

Assayers Foundation of British Columbia



MINUTES
of a
Meeting of the British Columbia Assayers Foundation Advisory Council
held in
Room SW2-158. British Columbia Institute of Technology,
3700 Willingdon Ave. Burnaby, BC.

April 21st, 2006

Present:

John Gravel	Vancouver, BC
Ray Lett (Secretary/Treasurer)	Victoria, BC
Jim McLeod	Vancouver, BC
Albert Hung	Richmond, BC.
Paul Morrison	Burnaby, BC.
Keith Rogers (President)	Vancouver, BC
Scott Daniels	Trail, BC.
Elaine Woo	Burnaby, BC.
Duncan Sanderson	Burnaby, BC.
Lloyd Twaites	Vancouver, BC.

1. Agenda Approval

Meeting called to order at 12.25 p.m. by Keith Rogers. Agenda tabled and additional items for discussion invited. September, 2006, Canadian Mineral Analyst Meeting tabled by Elaine Woo for discussion.

Proposed by Jim McLeod and seconded by Lloyd Twaites that the Agenda for the April 21st meeting be accepted. **Discussion:** None. Revised Agenda accepted by all.

2. Discussion on Matters Arising from the Minutes of the April 21, 2006 Assayers Foundation Annual General Meeting.

- a. **Financial Report (Ray Lett):** The Foundation presently has \$ 19,596.95 invested in a GIC and in a RBC chequing account. The Treasurer has on-line access to the account for determining the balance. The balance has declined from \$21,392.44 in August 2003 when the Foundation was established. About \$2,500 is spent each year on expenses related to the Board of Examiners, scholarships (\$1000) and miscellaneous costs related to annual society registration. Company and individual contributions to the Foundation amount to about \$2000 each year. Present contribution grades

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are: \$500 from a Large Company; \$250 from a Small Company and \$50 from an individual.

Mac Chaudhry: Companies should be asked to consider contribute more than the minimum donation.

John Gravel: A wide range of organizations should be approached for donations. The Foundation's operating expenses are presently about \$2,400 annually in addition to the scholarships. Contributions from organization should match expenses.

Mac Chaudhry: The Energy & Mines Act requires that government pay the examiners expenses. Recommend that Ministry of Energy & Mines be asked to pay \$3000 to cover examination expenses and also make a \$500 contribution to the Assayers Foundation.

Action: Ray Lett to request that the Ministry of Energy & Mines be asked to pay \$3000 to cover examination expenses and make a \$500 contribution to the Assayers Foundation.

- b) Assayers Foundation Scholarships (Ray Lett):** BCIT Foundation has been advised that Assayers Foundation will fund the award of a \$500 Graduation Achievement scholarship in June 2006. Elaine Woo has recommended BCIT candidate for the scholarship. A notice has been sent to commercial laboratories asking for expressions of interest from candidates in an "apprentice assayer" award. *Jim McLeod:* Recommend that that notice include as July 15th, 2006 deadline for responses and that the award be presented at the Canadian Mineral Analysis convention in September, 2006.

Action: Ray Lett to send a \$500 cheque to the BCIT Foundation and to revise the "invitation for apprentice assayer" award to include a July 15th, 2006 deadline for responses. The invitation is to be sent to commercial assay and company labs.

- c) Examination Fees** A decision of the examination fees for the assayers certification examination has been made by the Board of Examiners.
- d) Assayers Examination Exemption (Mac Chaudhry):** The issue of exemption from the BC assayer examination and holding examinations at the Teck-Cominco, Trail, laboratory was raised by Brian Johnson at the 2005 Assayers Foundation AGM. The exemption issue will be reviewed under the Agenda Item "Examination Report". Assayer examinations have been held at the Teck-Cominco, Trail, laboratory in the past and future examinations can be arranged if agreeable to Teck-Cominco staff if there are more than four candidates. Estimated cost for the examiner's travel and accommodation is \$3000.
- Scott Daniels:* Teck-Cominco will pay for examination and examiners costs provided that there area more than four candidates.

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Jim McLeod: Holding an examination in Trail would put an additional financial burden for travel on candidates not living in Trail.

Scott Daniels: Potential candidates for the assayer's examination would be from Trail. At present there are 26 technicians in the Teck-Cominco laboratory. The short-term supply of candidates for the examination is sufficient, but over the next decade there is a concern about raising the awareness of certified assayers working in Teck-Cominco. Formation of a separated Assayers Society with regulatory powers could have a significant influence on companies such as Teck-Cominco who employ assayers. A curriculum would help technicians working in the Teck-Cominco laboratory pass the BC Assayers examination. The issue of developing an examination curriculum guide was raised at the last meeting by Brian Johnson who had also asked about the experience candidates working for the examination in commercial assay laboratories.

Jim McLeod: Would be willing to help with Elaine Woo and Mac Chaudhry to develop a curriculum guide for non-BCIT students who plan to sit the assayer's examination.

