

**MEMO**

To: All members of the Ontario Water Works Association  
From: Edward Bertolo, President  
Date: March 18, 2024

Re: **OWWA Annual General Meeting, Sunday May 5, 2024**

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Dear OWWA Member,

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Ontario Water Works Association (OWWA) will be held in concurrence with the Annual Conference and Trade Show in Niagara Falls, Ontario, on Sunday May 5, 2024.

**Date & Time: Sunday May 5 at 3:30 pm**

**Location: Niagara Falls Convention Centre, Room 201  
6815 Stanley Ave, Niagara Falls, ON**

The following information is included in this package:

- Notice of the AGM including the agenda
- Minutes of the Thursday May 4, 2023 AGM
- Proxy Registration Form

The 2023 OWWA Audited Financial Statements will be available upon request by April 1, 2024 and at the AGM on May 5. I encourage you to attend our AGM to network with other water professionals, learn about current association activities, and express your views to the Board.

If you are unable to attend the AGM, please complete and submit your proxy registration to the OWWA office (by mail, fax or email) no later than **4:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 2, 2024.**

Should you have any questions, or to request a hard copy of the AGM package, please contact the OWWA Office at 1.866.975.0575 or 416.231.1555 or via e-mail to [waterinfo@owwa.ca](mailto:waterinfo@owwa.ca).

Sincerely,



Edward Bertolo  
President, Ontario Water Works Association



**Date:** March 18, 2024

**To:** All Members of the Ontario Water Works Association

## **NOTICE**

You are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Ontario Water Works Association – A Section of AWWA, which will be held at the Niagara Falls Convention Centre in Niagara Falls, Ontario, on Sunday May 5, at 3:30 pm.

### **AGENDA**

1. Call to order
2. Voting Procedures and casting of ballots for election of Directors by members voting at the AGM
3. Approval of AGM Minutes for 2023, held on May 4, 2023 (copy attached)
4. Business Arising from Minutes
5. President's Report
6. Secretary-Treasurer's Report
7. AWWA Director's Report
8. Executive Director's Report
9. Election of New Directors and Officers and appointment of Secretary-Treasurer
10. Adoption of the OWWA Strategic Plan 2024-2026
11. New business
12. Adjournment

**Annual General Meeting Minutes  
of the  
Ontario Water works Association – A Section of AWWA  
Mississauga Grand Banquet & Event Centre  
Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023 4:00pm**

## **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by President Deb Goudreau at 4:05 p.m. Deborah welcomed attendees and thanked everyone for participating in this event. Deborah reviewed the agenda and introduced herself as well as the other speakers Scott Tam, Secretary Treasurer, Marcus Firman, AWWA Director and Michele Grenier, Executive Director.

There were 26 voting members in attendance on site, and 37 proxies were received. Deborah then introduced the board and staff. She also welcomed Cody Finan from AWWA and thanked him for attending.

Deborah reviewed the procedures for voting at the AGM. The Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act provides the opportunity to OWWA members to cast their votes by proxy or in person at the Annual General Meeting. One must be a member in good standing as of December 31, 2022 in order to cast a vote. Those members who are present at the AGM, and who have not voted in advance, are eligible to vote.

## **2. Approval of the 2023 Agenda**

Deborah asked for a motion to approve the agenda items presented for the 2023 AGM.

*MOVER: Lee Anne Jones*

*SECONDER: Jaime Boutilier*

*CARRIED*

## **3. Approval of Minutes of the Last Meeting**

Deborah asked that we dispense with the reading of the minutes and put forward a motion to accept the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of May 2, 2022 held in Niagara Falls, Ontario and virtually in Ontario via Microsoft Teams.

*MOVER: Marcus Firman*

*SECONDER: Linda Cooke-Weaver*

*CARRIED*

#### **4. Business Arising from the Minutes**

There were no action items arising from the 2022 AGM Minutes. There will be an opportunity for new business at the end of the meeting.

#### **5. Report of the President**

The Association continues to implement the 2020-2023 strategic plan. Deborah reviewed four key objectives on which the association had focused in the past year:

- Continue to build an inclusive culture that encourages, supports and celebrates the diverse voices of our members to fuel innovation and collaboration.
- Promote AWWA's Total Water Solutions™ resources for the water community
- Continue to develop the volunteer leadership's ability to guide and oversee OWWA
- Leverage OWWA's credibility with decision-makers & Identify priority risks to safe drinking water and advance policies to address them

The Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Working Group completed the development of the association's DE&I Action Plan, which was approved by the OWWA Board in June of 2021. The Diversity & Member Engagement Committee will be releasing a DE&I "benchmarking" survey on May 9.

