

.....105<sup>TH</sup>

# Annual General Meeting Booklet

Friday | October 17 | 2025 | 2:00 - 3:00 PM

EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE



**Dr. Sophia Leung**  
President

# AAO 105<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting 2025

## President's Message

Welcome to the 105<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Alberta Association of Optometrists. It is a pleasure to have all of you join us in Edmonton for another outstanding conference.

Our Continuing Education Committee and AAO staff have put together a great program filled with educational and social opportunities. We have an impressive lineup of speakers, and we hope you and your team will gain valuable insights you can apply in your practice right away. Be sure to come have fun at the AAO Party at the Fairmont Hotel Macdonald on Thursday night!

Our Optifair on Friday evening has sold out once again and will be held in Hall D at the Edmonton Convention Centre, with a beautiful view overlooking the river valley. You will also get a chance to see some exciting and innovative developments from our industry partners. This conference truly would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors and industry partners. I encourage all members to take a moment to thank them during the conference and at Optifair.

For an overview of the Association's activities over the past year, please refer to the 2025 Annual Report, which was included in the email with this communication. During the AGM, Council will also provide updates on the AAO's work over the past year, including key programs, services, and public awareness efforts to reinforce the role of optometrists as Alberta's primary eye care providers.

Representing Alberta's optometrists over the past year has been a true privilege. I am proud to practice in a profession that continues to lead with innovation, always striving to meet the changing needs of our patients. I would like to extend my thanks to my fellow Council members for their commitment over the past year.

Finally, I want to extend my appreciation to all AAO members. Your continued engagement and support are the foundation of our Association's strength. With over 130 members actively involved in committees, government relations efforts, and serving as spokespeople, our profession is well-positioned to overcome challenges, evolve, and lead into the future.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Sophia Leung**  
President



# AAO Council Members 2024/2025



**Dr. Sophia  
Leung**  
President



**Dr. Andrea  
Lasby**  
Past President



**Dr. Cristy  
Franco**  
President  
Elect



**Dr. Monica  
Bell**  
Director



**Dr. Pamela  
Giles**  
Director



**Dr. Darren  
Wagner**  
Director



**Dr. Karen  
Hayward**  
Director



**Dr. Alia  
Cappellani**  
Director



**Dr. Troy  
Brady**  
CAO  
Representative

## AAO Staff

**Dr. Gabrielle Betts,**  
*Chief Executive Officer*

**Karen Hollingsworth,**  
*Office Manager*

**Al Amarshi,**  
*Director, Vision Care Programs*

**Savy Vonn,**  
*Accounting Manager*

**Sabrina Licata,**  
*Communications Manager*

**Meaghan Trewin,**  
*Community Communications  
Specialist*

**Amber Williams,**  
*Member Services Coordinator*

**Amy Sylvestre,**  
*Events Coordinator*

**Breanne Lindsey,**  
*Vision Care Program Specialist*

**Mary Reech,**  
*Reception & Administrative  
Assistant*

**Prabjot Kaur,**  
*Database Administrator &  
Office Support*



# Awards

The AAO is pleased to honour the following individuals for their consecutive years of practice in Alberta.

## 50 Year Practice Award

Dr. Peter McGuigan

Dr. Neil Starko

Dr. Brian Trump

## 25 Year Practice Award

Dr. Jason Pearce

Dr. Paul Singh

Dr. Seema Kamal

Dr. Diana Monea

Dr. Jan Lebenhagen

Dr. Jon Pack

Dr. Tanya Janssen

Dr. Donald Chin

Dr. Angela Endres

Dr. Jean Shen

Dr. John Pucy

## Speaker of the Year Award

Dr. Amal Ahmed (2025)

Dr. Salma Kiani (2024)

## President's Award

**2024**

Dr. Kevin Hesterman  
(posthumously)

Dr. James Asuchak

**2016**

Dr. Gerald Leinweber

**2014**

Dr. Gordon Hensel

**2010**

Dr. Allan Jones

**2006**

Dr. Larry Gies

**2005**

Dr. Dorrie Morrow

**2004**

Dr. Scott Brisbin

**2001**

Dr. Perry Wilson

**1987**

Dr. Craig McQueen

# Honourary Members

Mr. Adrian Berry

Mr. Alex Cairns

Mr. Glenn Campbell (1998)

Mr. Richard Fraser

Dr. Howard Gimbel (2018)

Mrs. Peggy Sloan (2008)

Mrs. Bonnie Sniedze (2011)

Dr. Stanley Woo (2024)



## Service Awards

### 2024

Dr. Tannis Rode

### 2021

Dr. Amy Forrest

### 2020

Dr. Sarah Keep & Kyle Keep

### 2017

Dr. Barton Anderson

Dr. Kenneth Gellatly (posthumously)

