



MROO

**Municipal Retirees
ORGANIZATION ONTARIO**

ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023

Municipal Retirees Organization Ontario - MROO

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Municipal Retirees Organization Ontario Annual Report



June 2023

A return to normal operations finally arrived and was welcomed with open arms. The removal of most COVID-19 precautions meant the return of in-person board meetings, conferences, conventions and, most importantly the annual MROO Spring Zone Meetings. This was a welcome change after the prolonged adoption of the pandemic restrictions faced by all.

Attendance at the Spring Zone Meetings was excellent and gave many, including the President and the Executive Director, their first taste of these important gatherings of MROO members. Overall, they were a refreshing return after a long, three-year hiatus.

As is “the norm,” the past year saw changes in board make-up as well as perhaps the first parental leave that the organization has encountered. The new faces have brought a fresh outlook and a renewed enthusiasm to the meetings that have become more frequent as MROO takes on more challenges.

Work on the new Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act was begun and there is optimism that we are approaching the finish line on the new document. While this has been a labour-intensive project and has often moved slowly, the final product will be an important piece of our foundation as we grow into the future.

For the first time in a long time, MROO has moved some meetings from the Airport Westin Hotel. This change was well received and served as a reinvigorating change of pace.

Lastly an Office Accommodations Advisory Committee was struck to determine the capabilities and requirements of our present office space and decide on a path moving based on a needs analysis. This committee is well underway and expected to be able to make a recommendation in the coming months.

Strategy 1 Membership Growth and Services

MROO retains members and grows membership by increasing value to members and representing them.

Objective: Deliver regular communications and education programs to members.

Report: The webinar to be presented in June 2023, will be the 23rd webinar presented in the MROO Webinar Series. What was begun as a means to stay in touch with our members during COVID has evolved into one of the most appreciated aspects of MROO's member engagement. Excellent presenters (many suggested by MROO directors) have resulted in a growing number of registrants, over 600 sign-ups in many months, and a continued stream of members looking to view them on-line after they have been presented. This has helped us keep our member database updated since new registrants often contact the office looking for lost passwords. Administration uses that as an opportunity to ensure their information is up to date. A win-win for MROO.

The MROO Newsletter continues to be as popular as ever. However, an effort to control costs going forward means a renewed focus on moving as many members as possible to an electronic version will commence in the latter part of 2023. Messages will be prominent on the print version offering members a chance to "save a tree" by receiving their copy on-line

Objective: Set realistic and achievable member targets and review annually.

Report: Using 'best practices' the increase in 2022-2023 is listed as 18%. Currently Administration continues to struggle with accurate member totals and does not feel confident in this final number. It is hoped that by focusing on "new member" funds, Victor plan enrollment increases, RPS attendees, and other new members, that Administration can produce a more accurate numbers moving forward. However, this number is likely to be expressed as a whole number, rather than a percentage due to the lack of confidence in the preceding numbers.

Objective: Enhance benefits and value for money to members with new partnerships.

Report: While no new partnerships were added in 2022/23 a change is underway with Simply Connect/Rogers. Simply Connect no longer offers roaming or snowbird services due to the closure of the 3G network in the US. With this in mind we have been negotiating with Rogers (parent company of Cityphone which owns Simply Connect) to add the option of switching to Rogers if roaming and snowbird services are required.

The new option will be very competitively priced and offer both roaming and extended roaming (snowbird) services to our members. This new service will be exclusive to Rogers Association Partners only, with MROO being the second association added.

MROO also lost a partner when Loblaws Optical (Thomas & Pringle) did away with any discount partners and moved to a new “lowest price” model. We are exploring a new partner, but service coverage continues to be a large problem in a province as large as Ontario.

Objective: Deliver regular communications and education programs to members.

Report: In addition to our live webinars, the recorded webinars that reside on MROO.org continue to be popular with our members. While we cannot count return traffic at this time, the sheer number of calls and emails looking for that information continues to grow month over month.

At the 2022 Spring Board of Directors Meeting the board approved the addition of a fall “All Zone Zoom Meeting,” much like the meeting held in the spring of 2022. This will allow for further contact with our members, splitting the difference between annual spring zone meetings.

Objective: Identify and recruit new members from OMERS member retiring early.

Report: Though unsuccessful to this point, there is still a push for allowing MROO to speak to OMERS employees at their annual updates. Currently MROO is restricted to attending only the updates for retired members.

Objective: Issue Request for Proposals (RFP) and complete a branding study that will differentiate MROO.

Report: With the return of our Manager of Marketing and Communications we will begin this process in the latter half of 2023.

Strategy 2 Advocacy

MROO develops proactive and effective advocacy to address relevant issues and concerns in real time.

Objective: Develop/revise advocacy program to address member and emerging issues in a timely manner.

