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# Minutes of the 46th Canadian Society of Biochemistry, Molecular and Cellular Biology Annual General Meeting

Intercontinental Hotel, Montreal, Quebec

Thursday, October, 9, 2003, 8:00 pm

Chair: Dr. David Andrews, President, CSBMCB

## 738. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as circulated on a motion from Dr. Browder which was seconded by Dr. Orlowski.

## 739. Approval of Minutes of the 45th AGM

The minutes of the Society's 45th Annual General Meeting as published in the 2003 issue of the BULLETIN were approved after the Chair received a motion from Dr. Palmer which in turn was seconded by Dr. Sharom.

## 740. Business Arising from the Minutes

Dr. Andrews stated that any matters arising from the minutes of the last AGM meeting would be addressed in his presentation.

## 741. President's Report

### a) HUPO/IUBMB Congress

Dr. Andrews stated that despite all the ominous disappointments that had befallen the planned Toronto IUBMB Congress, a lot of people stepped up to the plate and literally helped to pull a rabbit out of a hat in order to stage this present meeting in Montreal. Dr. Andrews reviewed the developments that affected the planning of the Congress over the past year. The spread of SARS in Toronto in the late Spring has had a dire effect on the economy and well being of Toronto. One of the fallouts of this occurrence was the cancellation of the IUBMB Congress which was slated to be held in July. Since a significant number of symposia speakers opted out, and the number of registrants had fallen far short of expectation, the

meeting was destined for a financial disaster and was therefore cancelled. This had a dramatic effect on our Society's programme. It appeared that all the hard work and industry that had been expended over the past six years in the planning and organization the Toronto Congress was to come to naught. However, Dr. Weiner, in concert with Dr. John Bergeron, the Chairman of the 2003 HUPO Congress, was able to resurrect the Toronto Meeting. Melding of its structure into the HUPO Congress' footprint joint HUPO/IUBMB venue was achieved. This now gave the Society a platform to hold its Annual General Meeting in Montreal at the Palais des Congrès, October 8-11, 2003.

The Society will not be responsible for the large debts that have resulted from the contractual obligations of the Toronto Congress, since the NRC financially backed this meeting. The Federal Government now stands to lose between \$2,000,000 and \$2,500,000. As a result of this loss, NRC Conference Services has refused to transfer the \$25,000 that the Society originally contributed to the IUBMB Toronto Congress, which the Society now wants to have transferred to the HUPO/IUBMB organization. This matter has still to be resolved. The Society is still obliged to repay NRC the \$25,000 that they lent the Society in 2000 to cover the Society's contribution to the Toronto Congress. It was hoped initially that the Society would recoup this seed money from the profits generated from the Toronto IUBMB Congress.

Dr. Andrews reported that the initial enrollment for the Montreal Congress was very disap-

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pointing with less than a thousand registrations, and only a handful of commercial booths being leased. However, at the last moment there was a groundswell and the registrations to date have substantially increased, with all booths being sold. This augers well for both the scientific and commercial success of the Congress. There is a good possibility that the Society now may realize between \$20,000 and \$25,000 from this Congress' profits, and may help offset our monetary commitments to the two meetings.

As a result of the number of scheduled Toronto symposia speakers opting out from the Montreal meeting, and compounded with financial restraints that faced this meeting, only 130 of the 264 speakers originally slated to speak in Toronto will participate in Montreal. The HUPO programme will contribute 75 speakers to the programme. There were 1,300 abstracts submitted, and as of the last count there were more than 2,500 registrants of whom almost 600 were Canadians.

Dr. Andrews applauded Dr. Palmer for resurrecting the Toronto IUBMB Young Scientist Programme on such a short timeframe. The conference will be held this weekend in an abridged form over one day instead of the original two days as part of the main HUPO/IUBMB programme. Of the 120 participants stated to attend the Toronto meeting, only 90 have elected to attend the Montreal meeting, representing 44 different nations. Dr. Palmer was able to maintain the original \$230,000 pledged for this undertaking, which included the Society's \$20,000, however PABMB has clawed back \$7,500 from their original \$30,000 donation.