### 2016

Dr. Andrea Lasby

Dr. Diana Monea

### 2015

Dr. Jennifer Ash

### 2013

Dr. Guy Ambrosio

Dr. Heather Cowie

Dr. Larry Gies

Dr. Karen Hayward

Dr. Zain Jivraj

Dr. Susan Joe

Dr. Nasir Khan

Dr. Ruby Mangat

Dr. Craig McQueen

Dr. Simon Reid

Dr. Stan Russo

Dr. Rina Singh

Dr. Shane Smith

Dr. Nohad Teliani

Dr. Kevin Tsen

Dr. Femida Visnani

Dr. Salina Wazir

### 2012

Dr. Debbie Luk

### 2010

Dr. Samuel Boucher

Dr. Alison Harapiak

### 2009

Dr. Kevin Hesterman

Dr. Andrea Saetre

### 2006

Dr. Carolyn Fyffe

### 2004

Dr. Kim Bugera

Dr. Dianna Leong

Dr. Lori Lukey

Dr. Marilyn Wong

Dr. Larry Gies

### 1999

Dr. Dan Lowe

## Lifetime Members

Dr. Donald Akitt

Dr. Ken Armstrong

Dr. John Baker

Dr. Stuart Boyle

Dr. Scott Brisbin

Dr. Grant Campbell

Dr. Joseph Cloarec

Dr. Frank Crowe

Dr. Carmen Dawdy

Dr. Robert DeMara

Dr. George Edworthy

Dr. C.R. French

Dr. Patrick Gaudet

Dr. Lyn Graham

Dr. A.J. Harrison

Dr. Gordon Hensel

Dr. Allan Jones

Dr. Sadie Lampard

Dr. James Lampard

Dr. Ralph LeDrew

Dr. Ron Lindberg

Dr. Donald McCrimmon

Dr. Ivan McNabb

Dr. Angus Miller

Dr. Walter Mitson

Dr. Dorrie Morrow

Dr. Fred Nuttal

Dr. Clifford Palmer

Dr. Sharad Patel

Dr. Eric Ratledge

Dr. Shawn Rooney

Dr. Charles Ross

Dr. Cec Rowland

Dr. James Rowand

Dr. Tom Satchwell

Dr. J. Drayton Spence

Dr. Al Starko

Dr. Les Walker

Dr. Harold Willis



# New and Returning Members

**August 15, 2024 to August 15, 2025**

The AAO is pleased to welcome these new and returning members, and wishes to acknowledge their commitment to optometry and the Association. We look forward to working with them in advancing the profession.

Dr. Hannah Taylor	Dr. Laurel Harmar	Dr. Navneet Sandhu	Dr. Amanpreet Dhaliwal
Dr. Theola Li	Dr. Vinh Tran	Dr. Shuayb Akhtar	Dr. Angelica Jankovic
Dr. Milena Opacic	Dr. Bobby Mundra	Dr. Lakshmi	Dr. Eden Pagtalunan
Dr. Maryam Manzar	Dr. Wincy Chung	Thondikulam Easwaran	Dr. Lydia Lau
Dr. Ateet Gill	Dr. Chibuike Ohadugha	Dr. Tyler Parker	Dr. Laura Appleby
Dr. Aldrin Santamaria	Dr. Hani Elmais	Dr. Abby Obispo	Dr. Ashley Chea
Dr. Saini Baljot	Dr. Mat Singh	Dr. Ryan Chan	Dr. Belqes Galaal
Dr. Hafsa Nasser	Dr. Chibuike Ohadugha	Dr. Ilyaliz Arriaga	Dr. Ashley Karch
Dr. Abubakar Mohamed Adem	Dr. Shu Yi Wen	Dr. Carolyn Draude	Dr. Manpreet Sahota
Dr. Nanki Kaleka	Dr. Yussef Mimouni	Dr. David Scheuerman	Dr. Jacqueline Chan
Dr. Claire Shaw	Dr. Reena Hothi	Dr. Christopher Woo	Dr. Johnny Lu
		Dr. Grace Liu	





# 2024/2025 AAO Committees

The AAO relies heavily on its strong volunteer support. Within the committees alone there are more than 130 members, and there are many more who step up to help through lending their skills to support the profession. Building awareness is key to ensuring Albertans receive the care they deserve, and there are dozens of members who step forward every year to speak, attend public events, and help us build awareness. We couldn't accomplish everything we do without the efforts of this dedicated group of people.

## Policy Committees

### Artificial Intelligence and Teleoptometry Subcommittee

Dr. Andrea Lasby, Chair  
Dr. Brendon Bjarnason  
Dr. Joel Baillargeon  
Dr. Ashley Olford

### Board Development and Nominations Committee

Dr. Andrea Lasby, Chair  
Dr. Troy Brady  
Dr. Pamela Giles  
Dr. Alia Cappellani

### Business Management Subcommittee

Dr. Pamela Giles, Chair  
Dr. Daryl Berger  
Dr. Heather Cowie  
Dr. Peter Laansoo  
Dr. Ranbir Sond

### Cosmetic Optometry Subcommittee

Dr. Colin Hobson, Chair  
Dr. Riaz Ahmed  
Dr. Natasha Chrenek  
Dr. Gene Edworthy  
Dr. Aleem Jiwa  
Dr. Aaron Yau

### Emerging Trends Committee

Dr. Cristy Franco, Chair  
Dr. Andrea Lasby  
Dr. Darren Wagner  
Dr. Karen Hayward

### Finance, Audit, & Risk Management Committee

Dr. Darren Wagner, Chair  
Dr. Colin Hobson  
Dr. Kent Manville  
Dr. T.H Poon  
Dr. Connor West

### Local Optometric Societies Committee

Dr. Pamela Giles, Chair  
Dr. Monica Bell, CSO  
Dr. Tatiana Cook, LSO  
Dr. Jade McLachlin, ESO  
Dr. Jodi Sehn, MSO  
Dr. Heather Van Haren, CAOS

### Vision Development and Rehabilitation Subcommittee

Dr. Cristy Franco, Chair  
Dr. Rachel Bryant  
Dr. Sabih Chaudhary  
Dr. Charlotte Forgie  
Dr. Jason Holtom

## Operational Committees

### Billing Committee

Dr. Amy Forrest, Chair  
Dr. Yogesh Patel  
Dr. Adam Reid

### Continuing Education Committee

Dr. Monica Bell, Chair  
Dr. Dylan Johnston  
Dr. Sheila Morrison  
Dr. Rima Sabbah

