MINUTES FROM CANADIAN NEUROSURGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
12:45 pm - June 21, 2017 at the Empress Hotel – Victoria, BC

Attendance is as per the sign-in sheet.
Stephen Lownie        Pat McDonald        Dhany Charest
Ian Fleetwood         Chris Wallace       Winston Gittens
Jeff Atkinson         Walter Hader        Tejas Sankar
David Steven          Tim Darsaut         Vivek Mehta
Cian O’Kelly          Ahmed Al-Jishi      G.S. Cameron
Mark Bigder           Gelareh Zadeh       Ron Pokrupa
Joe Megyesi           Andy Parrent        Michael Taccone
Olufemi Ajani         Sean Christie        Bill Wang
Blake Yarascavitch    Kesh Reddy          Falah Maroun
Peter Gorman          Gwynedd Pickett     Joe Silvaggio
John Wong             Mel Boulton         Charles Agbi
David Clarke          Stephen McCluskey    Jeff Pugh

Invited guests / others:
Karine Michaud        Brian Toyota         Fahad Alkherayf

1. Meeting was called to order by Dr. Stephen Lownie at 13:20 hrs PST.

2. The Agenda was reviewed. One item was added to the Agenda, concerning the position of the Canadian Neurosurgical Society within the CNSF. Motion to approve the agenda with the additional item was made by Dr. Vivek Mehta, seconded by Walter Hader. The Agenda with the added item was approved unanimously.

3. The Minutes of the AGM Meeting which was held in Quebec City on June 22, 2016 had been circulated as an online attachment, and were reviewed. Motion to approve the minutes (Dr. Andrew Parrent); seconded by Vivek Mehta. Carried.

4. Business arising from the Minutes (to be addressed in Current Business).

5. CURRENT BUSINESS:

   a. Presidents Report: Membership numbers were reviewed by Dr. Lownie. Membership was provided with comparative statistics from 2014 to 2017. In general the other member societies of the CNSF have all seen a decline in membership over the years. On the other hand, membership numbers within the CNSS have been relatively stable. Discussion was then held as to ways to improve membership even further. Some of the successes of the last
few years have been due to requiring mandatory junior membership for residents applying for the McKenzie Prizes and for residents participating in CNSS-sponsored courses including the annual resident boot camp. Dr. Lownie has also approached Neurosurgery program directors whose memberships have lapsed or had not ever been members; in three instances they have renewed their memberships such that all PDs are currently Active CNSS members. A new initiative is the hosting of a CNSS welcoming reception at the annual meetings of the CNS in 2016 in Boston (Dr. Fleetwood) and the AANS in 2017 in Los Angeles (Dr. Lownie) meetings. These have been well received with 30-40 attendees.

It is recommended that we continue to lobby colleagues and especially program directors to encourage membership in the CNSS. These efforts have been ongoing and are slowly becoming successful. It is felt that increasing the profile of the CNSS could improve membership numbers. Further discussion will be held at our Fall Board meeting regarding additional ways to increase membership.

The Annual dinner will be held at the Union Club in Victoria. This is a very prestigious venue. On behalf of the CNSS, Dr. Lownie thanked Dr. Dan Warren, who as Union Club member was able to facilitate this event for the Society.

Since 2016, there has been considerable discussion regarding industry sponsorship of the Annual Dinner, and whether sponsorship it is in the Society’s best interest. The 2016 Annual Dinner was fully sponsored by a single sponsor, Medtronic. There were concerns expressed formally and informally to the CNSS Executive with the single-sponsorship model after last year’s event. The Executive felt that we needed to move away from the single-sponsor format and elected to try a completely self-funded model for 2017. Also, it was also decided by the executive that only Neurosurgeons who are Active CNSS members should be invited to the dinner. This year’s attendance will be compared to previous years because of the perception that lack of sponsorship may affect attendance. As of June 21st, 55 individuals had subscribed to the Dinner, which is comparable to recent years. New for this year, CNSS will take the opportunity to obtain a CNSS group photograph. It was felt that the Union Club venue would lend itself perfectly to this.

Membership was informed that Dr. M. Christopher Wallace will be this year’s recipient of the Life-Time Achievement Award (Charles Drake medal). There is a strong consensus among CNSS membership on the merit of the Award being conferred upon Dr. Wallace. Congratulations, Dr. Wallace!

Membership was also informed that we are currently receiving nominations for 2018 award. Letters of nomination pertaining to three potential candidates were solicited in the spring and have been received. One of these candidates has formally withdrawn in favour of another candidate. A fourth letter has been requested and has just been received by Dr. Lownie. The Society has also structured a sub-committee to evaluate the candidates and allocate the Award. The subcommittee will include the Executive of the CNSS plus three Directors. The President will cast a vote in the event of a tie.

