

# Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2023

Friday, January 19, 2024

Business meeting and Panel discussion at 6:30 and 7:30 pm respectively

*Online, on Zoom*

Participation varied for the different parts of the meeting and included between 50 and 60 participants at different times.

## Business meeting

Call to order (Réal):

- Approval of [minutes from last year's meeting](#)
- *The minutes were approved unanimously.*
- Approval of the agenda
- *The agenda was approved unanimously.*

Reports:

- [President's report](#) (Réal)
- [Treasurer's AGM Financial Report](#) (Eric)
- *The Treasurer's Report was approved unanimously.*
- Introduction of [By-Law amendments](#) (Stephen)
- *The By-Law amendments were approved unanimously.*

Election (Ted):

- Explanation of process by election officer (Ted)
- Call for nominations for President. 1 minute statements from each. Vote.
- *Réal Lavergne nominated for President. Elected unanimously.*
- Call for nominations for Vice-President. 1 minute statements from each. Vote.
- *Blake Hamilton nominated for Vice-President. Elected unanimously.*
- Call for nominations for Treasurer. 1 minute statements from each. Vote.
- *Eric McCabe nominated for Treasurer. Elected unanimously.*
- Call for nominations for Secretary. 1 minute statements from each. Vote.
- *Laura Bruins nominated for Secretary. Elected unanimously.*
- Call for nominations for Members-at-Large (4). 1 minute statements from each. Vote.
- *Stephen Fanjoy and Ala' Qadi nominated for Member-at-Large. Elected unanimously.*

## Panel Discussion

The conditions for a Citizens' Assembly on electoral reform to yield positive and significant results

Facilitated by former chapter President Ted Cragg.

**Panelists:**

- Lisa Marie Barron, NDP MP for Nanaimo-Ladysmith
- Réal Lavergne, President of Fair Vote Canada's NCR chapter
- Mike Morrice, MP for Kitchener Centre (briefly, with respect to the first question)

[Click here for the edited transcript of the panel discussion.](#) The transcript document contains a link to a recording of the discussion as well.

**A few highlights follow:**

How do you rate the odds that Motion M-86 will pass and why? What is the value of this motion even if it fails?

- *Panelists agreed that the odds of the motion passing were unpredictable, and that much depended on the positions put forward by Cabinet and the Conservative shadow cabinet. Regardless, the motion itself, and the hard work put in by FVC volunteers will have helped to move the needle on electoral reform and generate momentum for the citizens' assembly idea in the media and with MPs. As Mike Morrice put it. "We have already won."*

What would the timelines look like? Could a CA complete its deliberations a few months before the next election?

- *Things often move slowly in Parliament and some time may be needed to allow for committee discussion on the mandate and operational details of a citizens' assembly on electoral reform. Good leadership and clear objectives would be needed to avoid unnecessary delays in committee.*
- *Once a citizens' assembly is started, the process would be an independent one and could probably continue even if an election occurs in parallel.*
- *If an assembly was able to submit its recommendations before the next election, parties might choose to campaign on those recommendations, singly or jointly.*

In the first hour of debate, Patrick Weiler proposed that the CA's main recommendations should be put to a referendum at the same time as the election. Is that a desirable and viable option? If not, what could the parties do to promote the legitimacy of the CA's recommendations as part of the election process itself?

- *The Conservative party considers a referendum to be a necessary follow-on to a citizen's assembly, but Motion M-86 says nothing about a referendum. Lisa Marie said this was intentional because she fears that referendums tend to make the issue a partisan one, which is something we wish to avoid. Many countries have successfully reformed their electoral system without the use of a referendum.*

Assuming the Motion passes, what measures might be taken to discuss the mandate and process for convening a CA? What sorts of subjects might judiciously be included in the CA's mandate to help ensure that the CA's recommendations lead to action once they have been submitted?

- *There are two options on this. One view is that the assembly might be structured around the general theme of electoral reform, not just how we vote and how votes are counted.*
- *Another view is that a more restrictive mandate would prevent the assembly from getting distracted by ancillary issues like online voting and Vote 16, to avoid overloading the assembly.*