

Minutes of the 103rd Annual Business Meeting

SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2025

PRESIDENT AND CHAIR: GREGORY P. WOWCHUK, P.ENG.

These minutes are prepared to align with PEO's By-Law No. 1, Section 15(7): "The record of all Council and committee meetings shall include only enough detail to summarize discussions and record motions and decisions made as a result of those discussions."

The 103rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO) was held on Saturday, April 26, 2025, in a hybrid setting with both in person and videoconference participation.

President Wowchuk called the meeting to order and welcomed PEO licence holders with a special welcome to the over 4500 new licensees joining PEO over the past year; engineering interns, students and employers; stakeholders; members of the public; colleagues in the engineering community; PEO staff; distinguished guests; and friends.

President Wowchuk then introduced and welcomed to the podium Ontario's associate attorney general, The Honourable Michael A. Tibollo. In his message, Minister Tibollo emphasized the importance of building systems, structures and boundaries that not only meet current needs but are also sustainable for the future. He highlighted the importance of seeking upstream solutions as a key to building a better tomorrow. He further noted that the PEO legislation is over 40 years old and emphasized the need for legislative modernization. As this falls within his current portfolio, he expressed his commitment to supporting necessary reforms.

The minister concluded his remarks by emphasizing the importance of continuous professional development, noting that it plays a critical role in maintaining the integrity of any profession. He encouraged all attendees to dream big while continuing to uphold professional rules and operate within appropriate boundaries.

On behalf of PEO and Council, President Wowchuk thanked Minister Tibollo for joining PEO's AGM.

INTRODUCTION OF COUNCIL

President Wowchuk introduced the members of the 2024–2025 PEO Council:

President Gregory P. Wowchuk, BAsC, Dipl.El.Tech., P.Eng., FEC; Past President Roydon Fraser, PhD, P.Eng., FEC; President-elect Fred Saghezchi, MAsC, P.Eng., FEC; Vice President (elected) Guy Boone, P.Eng.; Vice President (appointed) and East Central Region Councillor Nanda Lwin, BAsC, P.Eng., MEPP, FEC; Councillors-at-Large Leila Notash, PhD, P.Eng., FEC, Glen Schjerning, P.Eng., and Randy Walker, P.Eng., FEC; Eastern Region Councillors Mic Liu, MAsC, JD, P.Eng., LEED-GA, and Chantal Chiddle, P.Eng., FEC; East Central Region Councillor Shahandeh Hannah Ehtemam, P.Eng., PMP; Northern Region Councillors

Luc Roberge, P.Eng., FEC, and Ahmed Elshaer, PhD, P.Eng.; Western Region Councillors Susan MacFarlane, MSc, PhD, P.Eng., and Vicki Hilborn, MAsC, P.Eng.; West Central Region Councillors Ravinder Singh Panesar, P.Eng., FEC, and Pappur Shankar, P.Eng., FEC; and Lieutenant Governor-in-Council Appointees Lorne Cutler, MBA, P.Eng., Andy Dryland, C.E.T., Paul Mandel, MBA, CPA, CA, CBV, CFF, Rachel Prudhomme, BEng, MSc, P.Eng., Scott Schelske, P.Eng., FEC, Uditha Senaratne, P.Eng., FEC, and Sherlock Sung, BAsC.

President Wowchuk thanked Council for all their hard work and service.

President Wowchuk also introduced PEO staff: Jennifer Quaglietta, MBA, P.Eng., ICD.D, CEO/registrar; Meg Feres, manager, Council operations; Chetan Mehta, director, finance; and Parliamentarian Atul Kapur.

IN MEMORIAM

President Wowchuk asked all those present to observe a moment of silence in remembrance of those PEO licence holders who passed away in 2024.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

President Wowchuk reviewed the order of business and housekeeping items. A test of the voting system was conducted.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

President Wowchuk referred licence holders to the minutes of the 2024 AGM. It was moved by Councillor Susan MacFarlane and seconded by Councillor Vicki Hilborn that the minutes of the 2024 AGM, as published in the Fall 2024 issue of *Engineering Dimensions* and on the PEO website, be adopted.

