

**PRIVATE CAREER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS AGENCY BOARD MEETING**

**Thursday, February 1, 2007  
BCIT Downtown Campus  
Room 281  
555 Seymour Street  
Vancouver BC**

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**Board Members Present:**

Derek Hamill – Chair  
Ruth Wittenberg  
Lois McNestry

Nancy McNab  
Tammy Pitkeathly  
Kevin Williams

**By Conference Call:**

Robert Prendergast

Steve Whiteside

**Also Present:**

Jim Wright, Registrar & CEO  
Susan Brown, Director, Policy and Systems Quality Branch  
Ministry of Advanced Education

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**MINUTES**

1.0 Approval of the Agenda

The following items were added to the Agenda:

- 3.5 Kingston College Update
- 5.3 Student Complaint process
- 5.4 Grand-parented degree-granting institutions
- 5.5 Ministry Update

Moved that the amended Agenda be approved.

Moved: Nancy McNab  
Seconded: Kevin Williams  
Carried

2.0 Approval of Minutes

- 2.1 Motion to approve Minutes of November 16, 2006

Moved: Lois McNestry  
Seconded: Tammy Pitkeathly  
Carried

2.2 Motion to approve Minutes of December 8, 2006

Moved: Tammy Pitkeathly  
Seconded: Lois McNestry  
Carried

3.0 Old Business

3.1 Minister's request for new Bylaws, November 23, 2006

The registrar reviewed the Minister's letter of November 23, 2006 wherein, firstly, he requested the Board to create a new bylaw authorizing the public posting of the names of institutions whose registration or accreditation have been suspended or cancelled, and secondly, requested a new bylaw requiring that nominees to the PCTIA Board must represent an institution that has been in good standing with the Agency for a period of at least one year.

3.2 Amended Bylaw transmittal letter

On December 8, 2006 the Registrar forwarded a set of the amended Bylaws to the Minister. The revised Bylaws responding to the two requests from the Minister for new bylaws, and included adjustments in the annual fees charged to registered and accredited institutions. These were the first fee increases since the Agency was established in November 2004.

3.3 Repayment of Helicopter of Canada legal costs

The Board reviewed a November 20, 2006 letter from the Ministry, advising that the Agency would receive a grant in the amount of \$16,978.45 for legal costs associated with the constitutional challenge by the Helicopter Association of Canada. When the Registrar advised that the funds had not yet been received, Susan Brown said she would follow up.

3.4 PCTIA web interface project

The Registrar explained that the report in the agenda was prepared for the Ministry, outlining the status of the Web Interface Project through December 2006. He advised the Board that 480 of 530 institutions had now filed their annual enrolment figures on-line, which was regarded as a

very positive response. Steve Siblock is now working with the Ministry, preparing detailed documentation for phase two of the Project.

### 3.5 Kingston College update

Kingston College remains suspended, pending closure at the end of the train-out period. The institution's lawyer filed a notice of the institution's intent to seek reconsideration, but to date has not provided any basis for the reconsideration. An investigation into Kingston College's operations in Ontario has resulted in the institution being suspended in that province as well, pending a voluntary closure no later than August 2007.

## 4.0 Committee Reports

### 4.1 Finance & Personnel Committee

#### 4.1.1 Review of December 2006 month-end financial statements

The Chair reviewed the Statement of Financial Position and the Statement of Operations, expressing satisfaction with the fact that as at the end of December 2006, the Agency had a surplus of \$79,728.53.

#### 4.1.2 Proposed operating budget for 2007/08

The Registrar reviewed the proposed operating budget, noting that the revenue projection was based on the recently revised registration and accreditation fees, as well as a one-time grant of \$200,000 from the Ministry of Advanced Education in anticipation of the re-regulation of ESL schools during the upcoming fiscal year.