With regards to the second objective, OWWA continues to collaborate with our partners at WEAO on matters of mutual interest, and we are excited to host the first ever OWWA-WEAO Joint Conference and Trade Show in Niagara Falls, from May 5 to 7 next year.

The Board and staff continue to look for opportunities to foster future association leaders within the membership. A few programs that were implemented or maintained in 2022/2023 include:

1. The Mentorship Program was offered again in October 2022 and has 15 mentor/mentee pairs.
2. The Board updated its meeting attendance policies to allow for participation from a broader range of individuals, including Committee and YP leaders.
3. DE&I Training for Board, staff and DMEC members is planned for June of 2023 as part of the overall strategy to ensure that OWWA is an environment where all our members feel welcome and see themselves reflected in the association's leadership.

The Board also recently launched the OWWA Advocacy Steering Committee, to advance policy on water issues through active participation in regular meetings with the MECP and other ministries, as well as with other like-minded organizations.

Looking forward, planning for the next Strategic Plan cycle will kick off in June after ACE. Deborah reminded attendees that ACE23 will be taking place in Toronto and in 2024 the annual conference will resume as a joint conference with WEAO in Niagara Falls.

Deborah introduced the incoming President, Ed Bertolo and Vice President, Scott Tam.

Deborah called for a motion to accept the President's Report as presented.

*MOVER: Reg Russwurm*

*SECONDER: Mark Spanjers*

*CARRIED*

## **6. Report of the Secretary-Treasurer**

Scott Tam introduced himself as the 2023-2024 Secretary-Treasurer.

OWWA's finances have improved in 2022 and are essentially back to pre-pandemic levels. The return of the in-person conference had a positive effect on total revenues. OWWA also saw growth in other revenue streams, particularly Publications and Job Postings.

The CCC Certification Program also saw a return to "normal" operations.

OWWA is in a very strong financial position after several years of surpluses. Drawing from the reserves has not been necessary.

Scott presented the Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Operations for 2022, and asked for a motion to accept the Secretary-Treasurer's report.

*MOVER: Sigrid Pelzsus*

*SECONDER: Tom Woodcock*

*CARRIED*

Scott called for a motion to appoint Grant Thornton LLP as the auditors for 2023, and to authorize the Board of Directors to fix remuneration.

*MOVER: Angelika Masotti*

*SECONDER: Ed Bertolo*

*CARRIED*

## **7. Report of the AWWA Director**

Marcus Firman introduced himself as the 2021-2024 AWWA Director for the Ontario Section.

Marcus introduced the 2023-2024 AWWA Officers and provided an overview of the 2025 AWWA Strategic Plan, which is focused on member engagement and development, knowledge creation and exchange, water policy and leadership, and organization stewardship.

Marcus provided AWWA's 2023 Status Report which noted that AWWA currently has 50,588 members and that membership has increased over the year, surpassing the 2023 end of year goal.

Marcus introduced AWWA's new initiative, Water2050, which seeks to establish a long-term vision of the future of water. The goal is to engage in thoughtful, intentional and inclusive discourse that results in bold, achievable goals.

Marcus noted that ACE23 will be co-hosted by OWWA in Toronto from June 11 to June 14. He highlighted registering in advance for the No Water... No Hockey Game on June 11 and the Canadian Water Forum on June 12.

Marcus called for a motion to accept the AWWA Director's Report as presented.

*MOVER: Deborah Goudreau*

*SECONDER: Scott Tam*

*CARRIED*

## **8. Report of the Executive Director**

Michele Grenier introduced herself as the OWWA Executive Director. Michele provided updates on the OWWA membership (as of Dec. 31, 2022) including a breakdown of individual, service provider and utility members.

She also offered highlights of 2022 events, including the first ever virtual conference & trade show, committee webinars, and networking events.

Looking ahead to 2023, the association is looking forward to a return to in person events. Other priorities will be to:

- Working more closely with Area Conferences
- Working with DMEC to advance the implementation of the DE&I Action Plan and its next iteration
- Continue to strengthen strategic partnerships
- Supporting advocacy & policy work
- Establishing the Education & Outreach Task Force to address workforce issues

## **9. Election of New Directors & Appointment of Secretary-Treasurer**

Deborah introduced the two new Directors of the Board of Directors 2023-2026, Blair Saunders and Jesus Garcia Aleman, and Tom Woodcock as incoming Secretary-Treasurer for 2022-2023.