### New Grad Committee

Mr. Brian Wik, Chair  
Dr. Claudia Amaniampong  
Dr. Aysha Chaudhry  
Dr. Jonah Gilham  
Dr. Steven Ha  
Dr. Tracy Kitz  
Dr. Pearl Motkoski  
Dr. Jennifer Verrett

### Government Relations Committee

Mr. Brian Wik, Chair  
Dr. Riaz Ahmed  
Dr. Jonathan Akle  
Dr. Mohammad Al-Bekai  
Dr. Monzer Al-Bekai  
Dr. Trent Allred  
Dr. Ziad Al-Qishawi

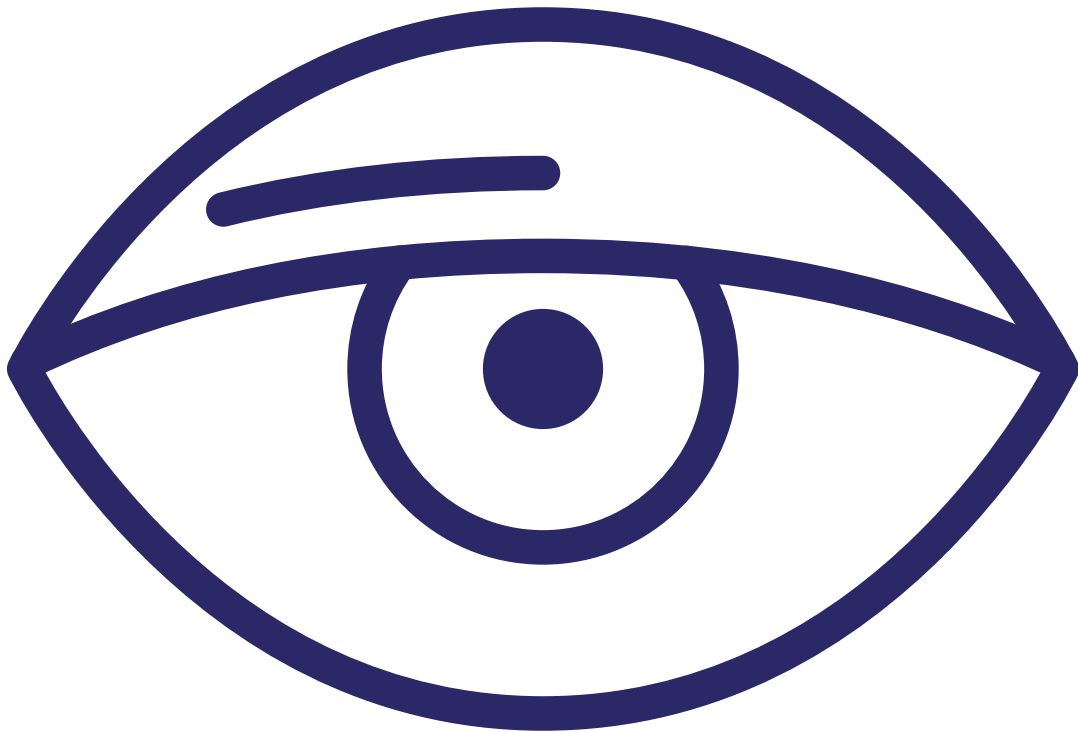
Dr. Guy Ambrosio  
Dr. Dave Anderson  
Dr. Jennifer Ash  
Dr. Jim Asuchak  
Dr. Jaswinder Bains  
Dr. Sallie Barclay  
Dr. Ben Barrus  
Dr. Monica Bell  
Dr. Troy Brady  
Dr. Kim Bugera  
Dr. Aysha Chaudhry  
Dr. Theresa Checkley  
Dr. Laura Chisholm  
Dr. Nadia Clark  
Dr. Mark Cloarec  
Dr. Heather Cowie  
Dr. Richard Cowles  
Dr. Matthew Craig  
Dr. Yen Dang  
Dr. George Day  
Dr. Hazel Delong  
Dr. Nicole Deschamps  
Dr. Kirandeep Dhaliwal  
Dr. Blake Dornstauder  
Dr. Benjamin Doz  
Dr. Laura Dwernichuk  
Dr. Amy Forrest  
Dr. Cristy Franco  
Dr. Pamela Giles  
Dr. Ranweet Grewal  
Dr. Jackie Hagen  
Dr. Jamie-Lee Halabi

Dr. Chrissy Hines  
Dr. Colin Hobson  
Dr. Michael Hopper  
Dr. Clark Hyde  
Dr. Sumeet Jeerh  
Dr. Aleem Jiwa  
Dr. Menka Johl  
Dr. Shane Keddie  
Dr. Tracy Kitz  
Dr. Michael Kreuzer  
Dr. Hudson Kroeker  
Dr. Jennifer Langfield  
Dr. Cory Larsen  
Dr. Andrea Lasby  
Dr. Paul Lathrop  
Dr. Sophia Leung  
Dr. Allan MacKenzie  
Dr. Noufal Mais  
Dr. Jeff Mann  
Dr. Jade McLachlin  
Dr. Craig McQueen  
Dr. Craig Meckelborg  
Dr. Harpreet Minhas  
Dr. Diana Monea  
Dr. Brenda Mummery  
Dr. Eve Niedergesaess  
Dr. Nimrit Nijjar  
Dr. Nobe Nijjar  
Dr. Justin Norris  
Dr. Sherri Norris  
Dr. Jon Pack  
Dr. Holly Parker