Dr. Andrews stated that the Society has a prominent presence in the exhibit area of the Congress in the form of a booth from which distribution of Society literature and recruitment has take place. Posters advertising the Mount Tremblant meeting have been displayed along with registration forms and programme. Copies of the LINK, the "Join Us" pamphlet and the 2003 BULLETIN are being handed out, as well as registration forms for new membership. It is important to have strong Society representation at the booth, especially during the times of the poster sessions, and to this end, several members of the Society's

Executive are posted to man the CSBMCB booth along with a group of student volunteers.

Due to the logistics of the meeting, Dr. Andrews stated that the Society's Roche Diagnostics Graduate Student Poster Competition was placed in abeyance this year, and the funds will be used to reward the three students who help man the Society's Congress booth. The Competition will be remounted for next year's Mount Tremblant meeting.

Dr. Andrews reported that he was able to obtain a sponsor to underwrite the cost of a T-shirt Society promotion campaign. MBI Fermentas has supplied 300 T shirts which have a Society design emblazoned on the front side of the shirt and Fermentas' logo on the back. The Society logo has been designed with the thought that these T-shirts will also be made available for the 2004 Mount Tremblant meeting, and therefore have not been characterized specifically for the Montreal meeting. 150 T-shirts have been distributed at the Society's reception this evening to students who had registered for membership at the Society's congress booth.

Dr. Andrews then thanked Dr. Tustanoff for arranging the successful Society reception which was held this evening in the Maisonneuve Ballroom, Intercontinental Hotel. Invitations were restricted to Canadian registrants due to budgetary limitations. The budget of \$8,000, which was garnered from four contributors each donating \$2,000 (MBI Fermentas Inc., New England Biolabs, University Medical Discoveries, and CSBMCB), was planned to provide food and drink for 250 guests, and as a safety valve if required, additional drinks for a further 250 people. The menu for the reception included a Deli bar with two stations attended by chefs carving smoked meat and supplemented with appropriate garnishes and in addition waiters passed around 36 dozen varied canapés. Each attendee was given a ticket for one drink of their choice, and a cash bar was made available for additional libations. The cost for the reception will only be \$6,302.32, since attendance did not exceed the planned 250 people. During the reception, presentations were made to Dr. Weiner and Dr. Walsh for their leadership and work in organizing both the IUBMB Toronto Congress and the HUPO/IUBMB World Congress.

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A gift and a plaque were presented to Dr. Palmer, who is retiring as Treasurer after six years of diligent service to the Society, and plaques to Dr. Lazure and Litchfield, retiring councillors, were also presented.

### **b) The Link**

At the last AGM meeting in Banff, Dr. Andrews described a plan for publishing quarterly a Society newsletter which could be used to recruit new members and act as a clarion for science policy and lobbying. He said that he hoped to enlist three other societies so that each would be responsible for editing one issue each year, however to date, this has not happened. Caren Helbing has done a bang up job in turning out the first issue of the newsletter called "The Link", which appeared in October, and is to be congratulated. Because of cost considerations, it was only printed in two colours instead of the four originally proposed. The cost for the multicoloured printing would have been \$2,000, whereas we were able to print 1,000 blue and white copies for \$600 in a 11 x 15 inch format. The Link will be distributed by e-mail to the membership as a PDF file, and the hard copies will be available for science advocacy. It was decided that English articles should have a sidebar containing a French summary and French articles should have the corresponding English sidebar. The first four-page issue included articles on SARS, Advocacy Report, Bugs, Genes and Chemicals, Gradlink, and Découvrir des protéines dans les pièces de la maison cellulaire, with a bilingual touch. In order to keep the impetus rolling behind "The Link", Dr. Andrews asked the Board and Society members to pitch in behind Caren and either submit or encourage articles for publication. Articles for the next Link should be submitted by December 1.

### **c) Membership Recruitment Strategies**

Dr. Penn has been very active in setting up and implementing new strategies in membership recruitment. She has put together a very colourful "Please Join Us" pamphlet, 4" x 10" folded into three sections, outlining the following articles: What the Society Does, How we Support Bioscience in Canada, Advocacy in 2002, Recent CSBMCB Meetings, and How to join the Society.