Report: The development of an Advocacy Committee has not yet been undertaken. Completion of the ONCA compliant by law should free up time for this initiative.

Objective: Assess seniors' housing demonstration project opportunities (e.g., Abbeyfield) in our real estate needs study.

Report: This will be addressed as part of the Office Accommodations Advisory Committee report.

Objective: Refine senior care advocacy (aging in place, services & supports).

Report: The Memorandum of Understanding completed with Carleton University has already lead to research students reaching out to MROO members for participation in their individual studies. It is hoped that completion of our next targeted scholarship will lead to additional participation with the new partner institution.

Strategy 3 Reputation and Awareness

MROO improves awareness and its reputation among current and prospective Members and key stakeholders.

Objective: Leverage public relations (PR) function to expand reach/ impact of reputation matters.

Report: Our first targeted scholarship has been awarded to a student at Carleton University, Aidan Lochbiler. An interview with Aidan will be part of the July Newsletter. These stories allow MROO to show Members additional ways in which MROO is working for both MROO members and seniors in general.

Objective: Enhance reputation for quality and relevant training/webinars.

Report: The popularity of webinars continues to grow as do the reviews and accolades received. Healthcare and financial well-being continue to be the most well received.

Objective: Review Scholarship Program impact for PR and awareness, revise.

Report: Once again the return of the Manager of Marketing and Public Relations will mean this program will be reviewed and will likely result in media contact being brought back into the Operations fold. Removing the element of media outreach from the plates of our directors will free them up for other tasks in their zones.

Objective: Increase awareness of MROO by OMERS Employers.

Report: Marketing will undertake a study to determine the most efficient way to reach the nearly 1,000 OMERS employers. If a viable marketing vehicle (electronic mail, direct mail, traditional advertising) can be developed, a budget, timeframe, and an attractive marketing piece will be developed for presentation to the board.

Strategy 4 Organization Capability and Effectiveness

MROO identifies and implements the organization structure and resources, particularly staffing and technologies, necessary to implement strategic direction.

MROO builds organization capabilities to levels that serve the evolving structure and resources in place over time.

Objective: Review Human Resource (HR) Plan to determine appropriate level of staffing needed by MROO.

Report: With some turnover, and a parental leave, change has been a bit of a constant for the last year. Operations expects to return to regular staffing levels in June of 2022. A review of staffing levels will be undertaken in the fall of 2023.

Objective: Identify real estate (office) needs and opportunities (e.g., Abbeyfield) and present a viable plan to Board

Report: A report from the Office Accommodations Advisory Committee will be presented, tentatively in Q3, covering this area.

Objective: 1. External and internal communications tools development.

2. Migration strategy to modernize IT and communications platforms.

Report: A large IT project is underway and nearing completion. The final project will see all Executive and Director computers now be property of MROO, removing the burden

placed upon volunteers to procure their own hardware. This will result in a standardization of hardware capabilities as well data/information security.

In addition to hardware, MROO will switch entirely to Microsoft based communications tools (Teams, SharePoint) removing the need to use the website to share information amongst our volunteers.

Lastly standardization of data storage will provide near seamless transition from individual to individual when someone assumes the role of their predecessor. This will result in minimal lag in transfer of data files since all data will reside in MROO controlled cloud storage, linked to an email address rather than any one individual.

Strategy 5 Good Governance

MROO improves decision-making by adopting good practices, processes, conduct, information, deliberation, communication, and respect for the outcome.

MROO maintains role clarity of the people working on its behalf, which fosters greater focus and accountability.

Objective: Update Constitution/By-laws & policies re Not-for-Profit Corp Act

Report: Currently underway and tracking for completion well ahead of the required date for implementation.

Objective: Develop onboarding, orientation, and training programs/processes

Report: The Director's Manual, along with a Zone Meeting Manual are complete and have been updated as needed. Manuals for Alternate Directors and Ambassadors will follow in 2023 Q4 or 2024 Q1.

Conclusion

While a return to normalcy has reinvigorated the organization, the most significant undertaking in the last year, the long overdue revamping of the by law and constitution into a single document, may have brought the perspective of the organizational purpose back into focus.

The new by law, mandated by the final passage of the new ONCA, has given the Municipal Retirees Organization Ontario an opportunity to clean up a number of

contradictions that existed in the two competing documents that preceded it and offered the Board of Directors a chance to look inward, away from the normal day-to-day challenges.

The result has been a greater focus on advocacy and a desire to deliver more for MROO's members. The Housing Support for Ontario Seniors advocacy committee, the monthly webinars, the addition of targeted scholarships and even the willingness to undertake a major revamp of organizational IT, all shows that the volunteers that make up the organization are committed to making MROO the best it can be.