Dr. Jason Pearce  
Dr. Shannon Penniford  
Dr. Darren Phillips  
Dr. Mark Pitcher  
Dr. Jimmy Prince  
Dr. Christine Russo  
Dr. Stan Russo  
Dr. Brent Saik  
Dr. Jean Shen  
Dr. Brittany Shewchuk  
Dr. Tanya Sitter  
Dr. Timothy Skwarok  
Dr. Sara Starko  
Dr. Jared Steblin  
Dr. Farah Sunderji  
Dr. Pamela Syrota  
Dr. Chelsea Syverson  
Dr. Shelly Taneja  
Dr. Julie Theng  
Dr. Raman Thind-Gill  
Dr. James Thompson  
Dr. Jay Torbeih  
Dr. Kevin Tsen  
Dr. Mona Ubhi  
Dr. Jade Ulmer  
Dr. Christopher Vu  
Dr. Darren Wagner  
Dr. Tom Wilk  
Dr. Mark Wood  
Dr. Michael Yu  
Dr. Ward ZoBell



# Annual General Meeting Documents



## **AAO** Mission Statement

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To provide leadership and support for our members to be every  
Albertan's first and continual access point for world leading eye care.





# Rules of Order **Alberta**

1. Except as specified in these Rules of Order, or in the Bylaws, the rules of procedure shall be governed by the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.
2. Only persons entitled to vote shall make motions, debate and vote.
3. No person shall speak until recognized by the Chair. To obtain recognition a member shall first raise his or her hand. After recognition the member shall state his or her name.
4. All motions shall be in writing and given to the Chair prior to the member speaking to the motion.
5. A member may second a motion by simply raising their hand.
6. Speeches are limited to two (2) minutes.
7. No member may speak more than once to a motion unless no other member indicates a desire to speak.
8. Debate on a motion is limited to ten (10) minutes after the motion is stated by the Chair. The Chair will advise when there is two (2) minutes remaining on the motion.
9. Motions can be made to extend the debate. Motions to extend debate shall be made before the ten (10) minutes has expired. Motions to extend debate are made for ten (10) minutes and require a two-third (2/3) vote for adoption.
10. Members who wish to move a motion to close debate and vote on a motion or "Call for the Question" need to be recognized by the Chair prior to making this motion. The motion requires a two-thirds vote and is undebatable.



# Minutes of the Alberta Association of Optometrists

## 104<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting

**Banff, Alberta – October 4, 2024**

### **A total of 213 members attended the meeting.**

Dr. Andrea Lasby, Alberta Association of Optometrists (AAO) President, called the meeting to order at 1:47 pm.

Dr. Lasby began the meeting by acknowledging the meeting was taking place in Treaty 4, 6, 7, 8, and 10 Territories within Alberta, and acknowledged the many Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for generations. We recognize the land as an act of reconciliation and gratitude, and we dedicate ourselves to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of collaboration.

Dr. Lasby introduced the 2023/24 AAO Council Members:

- Dr. Andrea Lasby – President
- Dr. Richard Cowles – Past President
- Dr. Sophia Leung – President Elect
- Dr. Monica Bell – Council Member
- Dr. Cristy Franco – Council Member
- Dr. Pamela Giles – Council Member
- Dr. Colin Hobson – Council Member
- Dr. Darren Wagner – Council Member
- Dr. Troy Brady – CAO Representative

Dr. Lasby also acknowledged AAO Past Presidents in attendance:

- Dr. Jim Asuchak
- Dr. Riaz Ahmed
- Dr. Troy Brady
- Dr. Richard Cowles
- Dr. Al Jones
- Dr. Dan Lowe
- Dr. Aaron Patel
- Dr. Jason Pearce

Mr. Brian Wik, AAO Chief Executive Officer, was also introduced.

With respect to the running of the meeting, Dr. Lasby noted that two documents had been circulated prior to the meeting: 104th AGM Booklet, which contains information to be referenced during the meeting; and the 2024 Annual Report, which outlines our accomplishments for the year, contains the AAO's activities, and 2023 audited financial statements.



## Motions

The following motions were presented by Dr. Lasby in accordance with the bylaw requirements.

### **MOTION:**

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**To accept the Rules of Order for the meeting as circulated to the members on page 9 of the AGM Booklet.**

Moved: Dr. Richard Cowles

Seconded: Dr. Monica Bell

**Carried**

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### **MOTION:**

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**To allow the following non-members to attend the Annual General Meeting.**

- Dr. Martin Spiro – President, CAO
- Dr. Evelyn Lo - President, BCDO
- Dr. Brent Allen – Vice President, BCDO
- Dr. Richard Kort – President, SAO
- Dr. Averil Van Dam – President, MAO
- Dr. Stan Woo – Director, University of Waterloo
- Mr. Francois Couillard – CEO, CAO
- Ms. Kathryn Bell – CEO, BCDO
- Ms. Andrea Carthew – University of Waterloo
- Mr. Brian Wik - Chief Executive Officer, AAO
- Ms. Sabrina Licata – Communications Manager, AAO
- Ms. Amy Sylvestre – Events Coordinator, AAO
- Ms. Kelsey Gagnon – Associate Director, Advancement, University of Waterloo

Moved: Dr. Pamela Giles

Seconded: Dr. Darren Wagner

**Carried**

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### **MOTION:**

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**To appoint Ms. Sabrina Licata as Recording Secretary.**

Moved: Dr. Sophia Leung

Seconded: Dr. Cristy Franco

**Carried**

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## Parliamentarian

### **MOTION:**

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#### **To appoint Dr. Gene Edworthy as Parliamentarian.**

Moved: Dr. Darren Wagner

Seconded: Dr. Colin Hobson

**Carried**

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## In Memoriam

We have recently been informed of the passing of two former members of our Association:

### **Dr. Doug Hunter**

Dr. Hunter graduated from University of Waterloo in 1972 and spent 45 years as a practicing optometrist. A former classmate described him as intelligent, articulate and a true professional who deeply cared about his patients and, an all-around great guy.