Given that only two nominations for the Board were received, both candidates will be acclaimed subject to ratification by the OWWA membership. Deborah then called for a motion to accept the slate of candidates as presented.

*MOVER: Lee Anne Jones*

*SECONDER: Kathleen Farrow*

*CARRIED*

## **10. New Business**

No New Business was tabled.

## **11. Adjournment**

Deborah called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:58 p.m.

*MOVER: Mike Schmied*

*SECONDER: Linda Cooke-Weaver*

*CARRIED*



## **VOTING INSTRUCTIONS**

**TO: All Members of the Ontario Water Works Association – A Section of AWWA**

Please see below the options to cast your votes for the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Additional information and instructions for the online election will be provided separately.

### **Option 1: Electronic ballot**

1. Check your email inbox for a link to the online poll.
2. Follow the instructions in the email.
3. Ensure that you place your vote no later than 4:30 pm on Thursday May 2, 2024.

### **Option 2: By Proxy at the Annual General Meeting**

1. Complete proxy registration form.
2. Mail, e-mail, deliver or fax the proxy registration to the OWWA office such that it is received no later than 4:30 pm on Thursday, May 2, 2024.

#### **PLEASE NOTE:**

**In accordance with OWWA Bylaws, a minimum of forty (40) members is necessary to constitute a quorum for the AGM. If you are unable to attend the AGM, please complete and submit your proxy registration, even if you have participated in the online election.**



## MEMO

To: OWWA Members

From: OWWA Board of Directors

Date: March 18, 2024

**Re: Acclamation of 2024-2027 OWWA Directors**

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Each year the Ontario Water Works Association (OWWA) seeks nominations for two new members to sit on the OWWA Board for a three-year term. For the 2024-2027 term, two (2) nominations were received.

With two positions open, the Board has acclaimed Emily Stahl, Manager – Technical Services for the City of Guelph and James Sticca, Manager of Public Works at the City of Welland, to the positions of First Year Director, subject to ratification by the membership at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

As a result, there will be no election process this year. Members are encouraged to attend the Annual General Meeting at which time the appointment of the new Directors will be ratified by an open vote.

The acclaimed candidate for the office of Secretary-Treasurer is Angelika Masotti from York Region.

The process of seeking nominations for the following year will also begin at the AGM to give ample time for members to consider the benefits of serving on the OWWA Board of Directors.

We enthusiastically welcome Emily and James to the Board.

Sincerely,



Edward Bertolo  
President, OWWA

## OWWA Welcomes Two New Board Members for the 2024-2027 Term

Each year the OWWA elects two members to the Board of Directors for a three-year term. This year there were two (2) nominations received for the positions of Director 2024-2027: Emily Stahl from the City of Guelph and James Sticca from the City of Welland. Given that there were only two nominations, both candidates will be acclaimed subject to ratification at the Annual General Meeting, and an election is not required.

Check your inbox for your link to the AGM package on or after March 18, 2024. Proxy Registration Forms may also be submitted and must be received by close of business on **Friday April 26, 2024**. We hope to see you at our AGM in Niagara Falls on May 5!

### Emily Stahl – Manager, Technical Services, City of Guelph

Emily Stahl is the Manager, Technical Services in the City of Guelph's Water Utility. In this role she is responsible for the technical team that supports the operational division. This includes management of capital programs, hydrogeology, water supply management and planning and source water protection. As Guelph is reliant on groundwater for their municipal water supply these roles ensure the long-term sustainability and protection of the resource.

Emily is a Professional Geoscientist (P.Geo.) with a master's in water resources engineering possessing significant government and private consulting-based experience in integrated water management, water resource planning, source water protection and associated technical studies and stakeholder engagement processes. Her experience has included working in both the private and public (municipal and conservation authorities) sectors.



Emily is currently the Chair of the OWWA Groundwater Committee and has served as a trustee and committee member in the AWWA's water conservation division.

### James Sticca – Manager of Public Works, City of Welland

James joined the Ontario Water Works Association (OWWA) as an individual member in 2009. Since then, he became a member of the South Central Water Works Association (SCOWWA) Board of Directors in 2016 and current serves as the SCOWWA Chair, and has also been a member of the OWWA Distribution and Publications Committees since 2018.



