



AOGC AGM Minutes
January 24, 2022
Edmonton Westin & Virtual

Present: 58 attendees including 40 oat growers

Chair Brad Boettger welcomed everyone to the Alberta Oat Growers Commission's (AOGC's) 2022 AGM. He introduced the Honorable Minister Nate Horner, welcomed him to the stage and thanked him for taking the time to attend the meeting tonight and bring the opening remarks.

Brad Boettger called the AGM portion of the meeting to order at 6:38 pm. He noted that the meeting materials, specifically the meeting agenda, 2021 AGM minutes, the 2020-21 Financial Statements, the Annual Report for 2020-21 and new proposed bylaws with changes from the previous regulations highlighted were all on the POGA website.

Motion: Raymond Phillips/Greg Bott to adopt the 2022 agenda as presented. Carried.

Motion: Dylan Robinson/Darwin Trenholm to accept the minutes from the April 8, 2021 AOGC AGM as presented. Carried.

Elections: Boettger introduced the other AOGC Board of Directors joining today: Darwin Trenholm, Vice-Chair, from Newbrook; Greg Bott, Audit-Chair, producer near Eckville; Anthony Van Rootselaar, producer from Spirit River; and Dylan Robinson, producer from Waskatenau. Boettger noted the AOGC election for two vacant seats that closed in December 2021. These two seats are now filled by himself as well as with a new director, Jason Wiese, from Camrose County.

Boettger thanked AOGC's departing board member, Nick Jonk, who had been AOGC's Audit Chair for the past 9 years, as well as POGA's representative on the Prairie Grain Development Committee for seven years. Boettger presented Jonk with a small token of appreciation from the AOGC. Also, due to COVID restrictions last year, Boettger also noted the two directors, Gordon Pope and Bruce Thomi, who departed the Board in 2021 and presented them with small parting gifts.

Resolutions: Boettger noted that no resolutions were brought forward to the Commission.

Review of 2020-2021 Financial Statements: Shawna Mathieson reviewed the revenue and expenses for the 2020-2021 year. She noted that AOGC realized a net gain of almost \$90,000 for the year. This increase was due to approximately a \$29,000 dollar increase in producer check-off revenues, as well as a decrease in producer refund requests. The expenses were also reduced due to COVID travel restrictions and many in-person events being cancelled. Due to the poor crop in 2021, the expectation is that most of this surplus will be utilized in the upcoming year.

Mathieson noted the contribution to the Prairie Oat Growers Association (POGA), as all three prairie province oat boards collaborate together under the POGA umbrella. POGA projects are focused to benefit all oat growers, and a Western Canadian voice and representation allows for more access to government funding and industry partnerships, as opposed to each province on their own.

In 2020-2021, the Alberta Commission provided financial support for 15% of the POGA budget. This amount changes each year based on the percentage of dollars collected by each provincial organization. For two years the percentage was reduced as AOGC was unable to contribute their full amount.

Forecasted AOGC Budget for 2021-2022: Shawna Mathieson noted the budgeted deficit of \$75,000 which is obviously a very large decrease due to the poor crop last year. Since SaskOats and the Manitoba Oat Growers Association allowed AOGC to build a reserve, and the 2020 crop was a good one, AOGC has over \$300,000 in reserves, so even with this deficit AOGC will remain financially healthy.

Project Overview & Slide of Spending Priorities Pie Chart: Mathieson highlighted the AOGC funding priority chart, specifically noting targets of 40% for market development, 35% for research, 10% for communications, 10% for advocacy, and 5% for building partnerships. Through POGA, AOGC supports approximately 30 different projects, with 7 different provincial and federal partners, plus industry support.

Mathieson noted one new project, led by Dr. Chen at the University of Alberta, titled *“The development of a nutritionally enhanced plant-based milk alternative beverage from Canadian oats and study of its glycemia-lowering effect”*. This project is co-funded through POGA with RDAR, or Results Driven Agriculture and we are grateful for their support.

Mathieson highlighted the other Alberta specific projects, including: the Gateway Research Organization’s Alberta Variety Trials; the Alberta Regional Variety Advisory Committee’s (ARVAC) oat trials; and Dr. Kirby Nilsen’s oat breeding work at Lacombe.

Mathieson noted the marketing project highlights from the year, beginning with the Mexico campaign. The project began in 2015, and until this year oat exports to Mexico have not fallen below levels prior to the project’s beginning. However, with the poor crop and therefore reduced supplies this year, this has resulted in Canadian market share loss in Mexico. POGA is confident this share will rebound with increased oat supplies next year.

Mathieson noted a similar project in Japan that began in 2019 to increase oat consumption as well as Canadian oat exports, and Canada has a strong presence in that market. This market is mostly for feed and Canada has around 46% of the market. The marketing campaign in Canada, *Oats Everyday*, is also being well received and initial results are surpassing expectations.

Mathieson noted the Keep It Clean Program through Cereals Canada and the Barley Council of Canada which started seven years ago. The program works to ensure Canadian producers are aware of which products might create issues in export markets, and looks to provide consumer confidence especially in international markets.

