

Assayers Foundation of British Columbia



Draft MINUTES
of the
Meeting of the British Columbia Assayers Foundation Advisory Council

held in
**Room SW9-118. British Columbia Institute of Technology,
3700 Willingdon Ave. Burnaby, BC.**

April 24th, 2009

Present:

Ray Lett (Secretary/Treasurer)	Victoria, BC
Paul Morrison	Burnaby, BC.
Elga Altybayeva	Vancouver, BC
Scott Daniels (Chair)	Trail, BC.
Elaine Woo	Burnaby, BC.
Mac Chaudhry	Victoria, BC
Alice Pang	Vancouver
John Gravel	Vancouver

1. Approval of the Meeting Agenda

Meeting called to order at 1.50 p.m. by Scott Daniels and a quorum of members determined to be present. Those present welcomed by the Chair who and asked them to sign a gift for Jim McLeod. Increasing the number of practicing assayers, a July Advisory Council meeting and recognition for a long-serving BC Certified assayer were tabled as items for discussion under Other Business.

Proposed by John Gravel and seconded by Elaine Woo that the Agenda for the April 24th, 2009 Advisors Council Meeting be accepted with additional Other Business Items.

Discussion: None. Unanimous acceptance of the Motion.

2. Minutes of the November 21st, 2008 Advisors Council Meeting

Proposed by John Gravel and seconded by Elaine Woo that the Minutes of the November 21st, 2008 Advisors Council Meeting be accepted

Discussion: Corrections to the minutes noted by the Chair. Call for a vote on acceptance of the Minutes. Unanimous agreement that the Minutes of the November 21st, 2008 Advisory Council Meeting be accepted after corrections.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes – Action Items

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3.1 Ministry of Energy Mines & Petroleum Resources (MEMPR) approval to approach the Association of Professional Engineers & Geoscientists of BC (APEG BC) to determine if the BC Certified Assayers could have an association with APEG BC– Ray Lett:

MEMPR approved talking to APEG BC and Glen Singleton, an APEG BC Director, has been contacted. Glen encouraged the initiative because APEG BC is trying to develop stronger links with other organizations that have a professional registration. Glen recommended extend the contact to the APEG BC registrar.

Mac Chaudhry: Contact with APEG BC is encouraging because an association would ensure formal policing and regulation of the BC Assayers program under a larger and self regulating body.

Action – Ray Lett to continue discussion with APEG BC about an association that would include BC Certified Assayers.

3.2 Letter asking that MEMPR remunerate the BC Certified Assayers Program Chair of the Examination Board of for professional services – John Gravel. A letter has to be written.

Scott Daniels: Examiners expenses and reasonable reumeration for services should be paid by government and not the BC Assayers Foundation since the program is in the MEMPR mandate.

Mac Chaudhr.: The issue is one of principal. A firm annual commitment from government for support is needed.

John Gravel: Varying financial support from government may reflect a small number of candidates for the Certification examination in the past. Now that the BCIT modular training program has stimulated candidates to apply for certification as assayers the BC Certified Assayers program needs more financial support.

Action: John Gravel to write to the Director, Geological Survey, MEMPR on behalf of the assaying industry concerning annual remuneration to the BC Certified Assayers Program Examination Board Chairperson for professional services.

3.3 Council members review the letter to commercial laboratories urging more internal training for assayers – Scott Daniel

Jim McLeod had written a draft letter to commercial laboratories urging more internal training for assayers was circulated after November 17th meeting. The draft letter was discussed, but there had been no decision about the final text.

Action: Scott Daniels to finish writing the letter and send it to commercial laboratories.

3.4 – Ray Lett to send biographical information about those receiving trainee assayer awards to Scott Daniels for posting on the www.bcassayer.com web site:

Program updates have been sent to both BCIT and to Scott Daniels. Scott Daniels by Ray Lett before the meeting: The bcassayer web site can be utilized to list all active assayers. An appreciation event in June for a long serving assayer in Trail is an opportunity to encourage active assayers to sign onto the web site

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3.5 Assayer Foundation Membership renewal- Ray Lett

Recommended contributions from members in 2009-2010 are \$500 for larger companies, \$250 for smaller companies and \$50 for individuals.

Scott Daniel: Letters inviting contributions should be sent by email rather than ground mail with a reminder after an interval of two weeks. Those members who have made a contribution should be identified on the bcassayer site but not the amount of the contribution.

Action: Ray Lett to send out membership renewal notices for 2009-2010 and also to send a list on contributors to Scott Daniels for posting on the bcassayer site.

4. Examiners Board Report - Mac Chaudhry

Eight candidates attempted the theory examination in December 2008 and six were successful. The next theory examination is planned for October 2009 and the next practical examination for December 2010 when the BCIT laboratory is available. There may be 10 to 12 candidates for the practical examination. Of concern is the large number of candidates expected to sit the practical examination. An examination invigilator can manage four to six candidates so two separate examination sessions might be needed.

5. Language Proficiency- Scott Daniels: More discussion about the issue is needed. Previously, the examination Board Chair noted a potential safety hazard during the practical examination because some candidates have limited knowledge of English and may have difficulty communicating with invigilators and in understanding instructions.

Mac Chaudhry: Candidates for the practical examination should have a standard of verbal English. The examination requires that candidates have good problem solving skills rather than memory and they should also have a proven ability of verbal expression

Paul Morrison: Full-time BCIT student are required to pass a language proficiency test but part time student do not. The difficulty of evaluating a student's communication skills is that a test is commonly based on written rather than verbal English ability. There is no simple solution to the problem of having a reliable English language proficiency test.