James started his water career in 2007 with the City of Port Colborne, moved to the City of Niagara Falls in 2008. Presently he is the Manager of Public Works with the City of Welland. Throughout his career, James has held a variety of roles including Operator, DWQMS Coordinator, Water/Wastewater Manager and now Manager of Public Works overseeing the Water, Wastewater, Roads, Fleet and Stockroom operations at the City of Welland.

James has been fortunate to have a diverse set of projects and responsibilities during his career including hydrant maintenance, CCTV review, storm water pond retaining wall rehab, city-wide water meter change out projects, contract administration, work order system implementation, and acted as a representative on a variety of working groups and steering committees.



## IN PERSON BALLOT

Solicited by the OWWA Board of Directors

### **Please vote for the following:**

Approval of the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting	Accept	•
held on May 4, 2023 as contained in the mailing provided.	Oppose	•

### **Acclaimed candidate for the office of Secretary-Treasurer:**

Angelika Masotti

**Please note that there are only two candidates for Director this year. Acclaimed candidates for the 2024-2027 board term are:**

Emily Stahl

James Sticca

**Please note that if you are unable to attend the AGM in person, it is recommended you complete and submit the proxy registration form.**



## PROXY REGISTRATION

Solicited by the OWWA Board of Directors

I, \_\_\_\_\_ Member Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
**(MEMBER NAME - PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)**

being a member of the Ontario Water Works Association in good standing, hereby appoint:

- ☐ Deborah Goudreau, OWWA Past President **OR**  
☐ Edward Bertolo, OWWA President **OR**  
☐ A person as authorized \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name: Please Print Clearly)

as the proxy holder with power of substitution to attend, vote and otherwise act for the undersigned at the Annual General Meeting to be held on Monday May 5, 2024, and at any adjournment or adjournments thereof, on every poll which may be undertaken thereat to the same extent and with the same power as if the undersigned were present at the said meeting or any adjournment thereof.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

Signature of Member \_\_\_\_\_

A voting member has the right to appoint a person, other than the persons specifically named above, to attend and act on the voting member's behalf at the Meeting. Such right may be exercised by inserting the name of the person to be appointed in the space provided.

The proxy holder is given the discretion to vote on amendments or variations to matters identified in the Notice of Meeting or such other matters as may properly come before the Meeting including any adjournment or adjournments thereof.

The proxy registration may be mailed or e-mailed to:

Ontario Water Works Association  
507 Lakeshore Road East, Suite 215  
Mississauga, ON L5G 1H9  
Email: [waterinfo@owwa.ca](mailto:waterinfo@owwa.ca)

Must be received on or before 4:30 pm on Thursday May 2, 2024. If undated the proxy registration will be deemed to be dated as of the date of receipt by the OWWA.

## MEMO

To: OWWA Members

From: Edward Bertolo, OWWA President

Date: March 18, 2024

**Re: Adoption of OWWA Strategic Plan 2024-2026**

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The OWWA is a voluntary not-for-profit association that finds its strength and defines its purpose through its Vision, Mission Statement, and Core Principles. It implements its Strategic Plan by generating objectives and actions through Strategic Goals.

The organization's first strategic plan was created in 1995 and is reviewed and updated every five years. The OWWA's current 2020-2023 strategic plan was presented to the membership and adopted at the 2020 Annual General Meeting.

A Strategic Plan Steering Committee was struck by the Board and Chaired by the OWWA Past President, Deborah Goudreau. The other members of the Steering Committee included:

- Marcus Firman – a Past President of OWWA (2017-2018) and current AWWA Director for Ontario (2021-2024)
- Scott Tam – OWWA Vice President (2023-2024)
- Sonya Semanuik – OWWA Director (2022-2025)
- Michele Grenier – OWWA Executive Director

The OWWA's 2024-2026 Strategic Plan has been developed in consideration of updates to the AWWA 2025 Strategic Plan, recent changes to strategic partnerships, future joint events, and other key issues affecting the water industry.

The Steering Committee consulted with Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs during OWWA's Leaders' Day in October 2023 and presented the draft Strategic Plan for approval to the Board of Directors on January 25, 2024.

The proposed OWWA 2024-2026 Strategic Plan is being presented for adoption by the OWWA membership at this 2024 Annual General Meeting, in accordance with the OWWA Bylaws and Standard Practice Manual.