The "Join Us" pamphlet was placed in each Congress registrant's bag. Dr. Andrews stated with the circulation of this pamphlet, and with the recruiting efforts that are being expended at this Congress meeting, there hopefully will be an increase in our membership rolls. He then suggested it would be necessary to twist arms and give potential members some substantial reasons for joining. It is important to keep the Society's activities before the membership as often as possible in order to reinforce the idea that the Society is working on their behalf, whether in Ottawa, or from the scientific bench.

### **d) 2004 AGM**

Dr. Andrews reported that Dr. Terry Hébert, Montreal Heart Institute, the chair of the organizing committee for the Society's 2004 Mount Tremblant scientific meeting has matters well in hand. The meeting "Cell Signalling: from the Membrane to Nucleus" will be held at the Fairmont Tremblant Hotel, Mount Tremblant Quebec, May 27-29, 2004. The scientific programme is complete, with gender balanced speakers from Europe, United States and Canada. Efforts have been made to have representative speakers from the pharmaceutical industry on the programme as well. The meeting will open Thursday evening with a keynote address given by Dr. Sylvio Gutkind, NIH. There will be three sessions on Friday: 1) Ion channels/transporters: roles in cellular signalling and gene regulation (five speakers), 2) Tyrosine kinase receptor signalling-interplay between kinases and phosphatases (3 speakers), 3) Large scale approaches and model systems for cellular signalling (five speakers) and an evening keynote speaker, Dr. Gary Johnston, University of Colorado. There will be three sessions on Saturday 1) G protein-coupled receptors (five speakers), 2) Scaffolding proteins/adaptors and signalling networks, (three speakers), 3) Apoptosis (five speakers). More than a hundred letters have been sent out soliciting funds to help finance the meeting. To date, \$20,000 has been collected from five sponsors. The registration for the meeting has been set: Single occupancy, member \$1,470, nonmember \$1,545 and student/PDF \$1,395, double occupancy, member \$1,150, nonmember \$1,225 and student/PDF \$1075. These

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prices include three nights accommodations, meals from supper May 27 to breakfast May 30, and registration charges, \$250 for members, \$325 for non-members and \$175 for students and postdoctoral fellows. Dr. Andrews stated that a new innovation will be introduced at the meeting, one of the evening meals will be served in the poster area in the hope of garnering more interplay between the poster presenters and the registrants. The maximum number of attendees will be limited to 300. Dr. Hebert has presented a preliminary budget with the Society contributing \$5,000 in seed money. There will be space for 20 commercial booths at the meeting for which Dr. Hébert suggested there would be a \$2,000 charge. Posters have been prepared both in English and in French advertising the meeting and these will be sent to all university and institutional departments of biochemistry, molecular biology, genetics and cell biology in Canada. In addition, registration forms, the preliminary scientific programme and meeting information have been prepared and are now in the hands of Mrs. Antonious at the CFBS office for posting on the Society's web page.

#### **e) 2005 Banff Meeting**

Dr. Andrews stated that he has contacted Dr. Richard Wozniak and Dr. Richard Rachubinski, Department of Cell Biology, University of Alberta, to organize the 2005 April Banff meeting on the topic of organelle biogenesis and intracellular trafficking. He further stated that negotiations were well underway with the Canadian Genetic Society to piggyback our meeting with theirs, so that there will be one day overlap between both meetings. For that day, a common session will be planned to the mutual interest of both Societies. It is hoped to entice Dr. Guthier Blobel to be the keynote speaker.

Dr. Andrews reported that the CFBS is rethinking their mandate. They are proposing to start a new initiative called "Northern Lights Conferences" in which they will act as sponsors and meeting coordinators for various scientific organizations. This approach will reflect the changing nature of the Federation's scientific meetings and their desire to attract a larger international audience in addition to international speakers. He suggested that some day our Society's

future meeting could fall under the Northern Lights umbrella.