### **Dr. Sharad Patel**

Dr. Patel was a former council member of the AAO and received a lifetime membership for his contribution including a prominent role in helping Alberta Optometrists earn the right to perform dilated eye exams and use diagnostic agents. Dr. Patel has guided and inspired many Alberta optometrists over his time in optometry and will be fondly remembered.

A moment of silence was conducted in remembrance of these two colleagues.

## Motion

Dr. Lasby directed the membership to the agenda on page 10 of the AGM booklet, which was pre-circulated to the membership.

### **MOTION:**

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#### **To adopt the Minutes from the 103<sup>rd</sup> AGM.**

Moved: Dr. Pamela Giles

Seconded: Dr. Troy Brady

**Carried**

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## Elections

Dr. Cowles chaired the election process and presented the following slate:

### President

Dr. Sophia Leung has agreed to let her name stand for election. Dr. Leung practices in Calgary. Dr. Cowles called for further nominations from the floor for the position of President. Being none, the nominations were closed and Dr. Leung was acclaimed President.

### President Elect

Dr. Cristy Franco has agreed to let her name stand for election. Dr. Franco practices in Calgary. Dr. Cowles called for further nominations from the floor for the position of President Elect. Being none, the nominations were closed and Dr. Franco was acclaimed President Elect.

### Council Positions

Dr. Cowles advised five members had filed their papers for four Council position vacancies, each for a two-year term. In alphabetical order the candidates were presented:

- Dr. Monica Bell, Calgary
- Dr. Alia Cappellani, Calgary
- Dr. Karen Hayward, St. Albert
- Dr. Rupaly Toor, Edmonton
- Dr. Darren Wagner, Brooks

Dr. Cowles then called for any nominations from the floor. Being none, he declared nominations closed. Each candidate was provided three-minutes to address the membership. The speaking order was conducted by a draw.

At the conclusion, members were invited to vote. While the voting took place, the meeting continued with Reports of Officers and Committees.

## Reports Presentation

Dr. Lasby thanked the more than 130 members from across the province who volunteered on committees and assisted in advancing AAO initiatives. She then reported on advocacy and government relations, continuing education, partnerships, AAO member programs, member benefits, and the many communications activities.

### Advocacy and Government Relations

Dr. Lasby extended her thanks to the members of the Government Relations Committee (GRC) who took the time over the past year to meet with their local MLAs. The GRC provided a well-prepared information package outlining the proposed scope expansion and optometry's critical role in eye health care.

These GRC members played an important role by meeting directly with elected officials to explain the value of the procedures being pursued by the Alberta College of Optometrists (ACO), and why it is essential for the profession to be able to deliver this care.

While the Holiday Open House served as a social event, it also presented a valuable opportunity for engagement. Several Cabinet Ministers and MLAs were in attendance, allowing for meaningful conversations and the chance to share the many contributions that optometry continues to make in improving Albertans' eye health.



## Continuing Education

A diverse range of continuing education (CE) opportunities was offered to members, with session topics guided by input from the annual member survey. These learning opportunities were delivered through a mix of in-person sessions, hands-on workshops, and online webinars. The CE programs received consistently high ratings, reflecting strong member satisfaction across a variety of topics. The organization remains committed to engaging members in meaningful ways, based on the priorities they have identified.

## Stakeholder Outreach and Communications

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of its members, the AAO now offers a comprehensive Medical Student Handbook, which has been distributed to participants in both university family medicine residency programs. Feedback from students and residents has been overwhelmingly positive.

Significant progress was made with the University of Alberta's Faculty of Medicine this year. For the first time, the AAO was invited to deliver an Optometry Day — a mandatory session for all residents. The event was highly rated, receiving an average score of 4.7 out of 5, and residents expressed strong interest in collaborating with optometrists in future practice. While the university has committed to offering the session every two years, continued advocacy by the AAO has resulted in an additional hands-on session being scheduled annually.

The program at the University of Calgary's Cumming School of Medicine also continued this year. The AAO is actively working with faculty to further expand and enhance the offering. Participating students rated the program an impressive 5 out of 5.

Through its communications program, the AAO actively engaged with diverse audiences across Alberta in 2023. Presentations were delivered by members and staff to a wide range of groups, including Primary Care Network (PCN) medical staff, seniors' centres and residences, trade shows, corporate events, and allied health organizations. Over the past year, the AAO connected with more than 70 organizations.

A highlight of the year was the growing involvement of AAO members in these outreach efforts. To support and recognize this engagement, the association launched a Speakers Bureau and introduced a "Speaker of the Year" award to honour those who have made exceptional contributions.

These initiatives reflect the AAO's ongoing commitment to partnering with members to increase public awareness of optometry and promote eye health throughout Alberta. The association extends its sincere appreciation to all members who generously volunteered their time and expertise to support this important work.

The AAO's communications program employed a strategic mix of paid media, earned media, owned media, research, internal communications, and stakeholder relations. This integrated approach created a strong platform to educate Albertans and raise awareness about the importance of eye care across the province.

## AAO Member Programs

Member programs continued to show steady growth in participation throughout the year. The Eye See...Eye Learn™ program remained strong, with 38.4% of all five-year-old children in Alberta receiving an eye exam. Of these, 60% received their first pair of eyeglasses through the program.

The Eyesafe program also expanded, adding 52 new companies and increasing the professional



fees distributed to participating members. The Eyesafe Advantage program, which supports member clinics, now includes over 120 clinics across the province.

The AAO remains committed to supporting its members through a wide range of programs and services. A comprehensive guide is available to help members access and make the most of these benefits.

Additionally, Alberta Health data was reviewed to analyze trends related to eye exams for children aged 0 to 18, adults aged 65 and older, and the associated payments made to Alberta optometrists.