Keith Rogers: ALS-Chemex technicians encouraged to take the BCIT training course because the course adds to the work place experience by covering topics such as quality control and data handling. An ALS-Chemex technician has a better chance of passing the examination after having taken the BCIT course. A pre-examination protocol would help students to be aware of the examination curriculum and time management. Copies of previous examinations could help students working in company and commercial laboratories.

Mac Chaudhry: Past BC assayer examination examples could be supplied, but may not be helpful to students because the topics are designed to reflect present rather than historical methods. Past BC assayer examination examples would be most useful to companies such as Teck-Cominco where there is an organized in-house training program. Many technicians were self trained before the BCIT course was started.

Action: Jim McLeod work with Elaine Woo and Mac Chaudhry to develop a curriculum guide for non-BCIT students who plan to sit the assayer's examination.

- 3. Examination Report (Mac Chaudhry):** Three of the 5 candidates for the Assayers Certification practical examination at BCIT in December 2005 passed the examination. Two other candidates who applied for exemption from the examination. One candidate passed the theory and gained exemption. There are presently three candidates who are qualified to take the practical examination. There are 6 to 7 candidates for a theory examination later in 2006.
- 4. BCIT Training Report (Elaine Woo)** There is presently 45 students enrolled in the on-line distance practicum training program. All of the students are in different modules, but most are in modules 1 & 2. One student is from Columbia.

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Six students are in Module 5. There is very little formal training because students are enrolled in the on-line distance program. The program is part-time and students do have flexibility in finishing the modules within a given time. Some students balance full-time employments with the BCIT course. Practical training is available to students in the BCIT laboratory in the evenings and at week ends.

Keith Rogers: Students should be urged to finish their training because there are presently good employment opportunities for assayers. Without a firm date for finishing the distance training some students may never graduate. A student should be required to finish within 2 years of starting the course.

Paul Morrison: Typically 20% of on-line distance training completes the course within a reasonable time of starting the course.

John Gravel: The BC Securities distance-training course requires students complete papers before they can graduate.

Mac Chaudhry: Presently an average 6 students taking the BCIT on-line distance program graduate each year. Incentives for students to finish are important.

Jim McLeod: Teck-Cominco students are given bonus when they complete a module.

Elaine Woo: The number of BC Assays certificates issued between 1985 and present shows steady decline in number of BC Certified assayers graduating (graph attached to minutes).

Mac Chaudhry: Graph can be misleading because of spikes in certificates issued reflect economic growth spurts. Increasing the number of graduating BC Certified assayers reflects the basic problem of supply and demand. While a small number of students presently received certificates each year maintaining the BC assayer's examination standard is important.

Elaine Woo: There is an option for students to work for a company on an 8 month coop term when they finish 3 modules of the training course. Kemess Mine has 1 coop student from May to December 2006.

Scott Daniels: Teck-Cominco will be advertising for 4 to 6 summer students for 4 months in Trail for 2007.

5. Other Business –

- a. Canadian Mineral Analysts Meeting (Elaine Woo):** Canadian Mineral Analysis Meeting to be held at the Executive Airport Plaza, Richmond, BC from September 11 to 14th 2006. The organizing Committee is seeking sponsors (Invitation Circulated). Call for papers to W. Clifford. Deadline for Abstracts is July 15th. Suggestions for workshops in encouraged.
- b. Replacement Computer for Examination Chair.** The present computer used by the Board of Examiners Chair needs replacement because of obsolescence. *Proposed by Ray Lett and seconded by Jim McLeod up to \$1500 is allocated to purchase a replacement computer and printer for the Assayers Program Chair of Examiners, Mac Chaudhry. Unanimous agreement.*

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- c. **Appreciation to BCIT.** Unanimous appreciation expressed to Paul Morrison, by Council Members for the lunch provided by BCIT during the Foundation Annual General Meeting and the Advisory Council Meeting.
- d. **Tax Deduction for donations to the assayers Foundation (Ray Lett):** Charity registration is possible because Foundation awards scholarships, but the cost of registration as a non-profit society through an accountant will be expensive. Will continue to look into registration.

6. **Next Meeting:** October 27th, 2006 by conference call.

7. **Adjournment.** Proposed by Ray Lett and seconded by Jim McLeod that the meeting be adjourn at 2.06 p.m. Unanimous agreement

Summary of Action Items

Action: Ray Lett request that the Ministry of Energy & Mines be asked to pay \$3,000 to cover examination expenses and make a \$500 contribution to the Assayers Foundation.

Action: Ray Lett to send a \$500 cheque to the BCIT Foundation and to revise the "invitation for apprentice assayer" award to include a July 15th, 2006 deadline for responses.

Action: Jim McLeod work with Elaine Woo and Mac Chaudhry to develop a curriculum guide for non-BCIT students who plan to sit the assayer's examination.

Chair: Keith Rogers _____

Secretary: Ray Lett _____

Date: _____