



CANADIAN COUNCIL OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEES (CCPAC) 2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

September 10-12, 2017
Delta Fredericton Hotel, Fredericton, New Brunswick

CCPAC Constitution Information Note

Issue

At the CCPAC 2016 annual conference, CCPAC Members asked the Board of Directors to undertake a review of proposed revisions to the CCPAC constitution and provide recommendations to all CCPAC Members by March 2017 in order to invite input and comments prior to the 2017 annual conference. This information note provides background on the CCPAC constitution and proposed revisions.

Background

CCPAC delegates at the 1982 annual conference adopted the first CCPAC constitution. CCPAC President, T. Patrick Reid, MPP, Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, summarized the organization's purposes as set out in the constitution in the following way:

"We're here basically to upgrade our confidence as public accounts committees; to increase our own knowledge; to give our committees a higher profile; and to exchange views and ideas. Our intention is improving our own committees and their operations and hopefully ensuring that the taxpayers are getting the best bang for the buck."

The constitution was amended at the 1986 annual conference to provide for an Executive Director to assist with CCPAC conference administration and coordination. Today, the position also regularly liaises with CCPAC Board, Members, and Clerks; develops and maintains the CCPAC website and provides general continuity in support of Association activities.

A recurring theme from Members at CCPAC annual conferences has been that, "more time should be given to exchanges between jurisdictions as to what is happening, what should happen and what is not happening."

At the 2014 and 2015 CCPAC annual conferences, a committee of Clerks was established to provide the CCPAC membership with a draft revised constitution to reflect the interests of CCPAC Members, clarify governance to serve these interests, and provide for legislative staff resources to support the CCPAC Board of Directors with coordination and administrative arrangements for CCPAC annual conferences.

The committee of Clerks identified three possible changes to the constitution based on input from Clerks across Canada on the interests of their Members:

1. **Board of Directors membership – change Board membership to a Board of current and upcoming conference hosts to strengthen CCPAC annual conference planning:**
 - **From:** a Board of three Members comprised of a President and two Vice-Presidents drawn from two Members elected at large and the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee of the jurisdiction hosting the next annual conference.
 - **To:** a Board of three Members with the President being the host of the next annual conference and the two Vice-Presidents being the hosts of the current conference and the conference immediately after the next conference.
2. **Legislative staff support – make parallel changes to enhance legislative staff support with a Secretariat of an Executive Director and Clerks of the jurisdictions hosting the current and next two CCPAC conferences.**
3. **Preamble – add a preamble on the general purpose of CCPAC,** based on preambles for other parliamentary organizations.

Discussion at the CCPAC 2016 Annual Conference

At the CCPAC 2016 annual conference, CCPAC delegates discussed the proposed revisions to the CCPAC constitution, and unanimously adopted the following motion: *“That the Board of Directors undertake a review of the proposed revisions to the CCPAC constitution and provide recommendation(s) in both official languages to all CCPAC Members by March 31, 2017 in order to invite input and comments prior to the next Annual General Meeting to be held in September 2017 in Fredericton, New Brunswick.”*

CCPAC Board of Directors Follow-Up to the 2016 Annual Conference

In September 2016, the Board directed the Acting Executive Director to distribute the preliminary draft constitution to CCPAC Members, with a request for feedback and comments. No written comments or feedback were received.

The Board subsequently reviewed the draft constitution and proposed two additions at the end, on the “Amendment of the Constitution,” and the “Review of the Constitution.” These additions reflect the constitutions of other parliamentary organizations. The Board also proposed technical changes to clarify CCPAC’s purpose as set out in the preamble and aims, Board of Directors membership, and voting arrangements. In the Board’s view, the revised draft constitution provides a clearer statement of the purpose of CCPAC as a professional development forum for PAC Members, with clarified governance and support provisions to serve this purpose.

In June 2017, at the Board’s request, the Acting Executive Director resent the revised draft constitution with two additions to committee Clerks for further feedback from CCPAC Members. House of Commons Members expressed interest in opportunities for Members at the 2017 conference to share views and discuss proposals regarding the revised draft constitution.

To assist CCPAC Members at the 2017 annual conference, the Board directed that the revised draft constitution and an Information Note with additional information for Members on the constitutional changes be made available on the conference website and the CCPAC website, with print copies available for Members at the time of conference registration.