The expenditure side of the budget included the additional personnel approved by the Board at its last meeting, as well two additional FTEs in anticipation of the re-regulation of ESL schools. Other expenditure increases included amortization for additional equipment, the leasing of a new photocopier, the leasing of and lease-hold improvements for some additional meeting room space, and contract salaries for an FOIPOP contractor.

Steve Whiteside indicated his opposition to the increased budget because he believed the Agency needed to be finding ways to cut costs and regulatory oversight. He expressed the view that as a self-regulating body, the Board has a responsibility to the private career training industry, as well as to students and government. Several other Board members spoke in support of the need to

increase staffing, if only to be able to do the job currently expected of the Agency. Nancy McNab said that in her new job it is apparent that Agency staff are working very hard but not able to meet the expectations of institutions that are seeking new program approval.

In response to Steve Whiteside's remarks about the motivation of the Minister in his foreshadowing the need for heightened educational standards for both registered and accredited institutions, Ruth Wittenberg said the Board should reflect back on its recent Board development seminar, where it was made clear that the role of the Board is principally fiduciary, while it is the Minister's responsibility to set standards and the Registrar's responsibility to manage the Agency.

Tammy Pitkeathly asserted that as a recently elected Board member her platform had been to help bridge the gap between the aviation sector and the PCTIA. She did not think the Board should approve the budget because as a Board member, she did not know enough about the internal workings of the Agency and had received very little orientation to the Agency's governance model. This gave rise to a debate about the role of the Board, the meaning of self-regulation, and the responsibilities of the Registrar as the person hired to manage the Agency.

For his part, the Registrar took exception to Ms. Pitkeathly's references to mismanagement in the Agency, and asked that these be expanded upon. In response, she said she had not intended to cast aspersions on the Registrar or the staff, but felt she was not sufficiently knowledgeable of the Agency's operations to support the budgetary increases.

Following a reminder from the Registrar that, with the exception of revenue and expenditures relating to the anticipated re-regulation of ESL, the proposed budget was structured on fees and staff increases previously approved by the Board, it was moved that the Board adopt the 2007/08 operating budget as proposed.

Moved: Kevin Williams  
Seconded: Lois McNestry  
Carried, with one negative vote and one abstention.

## 4.2 Student Training Completion Fund Committee

### 4.2.1 Review of December 2006 month-end financial statements

The Committee Chair reviewed the STCF Statement of Financial Position for December 2006, noting that the Fund balance stood at \$5,581,754.

#### 4.2.2 Student tuition refunds

The Board approved a number of recommended student tuition refunds, as follows:

Canadian Technical Trades Institute in the amount of \$3,358.68

Moved: Robert Prendergast  
Seconded: Ruth McNab  
Carried

Kootenay School of Hairdressing in the amount of \$9,778.79.

Moved: Kevin Williams  
Seconded: Nancy McNab  
Carried

Trend College (Kelowna) in the amount of \$12,092.47.

Moved: Lois McNestry  
Seconded: Nancy McNab  
Carried

Berkshire College in the amount of \$156,274.10.

Moved: Nancy McNab  
Seconded: Kevin Williams  
Carried

#### 4.3 Quality Assurance Committee

The Chairman, Kevin Williams, reviewed the December 8, 2006 meeting of the Committee, at which he had been elected Chair. He expressed the view that while the Committee wanted to continue its efforts to identify opportunities for enhanced quality assurance, it felt uncertain as to how to proceed in light of the possibility of legislative change.

It was agreed that the as many members of the Committee as may be available will meet with Susan Brown as soon as possible, so Ministry staff can give consideration to the work of the Committee in developing options for the Minister.

#### 5.0 New Business

### 5.1 Election of a Vice-President for the Board

After the Chair reminded members that election as vice-chair did not mean the Vice-Chair was presumed to be the next Chairperson, he opened the floor for nominations.

Robert Prendergast proposed Kevin Williams, and he indicated that he was willing to let his name stand.

In the absence of any further nominations, Kevin Williams was declared elected by acclamation.