#### **f) CFBS Contractual Services**

Last May the Society received a proposal from CFBS outlining managerial services that they could provide our Society on a contractual basis. With the retirement of our Treasurer, Dr. Palmer, the search for his replacement has proved to be very difficult because of the commitment of time and effort that the Office now requires. This CFBS proposal was very timely. By redirecting the bulk of the Society's operational responsibilities and duties, it was pointed out that this would add stability to the Society and it would be easier to recruit a new treasurer since the "hassle factor" would be removed from this Office, however, at an extra cost. After fine tuning CFBS's contractual terms, the Society's Board agreed to sign a one year agreement with CFBS for managerial services. CFBS is now responsible for the following Society matters: 1) Invoicing and Membership Processing, 2) Website Setup and Maintenance, 3) E-mail List Server, 4) Book Keeping, and 5) Office Expenses, at a yearly charge of \$6,666. It was also decided to extend the lobbying contract with CFBS for another year.

#### **g) Time of Change of Office**

Dr. Andrews addressed the timing that the new Executive took office each year. Traditionally, this change occurred at the Society's June AGM, however since the Society severed its affiliation with CFBS, the scheduling of the Society's annual meeting has varied. He cited the fact that the 2003 AGM this year did not occur until October, which meant that his term of Office has been extended an extra four months. Since the 2004 AGM is scheduled for May, his successor would now only hold the office of the President for seven months. To correct this inconsistency, the Executive Board approved the following "That beginning July 2004, the term of the new Society Executive each year will run concurrently from July 1th to June 30th of the succeeding year."

#### **742. Past President's Report.**

Dr. Browder had no report.

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### **743. Vice-President's Report**

Dr. Orłowski stated that since Dr. Casey was spending his sabbatical leave in Ottawa last year, he took over the responsibility of science advocacy for the Society. Dr. Casey felt that Dr. Bruce Sells, Executive Director of CFBS was an important cog in the Society advocacy programme. Dr. Sells has over the past number of years developed important ties with many civil servants and politicians which now affords the Society access to Parliament Hill. As a result of these inroads, Dr. Casey strongly feels the Society is getting its money's worth with our association with CFBS's advocacy programme. Over the past year, Dr. Casey has had the opportunity on four occasions to meet with and lobby a number of Members of Parliament and Senators. According to Dr. Casey, the Health Research Society is dead in the water even though he personally has established a unit in Edmonton. Dr. Andrews stated that he has been to the Hill three times and his effectiveness has been worn out and new faces have to appear to reinforce our Society's lobbying for more research support. Dr. Casey stated that Friends of CIHR and HRAM have put forward strong and effective lobbying efforts.

Dr. Orłowski stated it was important this Fall to mount a letter writing campaign to the politicians and government leaders in Ottawa supporting science advocacy. The Executive is in the process of constructing a form letter that could easily be used by the membership this purpose. This could be sent to the Society's membership by e-mail and they in turn could dispatch this letter to their member of Parliament in Ottawa. Even though they are form letters, they still would have an impact, but not as great as a personal letter which would have more clout.

### **744. Treasurer's Report**

Dr. Palmer presented his 2003 interim financial statement which was current to September 6. Total receipts to date were \$194,001.90 with expenses paid out of \$95,771.89 resulting in a net balance of \$8,230.01. Dr. Palmer stated that the Society was obligated to repay the \$25,000 NRC loan which the Society obtained as its contribution to the Toronto IUBMB Congress. The Special Fund at the end of August stood at

\$350,537.26. He stated that he would have to withdraw \$24,000 from the Special Fund to cover the Society's 2003 obligations. Dr. Palmer moved that his report be accepted. The motion was seconded by Dr. S. Brosnan.

#### **CARRIED**

Dr. Palmer stated that he has had discussions with Dr. Duronio regarding transferring the Office of the Treasurer to Vancouver, and that he and Dr. Duronio plan to visit the CFBS office in Ottawa to meet with Mrs. Antonious in order to organize her contribution to our Society's management. The Society's bank account will be transferred to Ottawa and the Treasurer and/or the Secretary of the Society will have signing authority on this account. Dr. Bruce Sells, the Executive Director of CFBS will be authorized to sign cheques on this account only with the approval of the Treasurer.

