



ACADEMY OF THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING/RÉUNION ANNUELLE GÉNÉRALE

THE FAIRMONT, WINNIPEG

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 25, 2017 AT 12:00 AM

MINUTES – PROCÈS VERBAL

Meeting called to order at 12:10 pm by Irving Abella, President.

**1. Introduction**

Irving Abella welcomed all Fellows in attendance and offered congratulations to this year's New Fellows, New College Members and Medal and Award Winners of Academy I.

Irving Abella welcomed and introduced Dr Kim Sawchuk, Professor in the Department of Communication Studies, Concordia University Research Chair in Mobile Media Studies, and Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies for the Faculty of Arts and Science at Concordia University.

**2. A word from the sponsor of the Annual Business meetings Kim Sawchuk (Concordia University)**

Irving Abella invited Fellows and College members present to introduce themselves.

**3. Approval of the Agenda/Acceptation de l'ordre du jour (I. Abella)**

Moved by Christl Verduyn, seconded by Cheryl Warsh

Approved

**4. Minutes of last meeting/Procès-verbal de la dernière réunion**

Moved by Gary Libben, seconded by Leslie Howsam

Approved

**5. Business arising from the Minutes/Affaires découlant du process-verbal (I. Abella)**

Irving Abella offered congratulations to Gary Libben for the launching of the Academy's first Bulletin, a draft of which was distributed to the Assembly. It will soon be posted on the RSC's website.

Gary Libben noted that the platform developed for the Bulletin is an opportunity to create bridges and invited colleagues to submit short articles.

#### **6. Report of the Academy President/Rapport du Président de l'Académie (I. Abella)**

Irving Abella updated us on the agreement signed three years ago with the Academy of Sciences and Humanities of Israel. Two symposia have been held, the first was hosted by Academy III at Western and the second by Academy I in Jerusalem. The third will be held in May in Montreal, organised by Academy II, as part of the G20 academic meetings.

#### **7. Crisis in the Humanities Initiative/Initiative sur la crise dans les sciences humaines**

Irving Abella reported on the issue of the Crisis in the Humanities. Discussions with university presidents led to a consensus that there is a real problem and to the following suggestions:

1. that a task-force/expert panel be initiated by Council;
2. that a monitoring system be created, i.e., Divisions would report on the situation in their universities;
3. that a follow-up be reported to Council.

Kim Sawchuk noted that, at Concordia, enrolment in the Humanities is in fact up and that it would be useful to look at the data. It is suggested that since continental students tend to no longer go to the UK, one should perhaps tap into that source. Cheryl Warsh noted that 'rebranding' might be necessary to indicate that research in the Humanities is not only theoretical, but that there is a purpose to it. Irving Abella suggested that we look at promising initiatives in different institutions, gather data (without duplicating the work of the Federation), and report to Council.

#### **8. Report of the Academy Secretary/Rapport de la secrétaire de l'Académie (G. Jarema)**

Gonia Jarema first expressed her pleasure at having had the honour of working with President Irving Abella and that she is now looking forward to working with President-Elect Jean Grondin.

Gonia Jarema thanked Gary Libben, Editor of the Academy's e-bulletin, for having launched its first issue, which will both increase communication within Academy I and increase our visibility across Academies and the RSC at large.

One of the Secretary's main tasks is to contact Nominating Committee Chairs and to ask them to initiate the process of filling vacant positions in their respective Divisions. Gonia Jarema thanked Ian Lancashire, Jean Delisle and Allan Bell for their work in ensuring that the vacant positions in their committees be filled.

Filling vacant positions in the Division of Arts had posed some difficulty, as both the positions of President and that of Director of the Nominating and Selection of New Members Committees were vacant for 2017-2018. Gonia Jarema is especially grateful to Past President Allan Bell for his important contribution to the task of ensuring a full complement of committee members.

## 9. Reports of the Division Directors/Rapport des directeurs des divisions (I.Lancashire/ J. Grondin)

### Division 1

Ian Lancashire opened by thanking the outgoing President, Irving Abella, for his thoughtful support of the Division.

A summary of the report of the Humanities New Fellows Selection Committee (appended below) followed. The current total membership of the Humanities Division is 346 people, two Fellows over last year. Female membership increased to 30%. The distribution of living Fellows across Canada is: 85 members in the West, >200 in Ontario, 21 in Anglophone Quebec, and 20 in the Maritimes.

