

A PEO COUNCIL WHO'S WHO

By Jennifer Coombes

IF YOU HAVE been following our series of governance articles since they began in the July/August 2015 issue, you'll see we've covered several topics related to governance, but have not yet specifically tackled PEO's governance.

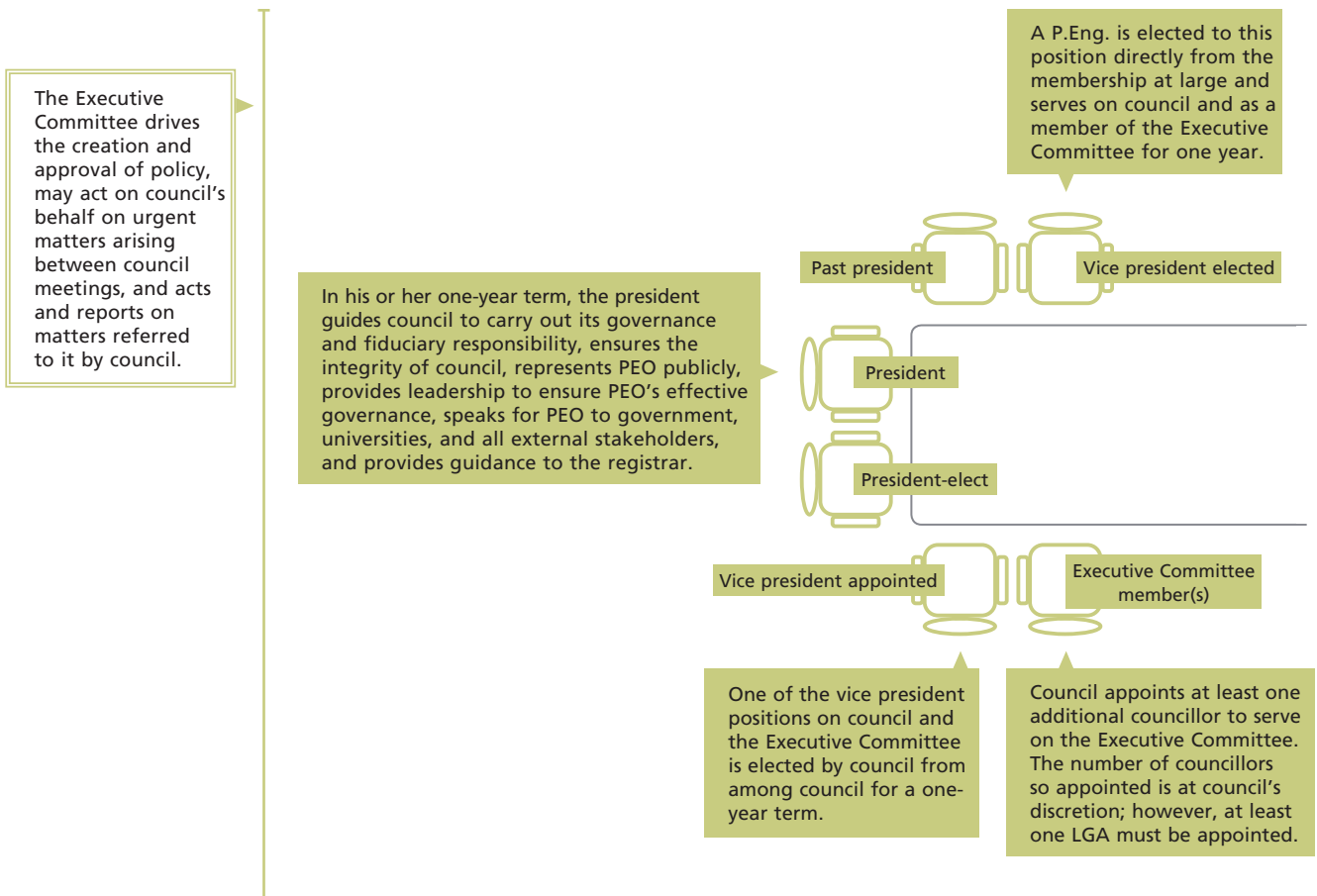
The first step in understanding how PEO is governed is to get to know more about council—the body that makes policy decisions for the regulation of professional engineering and PEO operations.

The composition of council is prescribed by section 2 of Regulation 941 under the *Professional Engineers Act* and includes up to 29 councillors, if all positions are filled.

Council comprises:

- the president;
- the president-elect;
- the past president;
- the vice president (elected);
- the vice president (appointed from among council);
- three councillors-at-large;
- 10 regional councillors; and
- up to 12 lieutenant governor-in-council appointees (LGAs).

The Executive Committee is made up of the president, the president-elect, the past president, a vice president who is elected by the membership, a vice president who is appointed from sitting councillors at the meeting of council immediately following PEO's



annual general meeting, and as many additional councillors as council deems appropriate, at least one of whom must be an LGA.

In addition to the elected Executive Committee positions and past president, the remainder of council is made up of three councillors-at-large, who are each elected from the membership at large, two regional councillors elected from each of PEO's five regions (for a total of 10) and 12 lieutenant governor-in-council appointees, seven of whom are P.Engs, and five of whom are non-engineers or lay members.

To borrow a little from the US Declaration of Independence, all PEO councillors are created equal. There is no difference in the obligations of elected or appointed councillors, except for the requirement that the membership of certain PEO committees comprise a specified number of elected and appointed councillors. All councillors must, at all times, hold the interests of the public paramount in their decision making. The public looks to PEO council for protection and leadership on issues affected by or affecting the profession.

Although 10 councillors hail from each of PEO's regions, these councillors do not have constituencies in the sense that members of parliament do. Rather, they are there to ensure council is aware of and considers regional differences in practice when it is making decisions. Ultimately, however, regional councillors, like all PEO councillors, have a fiduciary duty to PEO and must make decisions that serve and protect the public interest.

Anyone is eligible to seek election to PEO council as long as they are a licensed P.Eng. residing in Ontario. To become a candidate for president-elect, vice president or a councillor-at-large, a member must be nominated by at least 15 professional engineers, including at least one resident in each of PEO's five regions—Northern, Eastern, East Central, Western and West Central. To become a candidate for regional councillor, a member must reside in the region in which he or she wishes to be elected and must be nominated by at least 15 professional engineers who also reside in the region.

Each year, council appoints a Central Election and Search Committee to encourage members to seek nomination for election as president-elect, vice president or councillor-at-large, and Regional Election and Search committees to encourage members in each region to seek election as regional councillors.

Council meets at least four times each year. Σ

Up to 12 councillors are appointed by the lieutenant governor of Ontario and are known as lieutenant governor-in-council appointees or LGAs. LGAs carry the same responsibilities as elected councillors, and are intended to bring balance to council deliberations. Some are P.Engs appointed to bring the perspectives of diverse engineering disciplines, an outcome that can't be guaranteed through the election process, while others are lay people who can provide council with the perspective of non-engineers.