### **745. Secretary's Report**

#### **a) Society's Award Programme**

Dr. Tustanoff reported that Dr. Victor Ling, Vice President, British Columbia Cancer Agency, is the 2003 recipient of the Roche Diagnostics Prize for Biomolecular and Cellular Research, and that Charles Boone, Banting and Best Department of Medical Research, University of Toronto, is the 2003 CSBMCB's Merck Frosst Award designate. Thirty-six student travel grants totalling \$26,000 were awarded for the HUPO/IUBMB World Congress, 10 to Alberta, 10 to Quebec, 7 to Ontario, 3 to Nova Scotia and 1 each to Saskatchewan and Manitoba. These funds were donated by Merck Frosst Canada (\$16,000), Amgen Inc (\$7,500) and John Robarts Research Institute (\$1,500).

#### **b) BULLETIN**

The 2002 BULLETIN has taken a prolonged time to see the light of day. There were two reasons for this delay. Dr. Reithmeier had run into some technical problems with the editing of the BULLETIN and secondly, he was waiting to get a fix on the number of registrations at the Toronto IUBMB congress, since this had a bearing on the number of copies that were to be printed for circulation at that meeting. Dr. Reithmeier, with Dr. Sharom's and Dr. Tustanoff's assistance, were commended by

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the Board for the excellent product that was produced. Due to Dr. Reithmeier's heavy university departmental responsibility it would not be wise to saddle him with the editing the journal again, consequently Dr. Sharom will take over the responsibility of the BULLETIN with Dr. Tustanoff's assistance. It is intended to have 2003 issue ready to sent to the press by mid January.

**c) Nominations to the IUBMB Executive**

Dr. Tustanoff informed the Board that Dr Carol Cass' nomination to the IUBMB Executive as Chair of Congresses and Conferences was unsuccessful. Dr Weiner's nomination for second term on the IUBMB Nominating Committee is still pending.

**d) Society Article in IUBMB Life**

The Society was asked to submit an article on the history of the Society for publication in the commemorative IUBMB Toronto Congress issue of IUBMB Life. Dr. Tustanoff submitted the requested article which appeared in their April-May Issue, 55, 181-182.

**e) CNC-NRC**

Dr. Tustanoff attended the Ciset & NRC/ Partners Joint Meeting held in Ottawa at the NRC complex on Montreal Road on May 26-27, 2003. Representatives of the NRC Partners, who consist of the 30 Canadian National Committees(CNC) that NRC represents at the International Council for Science (ICSU), met with members of the Committee on International Science, Engineering and Technology (Ciset) to discuss their relationships and mandates. The first afternoon session dealt with the topic of "Access to publicly funded Scientific Data", with talks from the presidents of NRC, NSERC and SSHRC. The next day the Director of ICSU, Dr. Osswall spoke on the Role of ICSU and this was followed by Dr. Ian Smith's, Ciset Chair, talk on the role of Ciset and CNSs and the interface between CNSs. The afternoon was devoted to submissions both written and verbal from CNC representatives on their activities and mandates. Discussions were then held on what the CNCs can expect from NRC, and what the future holds for Canada on the international scientific scene.

**f) Hall of Fame**

Dr. Tustanoff suggested that the Board should give consideration in establishing a biochemistry hall of fame where Canadian scientists living and dead could be enshrined to honour and commemorate their scientific contributions to our discipline.

**g) Relationship with PABMB**

Dr. Tustanoff reported that the Society Board had moved a motion that the Society should withdraw its membership from PABMB. Dr. Tustanoff then presented the background for this action. He stated that he served as the Secretary-General of PABMB for the past two years and had witnessed at first hand the apathy of this organization. He and had grave concerns about the interest that the South Americans had in sustaining the Association's viability. The basic problem from Dr. Tustanoff's point of view was the general indifference that the national societies that make up the Association had. PABMB constitutes the following biochemical societies; , Division of Biological Chemistry of the American Chemical Society, American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, CSBMCB, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay, with Cuba, Portugal and Spain as Associate members. He cited a few examples of the lack of interest which predominates PABMB. One of the first orders of business that Dr. Tustanoff was to carry out, was to have the PABMB Board ratify the amended Association's bylaws and vote for a new Treasurer. After sending out three urgent requests, he said he received only four responses, three of which were from the Executive, which in effect meant that these new bylaws have never been ratified. The most telling event occurred when Dr. Tustanoff tried to organize the annual Board meeting this past November in Brazil, which was important in order to get the Association back on its rails. Initially, he stated that there was almost no response, or he was informed that travel funds were unavailable from some of the national societies to send delegates. A second request was sent out on two different occasions asking whether if supplemental travel funds from the Association were made available would they attend, and again either no answer or little positive response. As the last straw, funds were authorized to pay the entire trav-

