

District Director's Report - Fall Executive Workshop Oct 26, 2024

2024 Convention Highlights

- The OHA AGM and Convention was held in Guelph hosted by Districts 7&8, with over 300 attendees. Great speakers, different vendors each day, awesome bus trips, inspiring silent auction, awards and meeting other Society members from all across Ontario! What an amazing experience!! If you've never been to an in person OHA AGM and Convention, I would highly recommend it. But you'll have to wait until 2026, I believe it's in Oshawa.
- The next OHA AGM will be virtual in July 2025. We will need to have as many Societies as possible to log in and cast their vote. If you're not able to attend, please send your proxy votes to me or Kelly Taylor. Let your voices be heard!

OMAF training dates: Nov 21 and Jan 15. Dec 9 will be a Zoom session put on by OMAFA.

Dubois Agrinovation – Societies: remember to register your Society on the Dubois site. Save 10% off purchases and as a fundraiser. Share your unique code with members, friends and family. Use the code when ordering. Societies receive 2% rebate and OHA receive 2% rebate from purchases. If you have forgotten your code, contact me. Gary Hendin, Dubois rep, was in attendance to answer any questions. Gary would be willing to come and speak to any Society about this opportunity to get high quality gardening and agricultural products and raise funds for your Society. Gary Hendin (905) 870-8434 / gary@hendin.ca

Insurance – We have a new OHA Cooperators Group Insurance person, Dean Ribey; his office is located in Walkerton. Contact Dean at 519-881-4788 / 1-888-475-1124 dean_ribey@cooperators.ca. If you need an insurance certificate for a Society event, contact them. Duuu.ca insurance through Cooperators can provide vendors & event insurance at a reasonable cost for any event, not just Hort-related. If a speaker sells a book, he's considered a vendor and needs vendor's insurance.

ONCA

The Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, 2010 (ONCA) transition period ended on October 18, 2024.

Organizations who have not updated their governing documents by **October 18, 2024** will not be dissolved or prevented from operating.

The important things to consider when updating bylaws & constitutions:

1. Definitions
2. "Financial reviewers" (not auditors). Unless your Society is a registered charitable organization with a charitable number, then you have to have your financial records audited.
3. Length of terms for board members
4. How meetings can be held (in person or virtually). If virtual/hybrid are permitted, it MUST be noted in the by-laws. Virtual meetings are any meeting/vote held by telephone, teleconference, email, or online platforms like Zoom. Hybrid meetings are a combination of attendees both in-person and virtual.

Virtual/hybrid meetings can be held if noted in the bylaws and can be at the discretion of the board; taking into consideration the technology & expertise required, and provided that all attendees can hear each other clearly, speak and vote. **NOTE:** Wording is important. Meetings can be held in-person or virtually. If it says “and”, you must provide attendees with both options to attend meetings of the Society and of your board.

5. Who can call a special meeting (typically the President)
6. Voting – “votes cast by a majority of attendees”, again, the wording is important.
7. If not a full slate of officers/directors the board may still operate. Also may have more board members than stated in the bylaws.
8. What are the criteria for holding membership. How a membership can be terminated, if such is stated in the bylaws ie: a Code of Conduct violation, etc.
9. Must have terms of Society termination stated. If a Society/Club should fold, or be closed by OMAFA, no member of that Society may profit out of the assets of the club either directly or indirectly.

INDEMNIFICATION: Every society should have an Indemnification section in its Constitution and/or By-Laws to protect your officers/executive.

EXAMPLE: (customize the following and insert it into your bylaws.)

Every Director and Officer of the X Horticultural Society and his or her heirs, executors and administrators respectively shall from time to time, and at all times, be indemnified and saved harmless out of the funds of the X Horticultural Society only from and against:

1. all costs, charges and expenses whatsoever such Director or Officer sustains or incurs in or about any action, suit or proceeding that is brought, commences or prosecuted against him or her for or in respect of any deed, act, matter or thing whatsoever made, done or committed by him or her, in or about the execution of the duties of his or her office;
2. all other costs, charges and expenses he or she sustains or incurs in or about or in relation to the affairs of the X Horticultural Society; except such costs, charges and expenses as are occasioned by his or her own negligence or default, or failure to act honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of the X Horticultural Society. The X Horticultural Society may provide insurance to cover this liability of the X Horticultural Society.

Electronic signatures: people can now sign virtually. Be aware that a virtual signature or a check box to agree holds the same legal binding as a hard copy signature. Puts extra responsibility on the recipient of any document to keep records to show who “signed” the document.

Resources, Awards & Grants. – very few of our D10 Societies are taking advantage of the many awards and grants being offered by the OHA. Check them out and follow the criteria ie: **Seedy Saturday Grants** are due Nov 15. Paperwork for grants received must be in by Nov 30. **Service Awards.** Shows your appreciation, recognition is important. **Judging awards.** Volunteer Hours - remember to keep your volunteer hours and submit to OHA in your Annual Report due Feb 1.

CONTACTS : One of the biggest issues we're finding is that Societies are not keeping the District up to date on **contact people and emails/phone numbers** of your board members. Many Societies are not receiving the information/ emails are bouncing back. We receive the contact people from your OHA Society Annual Reports sent on Feb 1st. **Please keep us updated of any changes!!** Also when you receive something that needs to be shared with your members, please do so immediately. Members are saying they didn't know, didn't receive anything. Keep them informed. A good time is to submit right after your elections, your executive names/contact info/phone/email.

INVITATIONS: Send in your **Society AGM dates**, the District would appreciate an invitation, and someone can attend and install your board. Invite the board to all of your events, we'd love to be able to come! Please include the District Director in your newsletters mailing list: ohad10districtdirector@gmail.com. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted by
Joyce Schlegel, District 10 Director