Motion carried

FINANCIAL REPORT

President Wowchuk invited Councillor Lorne Cutler, chair of the 2024–2025 Audit and Finance Committee, to provide a report on PEO's audited financial statements.

Cutler reviewed the financial information, noting that the 2024 audited financial statements were approved by Council at the April 2025 meeting. He noted that these statements are on the PEO AGM webpage and would be published in the May/June (Spring) issue of *Engineering Dimensions*.

Cutler presented a graph showing a five-year trend of revenues, expenses and net income. He noted that as of December 2024, there is a slight reduction in revenues of \$500,000, or 1 per cent, due to lower income from applications, lower revenues related to the building at 40 Sheppard Avenue West and lower advertising income. However, the reduction was partially offset by higher revenues from the insurance affinity program with Engineers Canada, higher P.Eng. membership revenue and an increase in investment income. He further highlighted that there is an increase in expenditure of \$2.5 million, or 7.5 per cent, due to higher operating expenses for supporting various organizational initiatives.

In 2024, PEO reported a surplus of \$1.3 million in comparison to a surplus of \$4.3 million in 2023.

Key financial highlights as of December 31, 2024, were presented:

- Revenues of \$37.1 million (vs \$37.6 million in 2023);
- Expenses of \$35.8 million (vs \$33.3 million in 2023);
- A surplus, or net excess of revenues over expenses, of \$1.3 million (vs \$4.3 million in 2023);

- An increase of \$2.5 million, or 6.6 per cent, in cash and marketable securities to \$40.6 million (vs \$38.1 million in 2023); and
- PEO continues to have the lowest P.Eng. fees in Canada.

Cutler stated that PEO's finances are healthy and are expected to remain so for the foreseeable future. He answered questions related to legal expenditures and appointment of auditors.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

Staff responded to a question about Deloitte LLP's current contract with PEO, which will expire in 2026.

It was moved by Councillor Lorne Cutler and seconded by Councillor Randy Walker that the firm of Deloitte LLP, chartered accountants, be appointed as PEO's auditors for the association for the 2025 fiscal year or until their successor is appointed.

Motion carried

CEO/REGISTRAR'S REPORT

CEO/Registrar Quaglietta extended a warm welcome to everyone attending both virtually and in-person. She opened her speech by acknowledging the hard work of the entire 2024–2025 Council and its commitment to the engineering profession and the public interest, and thanking President Wowchuk on their collaboration over the past year in the evolution of PEO as a regulator.

Quaglietta provided an update that 2024 was a year of great progress and impact for PEO as it successfully met all the objectives in last year's Operational Plan, which guided the work towards achieving the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan goals. She remarked that this was significant progress in the journey to modernizing and strengthening the regulatory framework as PEO implemented key initiatives under three guiding pillars that reinforce the commitment to protecting the public: operational effectiveness, organizational alignment and governance renewal.

FARPACTA Update

Quaglietta reported that PEO exceeded compliance requirements for engineering licensing timelines as mandated by the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act*. In addition, significant progress was made in addressing the legacy licence application backlog, which was reduced by nearly 45 per cent. She stated that these achievements represent a substantial advancement toward ensuring timely, efficient and equitable access to engineering licensure in Ontario. Quaglietta further noted that the transition to a competency-based assessment framework for evaluating experience requirements was positively recognized by the Office of the Fairness Commissioner, which commended PEO for implementing an approach that promotes equity, diversity and inclusion in the licensing process.

PEAK Update

Quaglietta reported that in the second year of the PEAK (Practice Evaluation and Knowledge) mandatory continuing professional development (CPD) program, the organization achieved key outcomes. Notably, 89 per cent of eligible licence holders successfully completed the first two PEAK requirements: the practice evaluation and the professional practice module. Quaglietta extended appreciation to all participating licence holders for their commitment to meeting this new important regulatory obligation.