Upon request, Ian Lancashire briefly detailed this year's selection process of the Committee: in November, Marie-Lyne Renaud sent out an email to the Chair to ensure that the Committee's membership was complete and to begin the process of nominating new members. In February, there was a two-hour conference call following an initial triage of the nominations, and the ranking of the top 16 out of 54 nominations was discussed. Marie-Lyne received a list with the rankings and the Committee's Report, appended below.

The report brings up two important issues: (1) a lack of clarity concerning conflict of interest (should committee members rank candidates from their own institutions?) and (2) the assessment of aboriginal candidates. Their nominations pose a new challenge for some committee members. It is suggested that Selection Committees in all Divisions either always include an aboriginal member or add one when a nomination of an aboriginal candidate is received.

Several recommendations to nominators were offered, such as the need to obtain both institutional backing and the candidate's agreement. These are detailed in the Committee's Report.

### Division 2

Jean Grondin voiced his concern about the low number of nominations in Division 1. This year, only 3 new fellows were selected, leaving 2 out of the 5 allotted slots empty (one was thus added to Division 1 and one to Division 3). During his presidency, francophone universities will be strongly encouraged to sponsor nominations and the RSC will be given more visibility. This will constitute one of the major priorities of his mandate.

The issue of conflict of interest was discussed again, in the light of the report of the Comité de sélection des nouveaux membres, chaired by Jean Delisle. It appears that while in Division 1 committee members who are from the candidate's university withdraw, this is not the case for Division 2. In this division, members withdraw only if the candidate is in the same department, or works with a member of the committee. A more unified policy is thus needed.

Finally, it is suggested that, in view of the low number of nominations—in particular the below annual quota of this and last year's nominations—more than 5 new nominations be allotted in some years.

### Division 3

Allan Bell, Past Director of the Division, has submitted a Report of the Committee for the Selection of New Fellows, appended below. In this report, the Committee voiced a number of concerns and issues relating to the Division. One concern is that membership is largely composed of artists who are academics and who could, in fact, be members of the Humanities or Lettres et science humaines divisions. Practicing artists are disfavoured by the selection process due, in part, to the fact that this non-academic community is not well informed with regard to the RSC, and to the fact that the nomination process is too complex for practicing artists. Christl Verduyn noted that performing artists have a different kind of CV, very much like in the case of indigenous and visible minority candidacies. The question of inclusion of professional journalists who have made exceptional contributions to Canadian society was also raised, and it was suggested that they could be nominated within Academy II. As well, they can be nominated as specially elected fellows.

## 10. Priorities and Program of actions of the Academy (2016-2017) (J. Grondin)

### a. *Bulletin*

Gary Libben urges members to “keep on discussing issues”. Irving Abella suggests that a paragraph or two be reserved for a brief report by each Division.

### b. *Campus gatherings/rencontres campus*

### c. *Regional gatherings/rencontres régionales*

Jean Grondin will strengthen the activities of Division 2 by organizing campus and regional gatherings across Quebec. This will enhance the visibility of the RSC and contribute to boosting the number of francophone nominations.

### d. *Links*

It is proposed that emails of all Academy members be gathered in a directory.

### e. *Other RSC Academies, international programs, expert panels, College, etc.*

Upcoming scientific meetings involving other academies in 2017:

- A meeting will be held in May in Montreal, organised by Academy II (Irving Abella's project).
- A scientific meeting will be held in conjunction with the G7 meeting in Charlevoix, May 22-24, organized by Chad Gaffield on the following themes: (1) the Arctic, (2) digitalization in contemporary society and (3) the disconnect between science and society. This will involve Academies I and II.
- On April 10, Alain Gagnon will organize a meeting on the theme of ‘Reimagining Canada’ (*Refondation du Canada*), which will be held at UQAM and will involve members from our Academy and Academy II.

## II. Academy Operational Manual/Manuel d’opération de l’Académie (J. Grondin)

A draft version of the Manual is available for comments. The deadline is the end of December. Christl Verduyn pointed out that she is a member of the Task Force on Governance and offered her help.

**12. Other business/Autres sujets (J. Grondin)**

It is proposed that flyers of Academy publications and activities be published.

Christl Verduyn indicated that there is an imbalance with respect to Academy medals, in particular in relation to the Arts Division, and suggested that new medals be established in our Academy.

**13. Adjournment/Clôture (J. Grondin)**

Moved by Christl Verduyn, seconded by Gary Libben

Approved

Respectfully submitted,  
Gonia Jarema  
Academy Secretary

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