Dr. Lasby invited questions. As there were no questions put forward, she declared the Report of Officers and Committees received.

## Election Results

Mr. Brian Wik noted that some election results were submitted via paper ballots. The two past presidents have watched and will count the paper ballots and combine them with the electronic ballot results, in coordination with Dr. Gene Edworthy. The final results will then be presented to the Chair. Ballots closed at 2:30 p.m.

- Dr. Cowles announced the newly elected members of Council as:
- Dr. Monica Bell, Calgary
- Dr. Darren Wagner, Brooks
- Dr. Alia Cappellani, Calgary
- Dr. Karen Hayward, St. Albert

Dr. Cowles motioned to destroy ballots in 24 hours. Dr. Gene Edworthy noted that as per the bylaws (4.3.5) the paper ballots must be retained for 60 days.

First: Dr. Cristy Franco

Second: Dr. Pamela Giles

**Carried**

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## Communications Levy

Dr. Colin Hobson reviewed the success of the communications program highlighting the information presented in the Report of Officers and Committees and the 2024 Annual Report. As there were no questions, Dr. Hobson moved to a motion.

### **MOTION:**

**That the Alberta Association of Optometrists assesses a special levy of \$1,000 per full-time member, and \$500 per part-time member, to be used in the development and administration of an advertising and public relations campaign in 2025. This levy would be waived for new grads registering in 2025.**

Monies generated by this levy will be reported separately and used only for the stated purpose. It will be used provincially and/or in partnership with other organizations for public relations/marketing projects as deemed appropriate by the AAO Council.

Moved by: Dr. Colin Hobson

Seconded by: Dr. Cristy Franco

**Carried**

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## Financial Report

Dr. Colin Hobson reviewed the 2023 Audited Statements as presented in the 2024 AAO Annual Report and circulated to the membership in September. The firm RSM Alberta LLP acted as the auditor.

As there were no questions, Dr. Hobson moved to a motion.

### **MOTION:**

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**To accept the Audited Financial Statements for 2023 as presented.**

Moved by: Dr. Colin Hobson

Seconded by: Dr. Pamela Giles

### **Carried**

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Dr. Hobson presented the 2024 budget noting the budget was developed to facilitate the execution of the Ends (business objectives) that Council has set out. Each End has associated key performance indicators (KPI) to ensure objectives for advancing the profession are met. The report was received as information.

## Unfinished Business

Dr. Andrea Lasby advised that as there was no unfinished business stemming from the 2024 AGM, the item was declared closed.

## New Business

Dr. Andrea Lasby invited the membership to put forward any new business. Being none, this item was declared closed.

No new business declared at 2:39 p.m.

## Closing Comments

Dr. Lasby invited Dr. Leung to come forward for the official passing of the gavel. She thanked all those who were supportive during his tenure as President and looked forward to continued involvement on Council as Past President.

## Adjournment

### **MOTION:**

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**To adjourn the 104th Annual General Meeting of the AAO.**

Moved by: Dr. Richard Cowles

Seconded by: Dr. Monica Bell

### **Carried**

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The meeting adjourned at 2:44 p.m.





## COUNCIL POSITIONS & ELECTION FOR 2025/2026 TERM

<b>President</b>	Dr. Sophia Leung has completed her first term as President
<b>Past President</b>	Dr. Andrea Lasby remains as Past President
<b>President Elect</b>	Dr. Cristy Franco has completed her first term as President Elect
<b>Council Member</b>	Dr. Monica Bell has completed the first year of her third two-year term
<b>Council Member</b>	Dr. Pamela Giles is seeking re-election for her third term
<b>Council Member</b>	Dr. Darren Wagner has completed his first year of his second term
<b>Council Member</b>	Dr. Karen Hayward has completed her first year of her first term
<b>Council Member</b>	Dr. Alia Cappellani has completed her first year of her first term
<b>Council Member</b>	Dr. Troy Brady represents the AAO on the Canadian Association of Optometrists

## COUNCIL POSITIONS & CANDIDATES FOR 2025/2026 TERM

(Names for the respective positions as available at time of printing)

**For President:** (one year term)

- Dr. Sophia Leung of Calgary has agreed to let her name stand for re-election.

**For President-Elect:** (one year term)

- Dr. Cristy Franco of Calgary has agreed to let her name stand for re-election

**For AAO Council:** One vacancy for a two-year term. Letting their name stand:

- Dr. Pamela Giles of Grande Prairie, is seeking re-election for a second term..



# Communications Resolution

Each year, the AAO runs an integrated public awareness campaign to educate Albertans about eye health. We continue to focus on informing Albertans of the importance of vision health, annual eye exams, and the availability of medically necessary and urgent care appointments. Through our targeted campaign approach, Alberta Health billings grew by 7.99% in 2024/2025 to \$ 131,773,358.

Our research showed that while most people value their eyesight more than any other sense, only a small number actually book their annual eye exam. The campaign aimed to close that gap by highlighting how much care people give to other senses and encouraging them to treat their eyes the same way. To reach a broad audience across the province, we used a mix of digital, audio, print, and outdoor advertising.

We continue to grow our social media presence and outreach. In 2024, we achieved over 60 million impressions on our social media content, resulting in more than 1 million meaningful engagements across our platforms. This year, we began exploring influencer relations efforts to increase reach and engagement with our target audiences.

In our inaugural year of offering webinars for allied health professionals, we laid the foundation for an expanding education program designed to strengthen collaborative care. Over 100 participants attended sessions focused on key topics such as children's vision, diabetic eye health, seniors' vision, and general eye care. We look forward to expanding this initiative in the coming year.