Regulatory Compliance

Quaglietta mentioned that due to enforcement efforts, more than 80 complaints and seven discipline cases met resolution. Additionally, the organization celebrated two unlicensed practice prosecutions resulting in record-breaking cost awards for PEO.

Operational Achievements

Quaglietta mentioned that operationally, PEO has undertaken 57 digital transformation projects and improved customer service processes. PEO also remains committed to fulfilling key initiatives to enhance volunteer engagement and operational efficiency.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at PEO

Quaglietta noted that all work towards the strategic goals must reflect PEO's equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) values, in line with the Anti-Racism and Equity Code. As a result, EDI remained a key area of focus throughout 2024. She reported PEO continued to advance efforts to build a regulatory body and workplace reflective of the diversity within the engineering profession.

In recognition that an inclusive profession fosters public trust and strengthens PEO's capacity to fulfill its mandate in the public interest, significant progress was made in the implementation of the Anti-Racism and Equity Code Action Plan. Through the deliberate integration of EDI principles into policy development, decision-making processes and organizational culture, PEO is working to establish an environment in which diverse perspectives are not only welcomed but actively valued, and where all individuals are empowered to contribute meaningfully to the profession.

Closing Statements

Quaglietta extended sincere appreciation to PEO Council for its ongoing leadership and governance, noting its critical role in advancing thoughtful policy, upholding the public-interest mandate and ensuring regulatory effectiveness. She also expressed her appreciation to PEO staff for their dedication and professionalism in executing regulatory functions and contributing to a high-performing and inclusive workplace. Quaglietta further acknowledged and thanked over 900 volunteers for their valuable contributions, whose time and expertise across Council, statutory committees and chapters continue to support and strengthen the self-regulation of the engineering profession.

She concluded her speech by mentioning PEO remains committed to the goal of achieving regulatory excellence, upholding the highest standards of professionalism, accountability and public service. She emphasized that effective regulation is grounded not only in diligence and integrity, but also in fairness, transparency, compassion and fostering trust and collaboration with both the engineering community and the public. Quaglietta noted

that PEO will continue to build a profession that is both technically excellent and deeply rooted in the values that serve society best.

PRESIDENT WOWCHUK'S OUTGOING REPORT

President Wowchuk began by sharing his thoughts on the business conducted by Council over the 2024–2025 term. He thanked the CEO/registrar and staff for tackling a challenging operational year with positivity and dedication. He further expressed his gratitude to the current Council, chapters and committee volunteers for their hard work this past year.

President Wowchuk extended his appreciation for the opportunity to serve and acknowledged the privilege of working with PEO members, volunteers and staff. He especially acknowledged the contribution of former president Dr. Roydon Fraser and thanked him for his decades-long contribution to the organization.

President Wowchuk reflected on his long history of service with PEO since joining Council in 1997. He noted that serving as president marked the pinnacle of his volunteer career. He also shared his appreciation for the opportunity to engage directly with members during recent visits to several PEO chapters.

President Wowchuk recollected the historical foundation of PEO's mandate, established in 1922, when the Ontario government entrusted engineers with self-regulation on the condition that the public interest remains paramount. Wowchuk affirmed that, a century later, this model continues to serve the profession and public effectively as he believes the primary stakeholder in the profession is its 90,000 members.

He noted that during his presidential term Council remained focused on the strategic plan, including priorities related to licensing, organizational performance and governance. President Wowchuk briefly highlighted several key decisions and achievements. He reported that in response to stakeholder feedback, Council approved the return of an improved Engineering Intern (EIT) program to better support licence applicants while advancing PEO's regulatory mandate. President Wowchuk also reported that Council approved an Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) policy to enhance oversight of governance and operations. An annual risk register will be reviewed by Council to identify and address potential organizational risks. He mentioned that Council adopted the Director Accountability Framework, including updated policies on code of conduct, conflict of interest and criteria for election eligibility and disqualification, ensuring strong governance standards. President Wowchuk commented that Council directed staff to develop a process to address health-related capacity concerns outside the discipline process. This initiative aims to support fair and proportionate regulatory action. He further reported that the Council approved revisions to the practice standard for tower crane inspections, expanding its scope to enhance public safety in urban areas. President Wowchuk

commented that initial work commenced on the next strategic plan, including stakeholder consultations. The incoming Council will review and approve the plan, maintaining focus on public protection and regulatory excellence.