Finally Dr. Lownie informed the membership that Dr. Dhany Charest will be representing the CNSS at the AANS Board of Directors Meeting in Chicago in November 2017. Also, the AANS is currently accepting nominations until September for positions including Nominating
Committee membership, and for Member-At-Large. CNSS members who are also members of the AANS are asked to consider serving as a nominee from the Society to one of these positions. The CNSS will put forward such individuals as nominees.

Dr. Lownie highlighted the organizational structure of the AANS and raised the question as to whether the CNSS is in a position to consider a similar structural framework. The AANS comprises 10 different Divisions. It is proposed that the CNSS organize itself accordingly with Provincial Directors/Board Members being responsible for reporting on different aspects of the CNSS organization. Primarily this would take the form of providing succinct comments (or longer report if indicated) to the Fall and Spring teleconferences and the AGM. The divisions could potentially be structured as outlined in the example below:

**CNSS Divisions (proposed)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division 1</th>
<th>Cerebrovascular</th>
<th>John Wong / Lissa Peeling</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Division 2</td>
<td>Spine and Peripheral Nerve / CSS</td>
<td>Sean Christie / Eric Massicotte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 3</td>
<td>Fellowships-CAST / History / NREF / Journals</td>
<td>Steve Lownie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 4</td>
<td>Trauma / Critical Care</td>
<td>Michael Ellis / Dhany Charest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 5</td>
<td>Epilepsy / Functional / RCPSC</td>
<td>David Steven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 6</td>
<td>Pediatrics / Ethics</td>
<td>Colin Kazina / Patrick McDonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 7</td>
<td>Stereotactic / Province de Quebec</td>
<td>David Mathieu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 8</td>
<td>Tumours / Skull Base</td>
<td>Joe Megyesi / Robert Adams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 9</td>
<td>Women in Canadian Neurosurgery / WFNS</td>
<td>Lissa Peeling / Gwynedd Pickett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division 10</td>
<td>Community Neurosurgery / MOCERT</td>
<td>Dhany Charest / Gary Goplen</td>
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Considerable discussion was then held as to the objective of this new initiative and the structure required to move it forward. After much discussion Dr. Kesh Reddy put forward a **Motion**: that the Society pursues an informal arrangement based on the 10 divisions according to the above outline proposed. Motion was seconded by Dr. Walter Hader and the motion was carried unanimously.

b. **SECRETARY-TREASURER REPORT**

The Financial statements for 2016 were reviewed by Dr. Dhany Charest. The Motion was put forward by Dr. Walter Hader and seconded by Dr. Ian Fleetwood to approve the financial statement as published. These were approved unanimously.

The motion was then put forward for the approval of Crowe MacKay LLP as Accountant for budget year 2017. The motion was put forward by Dr. Ian Fleetwood and seconded by David Steven and once again was approved unanimously.

c. Dr. Tejas Sankar gave us an outline of the CNSF Neurosurgery Day which will be June 22, 2017. It was highlighted that the number of abstracts received this year was lower than the previous year. This drop was more pronounced on the Neurology side than on the Neurosurgery side. Based on these concerns, discussions were held as to how to encourage residents to continue to submit abstracts for consideration for the annual meeting. We then had a short discussion as to who could be the potential lecturer for 2018. Some suggestions were put forward and possible candidates will be contacted for availability.
Finally Dr. Lownie acknowledged and thanked out-going Scientific Program Committee Chair Dr. Tejas Sankar and out-going Professional Committee Chair Dr. Joe Megyesi for their outstanding work in their respective roles. Dr. Lownie also welcomed Dr. Joe Megyesi as the new Co-Chair of the SPC.

d. Dr. Lownie invited Dr. Wong to highlight the 2017 recipients of the McKenzie Prizes in Basic Neuroscience Research and Clinical Research. The CNSS would like to thank Dr. John Wong for his continued stewardship, hard work and the allocation of these prizes.

e. The Board of Director Membership was reviewed. The Membership was informed that Dr. Gary Goplen has accepted our invitation to be the Director and BC Representative. We also welcome Michael Taccone as a Junior Resident rep and thanked Dr. Bill Wang for his hard work as Senior Resident rep. With these additions a motion was put forward by Dr. Gelareh Zadeh and seconded by Dr. David Steven that the Board of Directors for 2017-2018 be approved. The Board was approved unanimously as follows:

   Stephen Lownie – Director and President
   Patrick McDonald – Director and Vice-President
   Dhany Charest - Director and Secretary-Treasurer
   Ian Fleetwood – Director and Past President
   David Mathieu – Director and QC representative
   Sean Christie – Director and NS representative
   Roger Avery – Director and NL representative
   John Wong – Director and AB representative
   Gary Goplen – Director and BC representative (pending society membership)
   Lissa Peeling – Director and SK representative
   Robert Adams – Director and NB representative
   Eric Massicotte – Director and ON representative
   Colin Kazina – Director and MB representative
   Mark Bigder - Director and Senior Resident Representative
   Michael Taccone –Junior Resident Representative - Observer (non-voting)
   Dan Morin – Director and CEO
   Cian O’Kelly, Mark Bigder and Michael Taccone – PDC committee reps
   Joe Megyesi (Vice-Chair), Mark Bigder and Michael Taccone – SPC committee

f. Membership in CNSS - as discussed above in the President's Report.

