for the East until its conclusion on November 3, 2019, before the commencement of a new two-year mandate. Pascal is a Financial Analyst who attended the Montreal meeting to meet the requirements of the replacement. This is how the members of the Committee came to discover a new recruit qualified to fulfill a difficult mandate as well as bringing a new breath of youth to the organization.

This autumn will also mark the start of the two-year mandates for the Regional Directors; the Ottawa Regional Director, filled in the interim by Anne-Marie Roy who replaced Daniel Lavigne as well as David MacFarlane, West Region Director.

To replace Marcel on the National Health and Safety Committee, the Executive appointed David MacFarlane, the Director representing the West who will be adding a new charge to his workload as he is already heading the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as the APS representative. However, David sees the two roles as complementary as they are both related. In the two cases, prevention is at the heart of the mandates and both concern the health and the wellbeing of employees. Nathan Farr, the Toronto President, will continue to occupy the other APS seat at that National Health and Security Committee.

The Executive also welcomed the arrival of Sébastien Fleurant at the National level. Sébastien came in as the second appointment from the Montreal Local following the election of Isabelle Benoit as the National Treasurer. Sébastien who also sits at the Montreal Workforce Adjustment Committee entered the assembly in full force by contributing to many discussions during the weekend.

Finally, as far as first events were concerned, the meeting was hearing for the first time the investment progress report instituted by the adoption of our new Investment Policy in November 2017. This new procedure covers the return on investments made by the Association. Isabelle Benoit as National Treasurer reports to the National Executive Committee to show individual returns for each investment fund. Isabelle confirmed the coming of age of the new investment strategy with higher returns on investments while preserving capital certified under guarantees.

At the level of future courses of actions for APS, the committee looked at the necessity to intervene with members to underline the failures of the corporation's compensation policies. Since last year many interventions were made with management to attempt to correct inequities without any success. Pending last-minute interventions to bring changes to this year's upcoming salary reviews, APS will launch an information campaign for all of its members.

The expiration of our existing collective agreement was also a topic of heated discussions. The date of expiration for the agreement is on March 31, 2020. There is a provision for automatic renewal that the parties have accepted to include in the duration clause of the agreement. To escape that possibility APS has to file a written notice to that effect six months before expiry, which places us in autumn 2019. Without adopting a formal resolution, the Executive Committee has debated possibilities very well aware of the consequences. Discussions with the employer will, therefore, be undertaken in the very near future.

The next face-to-face meeting of the Executive will, therefore, be held on Sunday, November 3, 2019.