In his closing statement, President Wowchuk expressed gratitude to Council colleagues and staff for their collaboration over the past year. He acknowledged the professionalism and dedication of PEO staff, led by CEO/Registrar Quaglietta, and emphasized the importance of Council's visionary leadership in shaping policy. President Wowchuk further extended his best wishes to incoming President Fred Saghezchi and expressed his intention to continue supporting Council and PEO's mission in the year ahead.

SUBMISSION #1—STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF PRESIDENT

The mover, Fred Saghezchi, presented his submission proposal to strengthen the role of the PEO president. His proposal outlined that the president of PEO shall hold all powers and responsibilities as outlined in provincial and federal legislation, along with the specific authorities. Additionally, certain additional powers are conditional and will only take effect upon the unanimous approval of the president, president-elect and past president of PEO. He stated that the time has come to reform the role of the president by enforcing and giving more authority to the role to make decisions. He proposed that if the presidential role had more power that it will work to ensure decisive actions are taken swiftly while safeguarding public interest.

The AGM floor was open to questions and comments. The mover responded to questions on the reforms proposed. He also faced comments that praised the current governance structure and functions of the regulatory body.

The president called for a vote on the motion.

Moved by Fred Saghezchi and seconded by George Nikolov, P.Eng.

Be it resolved:

- Empower the President: Grant the president conditional powers (e.g., dissolving the Council under exceptional circumstances or calling referendums) to address critical issues effectively. Allow the president sole authority over operational and financial decisions, conflict resolution and committee leadership to streamline processes and reduce delays.
- Enhance Governance Flexibility: Introduce mechanisms that allow the president to act decisively while respecting accountability measures like Council veto powers and adherence to legal standards.
- Safeguard Stakeholder Interests: Establish frameworks for stakeholder engagement, such as initiating referendums or public meetings, to ensure decisions align with the interests of the majority.

Motion defeated

SUBMISSION #2—EMPLOYER DEFINITION

The mover, Fred Saghezchi, presented his submission proposal for recognizing stakeholders of PEO as owners of PEO. He further proposed that the PEO Council is elected by and responsive to these stakeholders. Its primary mandate is to govern the profession and safeguard the public interest. His proposal also included that for major rules or regulations that have a substantial impact on most stakeholders, a general referendum is required. If preliminary approval is obtained from stakeholders, the final decision lies with the Council to either approve or reject the proposal. If preliminary approval is not granted, the motion is deemed defeated. The mover added that the process ensures that critical decisions impacting the profession are made with direct input from those most affected. He also added that the president of PEO should hold the authority to call for a referendum at their discretion, subject to unanimous approval from the president, president-elect and past president of PEO as this provision establishes a clear and authoritative mechanism for engaging stakeholders in key decisions affecting the engineering community.

He proposed that this will reinforce accountability and mandate staff compliance while implementing referendum procedures where stakeholders will have a direct voice in critical matters.

The AGM floor was open to questions and comments. The mover responded to several comments related to his proposal on referendums and presidential authority; and was reminded that the majority of the Council body is currently elected, and they represent the voices of stakeholders.

The president called for a vote on the motion.

Moved by Fred Saghezchi and seconded by Roger Jones, P.Eng.