g. PDC Report -- Dr. Joe Megyesi is moving on to become the Co-Chair of the SPC. Dr. Cian O’Kelly is replacing him as the Chair of the PDC Committee. The CNSS welcomes Dr. O’Kelly to this new role. The Membership was also informed that we are currently in the process of re-applying for an accredited assessor of CPD Credits. The CNSF is considered a strong organization in the assessment and delivery of CPD Credits and hopefully this will continue.

h. Scientific Program Committee Report -- Dr. Sankar has already briefed us on his work with the planning of the scientific part of the meeting. A report was also submitted.

i. CNSS Residents’ Representative report -- Dr. Wang provided us with his Resident report. We also took the opportunity once again to thank Dr. Wang for his commitment to this
society and wished him luck in his future career development. We welcome Dr. Mark Bigder in his role as Senior Resident Rep, and Dr. Michael Taccone as Junior Resident Rep and in their work in designing the resident course.

j. CNSS Website – Membership was briefed on the Society Website. The website address is www.CNSS.ca. Dr. Albert Isaacs provided an update on the website by email since he was unable to attend. He has worked with Donna Irvin in the CNSF secretariat to correct inconsistencies and to better align the site with the CNSF website. Dr. Gwynedd Pickett informed us on the work that is currently being done to improve the website banner to better reflect the society. Membership felt that this was a worthwhile endeavor and will continue to promote maintenance of the website with the recommended improvements.

k. Concussion in Canada- Dr. Ellis is a recognized authority on concussion diagnosis and management and serves as official CNSS Representative on the Canadian Concussion Consortium (CCC). At this time the role of the CNSS as a member organization of the CCC is being debated. It is not clear what the ultimate objective of the CCC will be and whether the CNSS will be able to endorse their position. Dr. Ellis also chairs a subcommittee of the CNSS concerned with concussion and the development of a position statement on this subject (Dr. Charest is official delegate from CNSS; Dr. McDonald and Fleetwood also serve). The Membership was informed on the progress to date, which has been somewhat slower than expected partly due to the potential impact the Berlin conference might have on this matter. The CNSS is strongly in favour of this moving forward during the summer and fall. This item concluded with a brief report on Parachute Canada conveyed by letter from Dr. Tator (Board member, Parachute Canada) and Dr. Ellis, thanking the CNSS for their ongoing support of $2500 towards the vision of an injury-free Canada.

l. WFNS Report – Dr. Pickett will be representing the CNSS at the WFNS Meeting in Turkey in the summer. Dr. Massicotte is unable to attend; Dr. Fred Gentili is to serve as Dr. Massicotte’s delegate.

m. History Project- Dr. Fleetwood presented a brief summary of his work trying to better highlight the history of the CNSS and Canadian Neurosurgery. This continues to be a challenge as there is very little documentation available. He once again sought members’ input and continues to work to establish a database for future reference.

n. American College of Surgeons – Dr. David Steven gave a brief summary of his work as the CNSS representative to this organization.

o. Neurosurgical Society of America – Membership was informed that Dr. Chris Wallace is President-Elect of the Neurosurgical Society of America. Congratulations are extended to Dr. Wallace on this achievement. Dr. Wallace did encourage people to attend the meetings which are held in various places in North America.

p. CJNS Journal Update- The Editor-in-Chief’s report was attached to the documents provided for the meeting and was reviewed. There were no concerns.

q. RCPSC AFC Interdisciplinary Brain Medicine was not discussed
r. Provincial Reports:

- **BC**: (Dr. Ramesh Sahjpal) – Dr. Sahjpal conveyed the following by email to Dr. Lownie: The Section of Neurosurgery (Head - Dr Honey, Economic Rep Dr. Dan Warren) - meets on a regular basis. Current focus is on renegotiating fee items. Case in point is complex spine fee codes, which are owned by orthopedics but the majority of complex spine in BC is done by neurosurgeons - so trying to gain control of these codes for neurosurgery. Also trying to create new fee codes for neuromodulation which, compared to other provinces, is woefully underpaid.

- **Alberta**: (Dr. John Wong) – Dr. Wong informed membership that the Alberta neurosurgeons are currently working to establish a more unified approach to their remuneration. This is a work in progress.