We also participated in various educational events for stakeholders, including medical residents, health professionals in primary care networks (PCNs), multicultural groups and seniors' serving organizations. In 2024, we visited 10 seniors' centres and multicultural groups, and participated in 11 trade shows, including events with the Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP), Alberta Occupational Health Nurses Association, Alberta Primary Care Nurses Association, Lamont County, the City of Calgary, and the ENMAX Rodeo and Safety Expo, among others. We are continuing to take a more focused approach to booking presentations and have already scheduled over a dozen in the coming months. A special thank you to the many volunteers who made this extensive communications outreach possible.

This resolution seeks to continue a communications program (public relations and advertising) that will provide for the continuation of this work, and the further amplification of the benefits and services provided by optometrists to all Albertans.

Thank you to the many volunteers who made this extensive communications outreach possible.

## Communications Levy

### MOTION:

**That the Alberta Association of Optometrists assesses a special level of \$1,000 per fulltime member, and \$500 per part-time member to be used in the development and administration of an advertising and public relations campaign in 2026. This levy would be waived for new grads registering in 2026. Monies generated by this levy will be reported separately and used only for the stated purpose. It will be used provincially and/or in partnership with other organizations for public relations/marketing projects as deemed appropriate by the AAO Council.**

Moved by: Dr. Monica Bell

Seconded by: Dr. Cristy Franco



# Finance Report

## 2024 Audited Financial Statements

The 2024 Audited Statements were presented in our 2025 Annual Report and circulated to the membership in September. The accounting firm of RSM Alberta LLP audited the financial statements applying a very in-depth process when reviewing our various accounts.

I am pleased to report that the Association's finances continue to be on solid ground.

In 2024, our cash flow remained positive. Our positive cash flow was the result of monies received from the Eyesafe™ Program, some rental revenue from our tenant, the money we gained from conference fees, and various sponsorships.

The Alberta economy held its own in 2024 despite economic pressures. The Eyesafe™ program proved valuable providing a reasonable return. Fifty-six new clients were signed on and with continued attention paid to our present client base, the Association had a slight increase in jobs. The program overall continues to generate a positive cash flow.

Participating Eyesafe™ doctors received Professional Dispensing Fee payments in the amount of \$797,466.

Overall, the revenues for 2024 was \$5,267,558 million, being slightly above anticipated revenue projections for the year.

However, the AAO has always been very prudent watching its expenses. In 2024, our total expenses were \$5,142,522 which is substantively below the budgeted \$6,455,877

This resulted, at year's end, a small surplus of \$125,036.

The Association maintains an operating reserve fund that is in place in the event of a financial emergency.

It is roughly the equivalent to three months of budgeted expenses. We did not have to dip into it in 2024 as we managed our overall finances sensibly. At the year's end, the fund holds a market value of \$1,668,389.

Our Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) was strong in 2024. It increased by \$11,618 year over year. It leaves the Association in a positive position to be able to manage through economic uncertainty given changing worldwide economic fluctuations.

### **MOTION:**

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**Accept the 2024 Audited Financial Statements as presented:**

Moved by: Dr. Darren Wagner

Seconded by: Dr. Pamela Giles

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# Alberta Association of Optometrists Bylaws Changes and Background

## Special Resolution – Notice to AAO members

## Bylaw Amendments

### Background to Bylaw Changes

The Alberta Association of Optometrists (AAO) Council is recommending a series of amendments to the AAO Bylaws that:

- a) Update the language to match technology and/or the delivery of information to the members. (throughout the bylaws)
- b) Amend the election process such that there may be both 1- or 2- year terms up for election. The person(s) with the most votes will fill the 2-year term position(s), with the 1-year term being filled by the person with the next highest number of votes. This allows for the filling positions that may have been vacated with a year remaining, while providing balance in the number of Council positions up for election annually. (Section 1 / Article 4)
- c) Should there be a Council meeting, an officer (President, President Elect, or Past President) must be present for the meeting to proceed. (Section 1 / Article 4)
- d) Affiliates will be able to obtain from the Association different forms of communications based upon decisions by Council. This will accommodate any technological changes or formats in communications. (Articles 4 & 5).
- e) Renumbering sections where subsections may have been added or deleted.

### Specific Amendments to Bylaws

The bylaws have been reviewed by Council on two occasions based upon the recommendations provided by a Task Force who reviewed them. Additionally, legal counsel was consulted to ensure their appropriateness.

- **Blue** text denotes additions
- **Red** text denotes deletions

### SPECIAL RESOLUTION – Motion Dealing with Specific Amendments

The amendments noted below to the respective existing articles of the Alberta Association of Optometrists' bylaws are repealed and are replaced by the amendment to the said articles of the Association's bylaws which read:



# Section 1: Definitions and Interpretation

## Article 1: Definitions

~~*Mailing Address* means the physical or electronic address specified by the Member from time to time, as the address where the member wishes to receive all communications from the Association.~~

- 1.1.15 *"Member"* means a Full Time or Part Time member who is an optometrist in good standing with the Association.
- 1.1.16 *"New Graduate"* means an optometrist practicing in their first or second year of optometry.
- 1.1.17 *"Optometrist"* means a person licensed to provide optometric care in accordance with the Optometric Profession Regulation under the *Health Professions Act*.
- 1.1.18 *"Province"* means the province of Alberta in Canada.
- 1.1.19 *"Seal"* means the official seal of the Association.
- 1.1.20 *"Special Meeting"* means any meeting of the Association called pursuant to these Bylaws, except the Association's Annual General Meeting.
- 1.1.21 *"Special Resolution"* means a resolution passed at a meeting by a vote of not less than 75% of Members entitled to vote.
- 1.1.22 *"telephonic or electronic means"* means any means that uses the telephone or any other electronic or other technological means to transmit information or data including, without limitation, telephone calls, fax, e-mail, ~~SMS automated touch-tone telephone system~~, computer or computer networks.