### 5.2 Test advertising of unapproved programs

The Registrar explained to the Board that institutions seeking program approval for highly capitalized trades programs from both the PCTIA and the Industry Training Authority (ITA), they are experiencing long delays in getting even preliminary approval to proceed. Some have asked if it would be possible to advertise these programs before they are approved, and the Agency Bylaws do not allow this to happen. The Registrar said that he is very reticent to see programs advertised without approval because it can be very unfair to students if the program does not proceed.

Robert Prendergast wished to go on record that it is his opinion that the Industry Training Authority is mismanaged, and wanted to know what the Ministry of Advanced education is doing about it.

After being reminded that the ITA is located, not in the Ministry of Advanced Education but in the Ministry of Economic Development, and receiving assurances from Ministry staff that they are fully aware of the problems associated with ITA program approval, and are working with the Ministry of Economic Development to try and improve the situation, the Board agreed that it need take no specific action on the matter at this time.

### 5.3 Student complaint process

Robert Prendergast said he had added this item to the agenda so as to be able to revisit the need for a formal student complaint process, and to let the Ministry know that the Agency is prepared to accept responsibility for this function. When other Board members suggested that this would result in the need for additional personnel, the Registrar acknowledged that that would be the case, but if the government was considering the possibility of reintroducing a complaint process, they should carefully examine best practices in other jurisdictions so as to ensure that only legitimate complaints were responded to. The Ministry representatives said that the

possibility of reintroducing a student complaint process had been discussed but no decision has been taken as yet.

The discussion concluded with a motion that the Board's position is that if the student complaint process is reintroduced, it be a mechanism or process under the oversight of the PCTIA Registrar.

Moved: Robert Prendergast  
Seconded: Kevin Williams  
Carried

#### 5.4 Grand-parented degree-granting institutions

The Registrar explained that when the *Degree Authorization Act* came into force five years ago, degree-granting institutions that were registered with PPSEC were given until April 11, 2007 to make application to the Degree Quality Assessment Board for the right to use the word "university" in their name and to continue delivering each of their degree programs in British Columbia. Unfortunately, the DAA did not require early application and several of the degree-granting institutions, in spite of urgings from the Ministry, failed to make application until quite recently. As a consequence, there is every possibility that some of these institutions will not complete the review process by the April 11<sup>th</sup> deadline.

Since the DAA provides no possibility for either extension or train-out, and since these institutions will at that date still be under the jurisdiction of the PCTIA, the Agency will have no alternative but to cancel their registrations on April 11<sup>th</sup>, and this will impact potentially several hundred students enrolled with these institutions.

In an effort to minimize the effect of these closures, the Registrar and the Ministry staff are working closely to determine if the universities in question have contingency plans and, if not, to try and arrange train-out opportunities with other private degree-granting institutions in the area.

#### 5.5 Ministry update

Susan Brown advised the Board that the Minister has instructed his staff to provide him with policy options relating to the regulation of private training institutions, and that he has gone on record that he intends, at a minimum, to re-regulate ESL schools during the spring sitting of the legislature. Other areas of interest include the possibility of broadening the composition of the Board, and setting minimum educational standards for regulated institutions. Although the sector has received a considerable amount of adverse publicity of late, these matters have been under consideration within the Ministry for some time, as was evidenced by the

Minister's letter to the Board almost a year ago regarding the need to enhance quality and ensure student protection. Consideration is also being given to some changes to the *Degree Authorization Act*.

- 6.0 The Chair asked Board members if they had any questions relating to the correspondence attached to the agenda. In relation to Julia Peters' January 8, 2007 letter of resignation from the Board, the Registrar had advised the Board of her recent appointment as an Institution Officer with the Agency.

In the absence of any questions, the Chair announced that the next regular Board meeting would take place on Thursday, April 19, 2007, and called for a motion to close the meeting.

Moved: Nancy McNab  
Carried

The meeting closed at 12:15 p.m.