- **Saskatchewan**: (Dr. Lissa Peeling) – no reports was provided. However Dr. Mike Kelly currently serves as President of the Saskatchewan Society and conveyed remarks via Dr. Lownie. There are currently 8 neurosurgeons in Saskatoon including 2 pediatric neurosurgeons. Plans are to recruit to 10. Funding is via AFP (one opted out). Two individuals are new with estimated 3 anticipated retiring. Regina is a fee-for-service model with 5 staff. It is felt that a province-wide alternate funding model is needed, with a genuine manpower plan. Lastly, Dr. Kelly enthusiastically endorsed the presence of the CANN at the CNS meeting, for opportunities to thank the nurses as colleagues in neurosurgical patient care.

- **Manitoba**: (Dr. Colin Kazina) – Dr. Kazina was unable to attend but provided the following written remarks by email to Dr. Lownie. In April 2017, the Government of Manitoba and Winnipeg Regional Health Authority announced plans for consolidation of health care services, which will decrease emergency, critical care, and surgical services at some community hospitals, with some relocation of these services to the hospitals where neurosurgical patients are treated. It is not clear the impact that this will have on neurosurgery patients or physicians exactly, as plans and timelines are being released live-time. In July 2017, the Section became 10 neurosurgeons, with the latest addition being a spine neurosurgeon, Dr. Perry Dhalwal. With the recruitment of Dr. Demitre Serletis, who started in Winnipeg in April 2016, the epilepsy surgery program is developing quickly in Winnipeg. A new (and long overdue) Section website will be going live in fall 2017. The Manitoba residency program (Dr. Joseph Silvaggio, Program Director) and that of the University of Saskatchewan (Dr. Michael Kelly, Program Director) have begun combining a number of academic curriculum sessions, and most recently their annual resident research day. This past year’s visiting neurosurgeon speakers were Dr. Jay Riva-Cambrin (University of Calgary) and Dr. William Couldwell (University of Utah).

- **Ontario**: (Dr. Eric Massicotte) – Dr. Massicotte provided email remarks to Dr. Lownie. The only announcement was the posting for a new division head for Hamilton. There is one posting for a spinal neurosurgeon at the Toronto Western Hospital in Dr. Massicotte’s group. As for the OHIP issues that continue to affect all neurosurgeons in Ontario, very few new developments exist.
- **Quebec**: (Dr. David Mathieu) – Dr. Mathieu was unable to attend. Dr. Karine Michaud served as his delegate. Current issues: many new coercive health laws have developed in Quebec. Law 20 was adopted to increase health services accessibility for patients. There is now the obligation to operate patients who are on a waiting list for more than 1 year, to see patients at clinic before a prescribed maximum waiting time, and to see consultations in the ER within a certain time. Physicians might incur salary penalties if they are not compliant with these obligations (up to 30%). Law 130 (not adopted yet) would lead to increased powers for health minister and hospital administrations, and would be a major blow to professional autonomy. Quebec medical federations are fighting this, and considering legal action.

Concerning billing issues, neurosurgery billing in Quebec is considered mixed; there is a per diem amount, as well as fee for service (% of amount based on time of day or emergency setting). Work to revise billing codes has begun but one challenge is that there are too many complicated codes, along with overlap of many acts (especially in spine).

Concerning residency training, there was a unilateral government decision to reduce admission of new residents. Only one resident is now admitted in the whole province for the academic year 2017-2018 (McGill has the first turn). Neurosurgery has pushed for 2 residents per year starting from 2018-19, but there has been no decision yet. Programs have started to combine academic resources (e.g. weekly academic conferences between Sherbrooke and Quebec).

Concerning workforce, there is limited availability of staff positions; most hospitals are fully staffed. Limited resources are available in each centre. There are currently only four possible jobs available in Quebec. There continues to be a concern about future employability of residents coming out of residency training.

- **New Brunswick**: (Dr. Robert Adams) -- Dr. Adams was not present but Dr. Dhany Charest was able to provide a brief update. New Brunswick is currently funded for 8 positions, 6 of them are filled with active members and 2 with locums.

- **Nova Scotia**: (Dr. Sean Christie) – Dr. Christie indicates that Nova Scotia is now at full complement with all the available positions filled.

- **Newfoundland**: (Dr. Roger Avery) – Dr. Avery’s report was provided by Dr. Maroun. There will be two new members joining the St. John’s group in the next year.

6. **New Business.**
   a. Surgical Safety Checklist Initiative by the Canadian Patient Safety Institute. This item was deferred due to lack of time, but will be discussed at the Executive level during the summer months.
   b. At Dr. Lownie’s request, Dr. Brian Toyota raised the topic of the position of the CNSS in the CNSF. A lot of discussion followed, although different members had certain concerns about the role of the CNSS in the CNSF. No consensus was reached and it was agreed to continue to carry on discussions and in the interim, no formal recommendations were made.

The meeting was adjourned at 14:45 Pacific time.