The March 2021 Ottawa Mission meetings looked a little different, as they were held virtually. The group felt it was a success, having 16 meetings with 62 key contacts including MPs, Senators, CN Rail and CP Rail, and senior officials from AAFC and Canadian Transportation Agency. Topics of discussion included: Research and development, National Food Policy, Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP), market development programs, oat exports, sustainability, business risk management, best management practices, climate change/carbon tax, transportation, importance of oats, crop diversity and the contribution of agriculture to the economic re-set post COVID.

Mathieson noted the group's commitment to support every Western Canadian oat breeder, including Dr. Aaron Beattie at the Crop Development Centre in Saskatoon, Jim Dyck with Oat Advantage out of Saskatoon as well, and Dr. Kirby Nilsen at the AAFC program in Brandon. In addition, POGA continues to fund genomic research work in Ottawa, as well as research on oat fractions, oat beverages and oats for dairy feed.

Return on Investment: The Alberta Commission has successfully contributed to the profile, representation and profit of Alberta oat growers. POGA, through the three provincial associations, has turned \$3.9 M of levy dollars into \$27.4 M which means growers in Western Canada have contributed less than 15 cents of every dollar spent on research and marketing. The remainder is funded through partnerships and collaboration among industry, government, and oat organizations.

Motion: Greg Bott/Raymond Phillips to accept the AOGC 2020-21 Financial Reports and 2021-2022 budget as presented. Carried.

Motion: Jason Wiese/Anthony Van Rootselaar to appoint Baker Tilly of Yorkton, SK as accountant for the Alberta Oat Growers Commission for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Carried.

Alberta Oat Growers Commission Bylaws & Regulatory Review process: Boettger noted that, as indicated in the Oat Scoop newsletter, last year at the AGM, and on the website, producers were informed about the mandatory review of the Commission's regulations and the ability for AOGC to adopt bylaws.

Producers were provided with a few proposed amendments to the Plan regulation and asked to provide feedback, if any, and a five-year expiry date extension was made to the Commission Regulation. Producers were also asked if they would support AOGC adopting bylaws. As no opposition was received, the Board moved forward with drafting the bylaws.

The mandatory regulatory review is required because the regulations governing the Commission under the authority of the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act (MAPA), expire in July of this year. The review provides an opportunity, with consultation from producers, to ensure the regulations are still relevant, current, and responsive to industry needs and to continue to serve the needs of the Commission.

In 2020, through Bill 22 – *The Red Tape Implementation Act*, four changes were made to MAPA and one which includes authority for Marketing Boards and Commissions to make bylaws, upon approval of Alberta Marketing Council. Marketing Council has been working with the other Marketing Boards and Commissions to help their organizations adopt bylaws, if they chose to do so.

The Alberta Oat Growers Commission Plan Regulation provides for board and organizational governance related requirements – these are the regulations that establish the Marketing Boards and Commissions and set forward its foundational governance and operations.

The Minister of Agriculture and Forestry is responsible for making Plan Regulations, including any subsequent amendments. These governance details were moved from the Plan regulation directly into the proposed bylaws. These are also items that change more frequently. The foundation elements remain in the Plan Regulation.

Establishing bylaws is anticipated to provide for more timely operational governance changes as needed and empower the Marketing Boards and Commissions (MBC) to govern internal operations, while continuing appropriate checks and balances of Council, as the oversight or supervisory agency of Alberta's MBCs.

Oversight and accountability are very important, which is why the Marketing Council has been involved in the process to move to bylaws. Marketing Council is the supervisory agency and oversight body for Alberta's 20 marketing boards and commissions and is responsible for approving bylaws before they take effect, and for approving any amendments made to bylaws once they have been established.

The amended Alberta Oat Growers Commission Plan Regulation and the proposed bylaws for the Alberta Oat Growers Commission were posted on the website with the materials for today's AGM. Both had the proposed changes or additions highlighted. The proposed bylaws were also available in paper copies for those attending in-person.

The only new items or changes were highlighted in yellow. The new additions were mainly around Election by Acclamation and Bylaw Amendments. (Items 28-31).

These new proposed bylaws must still be approved by the producer membership (which is why they were brought forward for members today to review), the Alberta Oat Growers Commission Board, and the Marketing Council. The only real difference between making a change to the bylaws vs. the Plan Regulations is that the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry doesn't need to approve bylaws. The Minister does however approve Plan Regulations. This shift to the bylaw structure makes for a timelier approval process for AOGC.

Boettger stated that if the proposed bylaws were approved today, then they will go forward to the Marketing Council for approval, and ultimately be posted on the POGA website. The Board already approved the bylaws in their current form prior to the AGM.

Motion: Dylan Robinson/Darwin Trenholm to accept the Alberta Oat Growers Commission Bylaws as presented. Carried.

Boettger thanked everyone for attending and contributing to the meeting. He adjourned the business portion of the Alberta Oat Growers AGM at 7:07 pm.