John Gravel: The Assayers Program needs to graduate people with an ability to understand the examination questions, to think and to clearly express answers verbally.

Elaine Woo: Students in the assayers training course sometimes have difficulty problem solving and working independently.

Scott Daniels: Assistance from BCIT to establish a standard for a verbal English proficiency requirement for the assayers' examination would be greatly appreciated. The Chair of the Examiners Board could refuse to accept a candidate for the practical examination if there is a concern that the candidate has poor communication skills and/or a poor appreciation of laboratory safety.

Mac Chaudhry: A language proficiency requirement administered by the Board of Examiners could be a prerequisite for a candidate sitting the practical examination. Proficiency of verbal expression could be established before the examination by assessing

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a candidate's response to questions about mineral identification. Alternatively, a short interview with a candidate could assess verbal expression ability.

Paul Morrison: Assessment of verbal expression ability by interview needs to be objective and the results have to be defensible or there may be a legal challenge from a candidate refused admission to the examination. Language requirements for other BCIT programs such as those in health sciences can be determined.

Scott Daniels: The issue of language proficiency cannot be resolved now. Suggestions for creating a verbal expression standard and a defensible evaluation method are invited from the advisors board members.

6. Examiners Succession Planning – Scott Daniels

The present term of the Assayers Certification Program Board of Examiners will end on October 31st, 2009 and the Board Chair and one other examiner plan to retire from the Board on November 1st, 2009. Qualified nominees for the Board will have to be recommended to the Board Resources authority before October.

A great debt of gratitude is expressed by the Advisors Board to Mac Chaudhry for serving as Examination Board Chair on a voluntary basis for the past ten years.

Elaine Woo: Willing to continue on the Examination Board but concerned that two experienced members will be leaving.

Mac Chaudhry. There are now more candidates for the assayers examination reflecting an increased demand by the mining industry for qualified BC certified assayers. As a result the workload of the Examination Board and especially the Chair has increased considerably over the past 2 years. A new examination Board Chair will need to fully understand the program to ensure a smooth transition. Several qualified candidates have been approached but have not as yet expressed an interest in serving. The technical requirements for the Board Chair have been documented but it is most important that the examiners are able to work effectively as a team. Since 1988 there has been a policy that the Board comprises one government member, one industry member and a member from BCIT.

Scott Daniels: The examination Board succession is a vital issue and needs more discussion at an advisors meeting before October.

7. Succession Plan for MEMPR Representative – Ray Lett

Succession will be discussed within MEMPR before the retirement of the present representative in 2010.

8. Secretary – Treasures Report – Ray Lett. A Secretary-Treasurer report was given at the Annual General Meeting immediately before the Advisors Board Meeting

9. BCIT Training Program – Elaine Woo

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The 24 students registered in the program enrolled in March 2009 and 7 have applied for entry in June 2009. The remaining students are at different stages of the Program. There is presently no systematic data of the number of students who completed the BCIT training and who have successfully become BC Certified Assayers.

10. Other Business:

- **Long serving Teck assayer recognition – Scott Daniels:** A celebration is being planned on June 11th for Mr. Patrick Creighton, a BC Certified Assayer, for 40-years who still works in the Teck, Trail laboratory as a Senior Technician. A letter from the Deputy Minister, MEMPR, has been requested to congratulate Mr. Creighton on achieving on his long service as a “BC Certified Assayer.

Mac Chaudhry: The work of Scott Daniels to encourage laboratory training at Teck, Trail and to recognize the long service contribution of Mr. Creighton must be acknowledged.

- **Next Advisors Council Meeting- Scott Daniels:** The examination Board succession is a vital issue and needs more discussion before the next advisors meeting. An advisors meeting on July 24 is advised with an agenda to be determined.

Action: Scott Daniels and Ray Lett to discuss an agenda for a one day meeting of the BC Assayers Program advisors Board to be held at BCIT on July 24th, 2009.

Increasing the number of practicing BC Certified assayers – Scott Daniels: Increasing the number of practicing BC Certified assayers is very important. Other self governing organizations such as professional engineers may assist with advice on ways to increase membership.

Action: Scott Daniels to investigate other regulatory professional organization to details how BC Certified Assayers membership can be increased.

Next Meeting: An Advisory Council Meeting will be held at BCIT on July 24th 2009 at 10.00 a.m.

11. Appreciation – Ray Lett: The Assayers Advisory Council thank Elaine Woo and Paul Morrison for providing refreshments during the Annual General Meeting and Advisors Council meeting.

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12. Adjournment: Proposed by Elaine Woo and seconded by John Gravel that the Advisory Council Meeting be adjourned at 3.50 p.m. April 24th 2009. Accepted Unanimously.

Chair, Scott Daniels_____

Secretary, Ray Lett_____

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Summary of Action Items

Ray Lett to continue discussion with APEG BC about an association that would include BC Certified Assayers.

John Gravel to write to the Director, Geological Survey, MEMPR on behalf of the assaying industry concerning annual remuneration to the BC Certified Assayers Program Examination Board Chairperson for professional services.

Scott Daniels to finish writing a draft letter to commercial laboratories urging more internal training for assayers.

Ray Lett to send out membership renewal notices for 2009-2010 and also to send a list on contributors to Scott Daniels for posting on the bcassayer site.

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