

2023 AGM Minutes

June 1, 2023

6:00 p.m. EST

Hybrid meeting: Church of the Holy Trinity in Toronto, ON & online on Zoom

Attendance: 20 people in person and 10 attendees on zoom. Some votes were submitted in advance. For all votes, the recorded votes in advance of the meeting, votes online, and votes in person were assessed before carrying the motions.

Recorder: Ian Van Haren, Board Secretary

1. Opening

Board Chair Cherilyn Spraakman opened the meeting at 6:03 pm with a land acknowledgement, introduction of CPJs mission a recognition of CPJs 60th anniversary, and opening prayer.

2. Agenda Review

Cherilyn Spraakman reviewed the agenda. No additions or changes were proposed.

3. Approval of 2022 AGM Minutes

Motion: To approve the 2022 minutes as distributed. M/S Michael DeMoor / Marlene Bergsma.
Carried

4. Chairperson Report

Board Chair Cherilyn Spraakman reviewed her report, which was included in the CPJ's annual report. She provided some highlights on the work done in climate justice, poverty eradication, and refugee and migrant rights. In 2022, two long-term staff members resigned: David Pollock and Karri Munn-Venn. She thanked the board members who completed their terms in 2021 and 2022: Adrienne Castellon, Martha Wiebe, and Nick Van Dyk in 2021 and Charles Kooger in 2022. Cherilyn noted that CPJ faced some challenges in 2022 with decreased revenue, a deficit, and a decision to leave some staff positions vacant given the financial context. She provided her accolades for Willard and the staff team.

5. Executive Director Report

Willard Metzger, CPJ's Executive Director, welcomed guests in-person and online to the AGM. He provided an overview of revenue from religious orders and CERB from 2019-2021, and then noted that 2022 was a challenging financial year for the organization. He mentioned that expenses were reduced and some staff positions remained vacant while navigating a challenging financial year. In 2023, revenue is healthy and there is excitement for the 60th anniversary. 2022 was a year of growth and new partnerships with Human Rights Watch, International Justice mission, etc. The Dignity for All campaign

ended in 2022; CPJ is exploring new partnerships across Canada. Willard expressed his gratitude to donor and membership base and their commitment towards the vision of public justice in Canada.

6. Treasurer Report

The board treasurer, Paul Berry, provided an overview of the finances and introduced three motions:

Motion: Receive the 2022 financial statements. M/S: Paul Berry / Michael de Moor
Carried

Paul mentioned that the budget is both aspirational and contingent, as it can be challenging to predict certain revenue and there is uncertainty about some pending funding applications.

Motion: Approve the 2023 operating budget presented in the budget. M/S: Paul Berry / Cathy Rogers
Carried

Paul mentioned that CPJ will explore working with a different auditor in the future. This year CPJ is changing their accounting system so did not want to change auditors at the same time.

Motion: Appoint Ouseley Hanvey Clipsham Deep LLP as CPJ's auditors for 2023.
M/S: Paul Berry / Ian Van Haren
Carried

7. Election of board members

The nominations committee proposed appointing Wanda Walter to a full term after her brief term replacing Charles Kooger who resigned last year. They also propose reappointing Marlene Bergsma and Michael DeMoor to a second three-year term.

Motion: Appoint Wanda Walter to CPJ board of directors for a three-year term.
M/S: Ian Van Haren / Keira Kang
Carried.

Motion: Reappoint Michael de Moor and Marlene Bergsma to a second three-year term.
M/S: Ian Van Haren / Harry Kits
Carried.

8. Questions and Comments from the Floor

There was a question from online participant about whether Willard's contract as ED was renewed. Cheryl Sprakman indicated after a review process, Willard's appointment was unanimously approved by the board and they are working on the terms of the reappointment.

Comment from Andrew Slonetsky: he is proud of work of executive work in hard times on the work done during challenging times.

Question from John Olthuis: Can you say more about different collaborations including collaborations with mainline churches?

- Emilio Rodriguez, CPJ's Refugee and Migrant Rights policy analyst, presented the partnership with Human Rights Watch and the Welcome to Canada campaign and the interfaith statement that CPJ was involved with. John asked if MPs are responding to the campaign. Emilio mentioned that it has been challenging at the federal level, but there was more success at the provincial level, where 5 provinces have changed their approach and CPJ was directly involved in three provinces.
- Willard Metzger discussed the connections that CPJ has with mainline churches including through CPJ affiliate membership in the Canadian Council of Churches. He pointed to the work that policy analysts have done in support of different denominations, including the United Church of Canada, Presbyterian Church in Canada, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. In addition, CPJ is a member of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.
- Natalie Appleyard, CPJ's Socio-Economic Policy Analyst, mentioned Kentro Christian Network, a new organization where CPJ is a founding member. CPJ has also supported campaigns for basic income led by churches. In 2024, CPJ will help convene national basic income conference in Ottawa and aim to build these partnerships.

Question from Will Postma: I am pleased to hear about these collaborations, and would like to know about CPJ's work of poverty for Indigenous people and reaching out towards young people?

- Natalie Appleyard highlighted collaborations with faith-based partners and other advocacy movements including Indigenous churches and Indigenous-led organizations whose research they support and amplify including the Yellowhead Institute. CPJ aims to be in networks and coalitions with these groups and ensure there is Indigenous representation on advisory committees and as guest speakers at events. These goals are embedded in CPJ's strategic plan.
- Willard Metzger mentioned how the public justice internship enables young adults to make a real impact on public policy. In addition, CPJ has many students who work as interns. CPJ is also working on creating a campus chapter of students for public justice at the University of Ottawa.
- Cherilyn Spraakman mentioned that following a recommendation from the staff team, the board passed a motion to ensure there is youth representation on board of directors.

John Olthuis asked about the reception on Parliament Hill about basic annual income. Natalie discussed the status of bills in the senate and house on development of the basic income framework. There are champions in both houses, including among some Liberal MPs, but not among leadership. The Canada Child Tax Benefit and forthcoming disability benefit are part of a move towards basic income and CPJ continues to engage with parliamentarians through the all-party anti-poverty caucus.

Walter Nautel shared an observation that over the history of CPJ, formerly known as CJL, two people played a significant role in shaping the organization. One is Gerald Vandezande, who passed away in 2011, and the other is John Olthuis, who is present. There was a round of applause for John.

9. Closing

Meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm EDT.