OWWA

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2024  
2026

# VISION

A Better Ontario Trough Better Water

## CORE PRINCIPALS

Protect Public Health and the Environment

Cultivate Collaboration

Inspire Innovation

Champion Diversity and Inclusion

## MISSION

Bringing Ontario's water community  
together to share knowledge and  
develop solutions for responsible water  
management

## GUIDING VALUES

Provide Value to Members

Act with Integrity

Pursue Excellence

Develop Leaders



# Member Engagement and Development:

OWWA continues to be the association of choice for the water community

## Grow

Retain and grow membership in the Ontario Section

- Design and implement programs and promotions that provide value to all categories of members, including Utility, Service Providers, Operators, Students and Young Professionals
- Support the Education & Outreach Task Force to raise awareness about careers in the water industry to both increase attraction to the W&WW Workforce and to OWWA membership

## Build

Continue to build an inclusive culture that encourages, supports and celebrates the diverse voices of our members to fuel innovation and collaboration

- Review and update policies and procedures related to volunteer opportunities to improve access and eliminate barriers to broader participation
- Continue to promote awareness about the OWWA Code of Conduct and the DE&I Action Plan

## Strengthen

Strengthen the organization's succession planning pipeline:  
**Member – Volunteer – Leader – Champion**

- Tell our stories to encourage member engagement and volunteerism
- Empower OWWA members to promote the association across the water industry
- Identify potential future leaders and encourage their development within the organization

## Standardize

Standardize the member experience across the Province

- Working with the Regional Chapters, implement Regional Hub model to create additional volunteer opportunities and develop programs to eliminate barriers of distance and remoteness
- Continue to pursue partnerships with the Area Conferences with a view to gaining new Regional Chapters

## Deliver

Continue to deliver outstanding value to members

- Create and deliver educational and networking programs that offer members value in terms of quantity, quality and cost
- Showcase the benefits and enhance the value of AWWA membership for Canadian members

# Organizational Stewardship:

OWWA will foster the development of high performing leaders to drive organizational excellence in accordance with its values and guiding principles, and in the best interest of its members

## Enhance OWWA's long-term viability through sustainable financial management

- Regularly evaluate the Section's program and service offerings for relevance, value and investment in the future

## Ensure the competency of the Board of Directors as it relates to the governance of the OWWA and its business activities

- Enhance training and onboarding for OWWA current and future leaders
- Review the nomination procedure for candidates for the Board to:
  - Encourage a broader range of candidates in terms of experience and affiliation in addition to being reflective of the membership
  - Create an environment where the democratic process can thrive

## Develop the OWWA's corporate structure that aligns with the organization's long term goals in terms of growth and sustainability

- Dedicate resources such that they continue to support the Section and its business activities while also creating flexibility to explore partnerships with other like-minded organizations

# Knowledge Creation and Exchange:

OWWA will be the trusted expert on water management

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## Enhance opportunities for members of Ontario's water community to connect and exchange knowledge and experiences

- Continue to host and grow Ontario's Water Conference & Trade Show
- Encourage OWWA Committees to organize quality educational events (e.g. seminars & webinars)
- Continue to develop content and grow the distribution of Pipeline magazine



## Improve access to educational resources for members and other water professionals who are in remote parts of the province

- Expand access to webinars, e-learning and other online content by leveraging and expanding OWWA's technology platforms
- Explore opportunities to expand the offering of seminars outside the GTA and in Northern communities, through the Regional Chapters and the MAC, and by supporting industry partners
- Continue to support and collaborate with the organizing committees for the Area Conference



## Promote AWWA's Total Water Solutions™ resources for the watercommunity

- Explore opportunities to deepen education and networking opportunities available through the conference
- Increase volunteer opportunities in the nexus between water, wastewater and stormwater

# Water Policy and Leadership

OWWA will be recognized as the trusted leader of the water community

## Leverage OWWA's expertise to increase our influence with decision-makers

- Encourage OWWA committees to develop White Papers, Guidance Documents and Best Management Practices
- Influence policy on water issues through active participation in regular meetings with policy-makers and by collaborating with other ministries and like-minded organizations
- Grow the Advocacy Steering Committee to allow it to better identify and define issues facing the industry and develop solutions that can be delivered to policy-makers and regulators

## Improve the public's understanding of water issues and the value of water

- Develop communications and media strategies to promote OWWA as Ontario's trusted water leader
- Maintain plain-language water-related information on the OWWA website for the general public
- Promote the work of the E&OTF

## Identify priority risks to safe drinking water and advance policies to address them

- Engage with OWWA Committees and Councils to identify potential issues of concern to members
- Raise policy issues or gaps with the Province and Federal Government through regular communication with the Senior Leadership or through other staff channels
- Encourage involvement of OWWA members/volunteers on AWWA Committees, Divisions and Councils