## Article 2: Other Powers, Duties, and Functions of the Council

- 2.2.5 The Council shall have the power ~~and duty~~ to ensure that Association policies are implemented through the monitoring of compliance with policies.

## Article 4: Election of the Council Members

- 2.4.4 All members of the Council, except the President, President Elect, the immediate Past President and any ex-officio members appointed by the Council, ~~may shall~~ be elected for a term of ~~one (1) or two (2)~~ years ~~as determined by Council~~.
- 2.4.13 In the event that there are more Members nominated for the Council than there are vacancies, the Members who receive the most votes shall be considered elected to the Council. ~~In the event of a 1 or 2 year terms, the individual(s) garnering the greater number of votes shall be assigned the 2 year term(s) on Council.~~

## Article 8: President Elect

~~2.8.2—In the absence of the President and President Elect, the Chair for a Council meeting shall be elected by a majority vote of Council members present.~~

- 2.8.2 ~~3~~ If the President Elect resigns or is unable to act, the Council shall elect, from among themselves, a person to fill the office for the remainder of the then current term of the President Elect's office. If the Council is unable to agree upon a replacement President Elect from among themselves, the Council shall seek nominations from the Members and the President shall convene a Special Meeting at which the replacement President Elect shall be elected by the Members.



## Article 10: Council Meetings

2.10.5 A quorum of Council is five (5) Members, one of whom shall be an officer of the Association ~~the President or President Elect~~.

## Article 11: Compensation of the Council, Committee and Other Members

2.11.1 The Council may establish a committee to review and establish the amount a member of the Council, a Council committee, individual or committee delegated by the Council is entitled to be ~~compensated and/or~~ reimbursed. Reimbursement will be provided for reasonable travel and living expenses, as well as reasonable disbursements while engaged in the Association's business.

This committee will undertake a review and make recommendations concerning the ~~remuneration per diem~~ rate for the Council and committee members. Per diem rates should be reviewed at least every four (4) years.

# Section 4: Meetings of the Members

## Article 1: Annual General Meetings

4.1.1 An Annual General Meeting of the Members shall be held at least once in every calendar year, at a time and location determined by the Council. The Council may determine that the meeting shall be held by telephonic ~~and/or~~ electronic means that permits all participants to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting.

## Article 2: Notice of Annual General Meetings and Election

4.2.1 The Chief Executive Officer shall notify every Member of each Annual General Meeting of the Association by ~~providing by delivering a hardcopy or electronic~~ mail notice of the date, time and location of the Annual General Meeting as determined by the Council, at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

## Article 4: Special Meetings

4.4.4 Notice of a Special Meeting shall be ~~provided by sent by hardcopy or electronic~~ mail to each Member at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting, and shall include:

4.4.4.1 reasons for which the Special Meeting is being called;

4.4.4.2 the time, date and location of the Special Meeting; and

4.4.4.3 a list of candidates, if applicable to the purpose of an election at the Special Meeting.

4.4.6 Attendance at Special Meetings is limited to Members in good standing, ~~Honorary Members, Council members~~, the Chief Executive Officer and guests invited by the Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Council.

## Article 4: Out-of-Province Affiliate

5.4.1 An Out of Province Affiliate is an optometrist, duly regulated and practicing in another jurisdiction, and a member in good standing with their respective optometric regulatory college and ~~also~~ association in that jurisdiction, who wishes to maintain a relationship with the Alberta Association.



- 5.4.3 An Out of Province Affiliate is eligible to attend Association functions and events, but not to hold office or vote. ~~An Affiliate is eligible for the "member fee" at Association functions.~~
- 5.4.4 An Out of Province Affiliate will receive appropriate Association correspondence, ~~and~~ information, ~~and~~ member programs as decided by Council.

## Article 5: Student and Resident Affiliates

- 5.5.4 A Student Affiliate or Resident Affiliate shall receive appropriate Association correspondence, information and member programs as decided by Council. ~~general mailings.~~

# Section 6: Management and Administration of the Association

## Article 5: Chief Executive Officer

- 6.5.2 The Chief Executive Officer shall carry out their responsibilities in accordance with, and subject to, Council-approved motions and policies. These responsibilities include but are not limited to:
- 6.5.2.13 preparing a financial report that identifies the Association's financial status as at fiscal year end for presentation at each Annual General Meeting, and ~~providing by mail~~ mailing a copy of the financial report including audited financial statements to each Member;

## Article 6: Finances

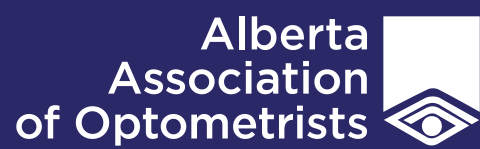
- 6.6.4 The Council shall establish fees by resolution for the following categories of members or affiliates:
- 6.6.4.4 Student and Resident Affiliates.
- ~~6.6.4.8 Resident Affiliates~~

# Section 7: Amendment of Bylaws

- 7.1.1 Proposed changes to these Bylaws must be ~~provided by~~ mailed ~~hardcopy or by electronic~~ mail to all Members in good standing at least thirty (30) days prior to an Annual General Meeting, at which time the amendment to the Bylaws shall be considered, or a Special Meeting at which the amendment to the Bylaws shall be considered.
- 7.4.1 The Association Bylaws approved by the Members on October 20, 2022 ~~14, 2020~~, are hereby repealed.

**Moved:** Dr. Sophia Leung

**Seconded:** Dr. Monica Bell



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