Be it resolved:

That the requested action from the PEO Council is to formally amend the bylaws or regulations to incorporate the proposed definitions and principles outlined in the motion. This includes:

- Recognizing Stakeholders as Owners: Codifying the role of P.Eng. licence holders as primary stakeholders and owners of PEO.
- Reinforcing Accountability: Ensuring the Council operates with accountability to its stakeholders while prioritizing public interest.
- Mandating Staff Compliance: Requiring PEO staff to adhere to Council-approved rules, with exceptions only for legislative conflicts or significant stakeholder opposition.
- Implementing Referendum Procedures: Establishing a democratic process through referendums for major decisions, ensuring stakeholders have a direct voice in critical matters.
- Defining Presidential Authority: Empowering the PEO president to facilitate referendums under clear approval mechanisms

Motion defeated

SUBMISSION #3—MANHATTAN SYNDROME

A pre-recorded message from the mover, Prakash Bansod, P.Eng., was played. His submission proposal stated that PEO's current Code of Ethics is either vague or uncommitted to plastic and other hazardous waste management and carbon footprint/global warming. Also, due to recent advancements in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence (AI) and the armament and munitions industries, PEO engineers need the guard rails of a new and specific code of ethics. The proposed changes to the Code of Ethics will remove any ambiguity in terms of the above-mentioned issues. These changes will bring clarity to engineering work for which licensed engineers may use their engineering seal.

The AGM floor was open to questions and comments. The mover responded to several comments related to his proposal being the same as or similar to his 2024 AGM submission.

The president called for a vote on the motion.

Moved by Prakash Bansod, P.Eng., and seconded by Zeljko Sikic, P.Eng.

Be it resolved:

That the PEO Council set up a Code of Ethics committee that examines the PEO's current Code of Ethics and consider whether it needs to be updated due to changes in technology and recent geopolitics. A list of topics is offered in the preamble for the committee's consideration. The Code of Ethics should make its recommendations in a report to the PEO Council by the end of 2025. Moreover, the Code of Ethics should be considered as work in progress and should be updated in subsequent years, at a frequency decided by the Council.

Motion carried

SUBMISSION #4—PROVIDING VALUE TO MEMBERS THROUGH PEO STAFF PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The mover, Ahmad Khadra, presented his submission proposal and stated that it will be valuable for members to audit and review PEO employee performances. The submission stated that Council should mandate a system of performance review for operations staff at PEO, according to modern best practices, whereby each department, program and employee would be periodically assessed against specific deliverables. He further added that the updates should be made annually to the general membership as part of the operational plan status report.

The AGM floor was open to questions and comments. The mover responded to several comments related to his proposal being administrative and operational.

The president called for a vote on the motion.

Moved by Ahmad Khadra, P.Eng., and seconded by Peter Keays, P.Eng.

Be it resolved:

That Council should mandate a system of performance review for operations staff at PEO, according to modern best practices, whereby each department, program and employee would be periodically assessed against specific deliverables. The outcome of this review shall be used to rationalize staffing and manage resources efficiently. Other benefits of this system might include: better employee satisfaction and reduction of administrative burdens. Updates would be made annually to the general membership as part of the operational plan status report.

Motion defeated

QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL

Licence holders were invited to submit written questions virtually or speak in person. President Wowchuk, the CEO/registrar and the Audit and Finance Committee chair responded to several questions related to topics such as member submission protocol, revenues, PEO's stance on removing interprovincial licence barriers, CEO/Registrar's Report, Gender Audit Report, Professional Practice Management Plan and Professional Practice Audit.

PRESENTATION TO OUTGOING COUNCILLORS

President Wowchuk congratulated retiring licence holders of the 2024–2025 Council who had worked diligently to move the profession forward and expressed his personal appreciation to all for their collaboration, support and encouragement throughout the 2024–2025 year. He stated that it has been a pleasure serving as president and chair.

President Wowchuk advised that the outgoing councillors had received a token of appreciation in recognition of their service to the profession. He thanked and recognized the following outgoing members of Council: Roydon Fraser, past president; Guy Boone, vice president (elected); Mic Liu, East Region

councillor; George Nikolov, lieutenant governor-in-council appointee; and Glen Schjerning, councillor-at-large.

INSTALLATION OF NEW PRESIDENT

Fred Saghezchi took the oath of office as the 106th president for the 2025–2026 term. Past President Wowchuk presented him with the chain of office.

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING PRESIDENT

President Saghezchi, on behalf of Council, thanked Past President Wowchuk and expressed sincere appreciation for all his work and efforts to both PEO and the profession. President Saghezchi recognized Past President Wowchuk serving as a volunteer since the 1990s and on Council and several PEO committees. He presented Past President Wowchuk with tokens of appreciation, including an amethyst clock, a framed picture from his feature in *Engineering Dimensions*; a certificate of appreciation; a past president's lapel pin; and an outgoing president's award.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Saghezchi addressed all attendees by expressing his gratitude for the opportunity to serve as the new president. He further added that he undertakes his new role with a profound sense of duty to the self-regulated profession and to the people of Ontario, whose interests PEO is committed to protect.

In his opening remarks, President Saghezchi thanked the Council, volunteers and staff for their remarkable contribution in the past term. President Saghezchi especially thanked outgoing President Greg Wowchuk for his steadfast and invaluable leadership. President Saghezchi informed the attendees that he has been volunteering at PEO for over 20 years and that accountability, honesty and integrity have been the guiding principles in both his professional and volunteer roles. He also read a disclaimer in his opening remarks stating that the views he expresses today are his opinion and vision and not official policies or bylaws of PEO. If his views ever conflict with PEO's established regulations, he will always uphold the *Professional Engineers Act* and its associated rules.

President Saghezchi reflected on his journey to becoming a volunteer and said he has firsthand witnessed all the hard work of all the individuals within PEO who serve to regulate and promote the engineering profession. He thanked the volunteers for fostering a dynamic and energetic community.

President Saghezchi highlighted a few key priorities for his term as a president. He commented that he would like to revisit and restructure PEO's current governance model and advocate to strengthen the role of the president to enhance transparency and reconnect Council with members. He believes that Council reforms are needed to attract fresh talent and innovative ideas. He added that he will strongly support work for reestablishing the EIT program and will recommend conducting a comprehensive review of the mandatory CPD program.

He acknowledged that the comprehensive review is already planned for the term. President Saghezchi further added that he has plans to address concerns related to the removal of the Canadian experience requirement as a FARPACTA compliance and is looking forward to proposing dialogues on repealing the industrial exception to promote engineering accountability.

President Saghezchi also remarked that volunteers are the backbone of PEO, and they play a vital role in its success. As a result, he plans to work towards enhancing the recognition and integration of volunteers while also strengthening the role of chapters in governance and recruitment. He called for unity across Council, chapters, staff, volunteers and members to advance PEO's mission and uphold the public interest.

INTRODUCTION OF INCOMING MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

President Saghezchi introduced the 2025–2026 members of Council:

Fred Saghezchi, president; Greg Wowchuk, past president; Leila Notash, president-elect; Sardar Asif Khan, PhD, MBA, P.Eng., FEC, vice president (elected); Lorne Cutler, lieutenant governor-in-council appointee; Chantal Chiddle, Eastern Region councillor; Sean Decloux, MEng, MBA, P.Eng., councillor-at-large; Andrew Dryland, lieutenant governor-in-council appointee; Hannah Ehtemam, East Central Region councillor; Ahmed Elshaer, Northern Region councillor; Vicki Hilborn, Western Region councillor; Paula Klink, PhD, P.Eng., FEC, councillor-at-large; Nanda Lwin, East Central Region councillor; Susan MacFarlane, Western Region councillor; Paul Mandel, lieutenant governor-in-council appointee; Ravinder Panesar, West Central Region councillor; Rachel Prudhomme, lieutenant governor-in-council appointee; Luc Roberge, Northern Region councillor; Scott Schelske, lieutenant governor-in-council appointee; Uditha Senaratne, lieutenant governor-in-council appointee; Pappur Shankar, West Central Region councillor; Susan J. Shi, MEng, P.Eng., Eastern Region councillor; Sherlock Sung, lieutenant governor-in-council appointee; and Randy Walker, councillor-at-large.

CONCLUSION

President Saghezchi then declared the 103rd AGM of the Association of Professional Engineers of Ontario concluded and reminded in-person attendees to take note of the information on the screen outlining the events scheduled for the rest of the day. **e**

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