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el and accommodation costs for those societies who could not afford sending their delegates to this meeting. Due to lack of support, the meeting was finally cancelled after several tries. Dr. Tustanoff, then hoping to light a fire under the Board's Executive, threatened to recommend to CSBMCB's Board that they should withdraw from PABMB unless there was a change in attitude in the overall support of PABMB. He asked the Vice-President of PABMB, who is becoming President on January 1st, on at least three different occasions to prepare a document which could be circulated to CSBMCB's Board outlining the reasons why CSBMCB should remain in PABMB. No reply was received. Dr. Tustanoff reminded the Board that CSBMCB is paying \$1,000 annually in dues to PABMB, and if the South Americans are not interested in supporting their own Association, he could not see why CSBMCB should, as these funds can better be used by our Society. Furthermore, on reviewing past Society AGM minutes he found that this is not the first time the Society had doubts about its participation in PABMB. After discussing the pros and cons, the Board decided to withdraw its membership from PABMB, even after Dr. Tustanoff cautioned the Board to consider the long term ramifications of this action before withdrawing. The Board's decision to withdraw from PABMB was hotly debated from the floor. Dr. Poirier stated it was the Society's obligation to financially support PABMB. Dr. Duckworth presented vigorous arguments in favour of continuing the Society's participation in PABMB citing his uplifting experiences in organizing the CBS-PAB meeting at the CFBS Winnipeg Meeting in the 1980's. Furthermore he stated that he was prepared to contact PABMB to try to resolve the Board's difficulties. Dr. Duckworth moved that further consultations with PABMB take place before any action to withdraw from that organization take place. This was seconded by Dr. S. Brosnan.

#### **CARRIED**

Dr. Andrews then appointed Dr. Duckworth to be the Society's PABMB representative.

#### **h) New Society Officers**

Dr. J. Casey, University of Alberta, has been elected to the Office of Vice-President, Dr. V. Duronio, University of British Columbia is now the Treasurer, and the two councillors are Dr. Frances Sharom, University of Guelph and Dr. G. Poirier, Laval University.

#### **746. Councillors' Reports**

Dr. Litchfield submitted a written report on his activities dealing with graduate student support during the past year. The Litchfield distribution of student support is appended as Appendix G. For those aware of past practices, prior to 2002, a total of \$2000 was allotted for student activities (each event up to \$500). However, response to this opportunity was inconsistent. Therefore, at the beginning of 2002, Dr. Litchfield sent a message to the CSBMCB membership to raise awareness of the opportunity. Following this message, the response exceeded the resource so that the allotment was increased to \$3000. Even with the increased resource, a number of inquiries were turned away. At the start of 2003, no request was sent to the student community other than the website to promote the opportunity again. It is evident that to this point in the year, the demand for the resource has returned to its old levels (i.e. \$2000). In light of fiscal pressures related to this event, this may not be a bad thing for this particular year. However, it does demonstrate that the CSBMCB continues to struggle with a problem of visibility.

#### **747. New Business**

There was no new business.

#### **748. Change of Chair**

Dr. John Orłowski assumed the Chair as President of the Society. Dr. Orłowski expressed both his and the Society's gratitude to Dr. David Andrews for his outstanding and steadfast dedication to the Society during his term of office. The Society has undergone a great number of changes which were spearheaded by Dr. Andrews and his steady hand helped smooth out the many problems the Society encountered as a result of the cancellation of the Toronto IUBMB Congress.

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### **749. Approval of Signing Officers for 2003-2004**

Dr. Palmer moved that the President, Treasure and Secretary be appointed as the signing officers for the Society for the period 2003-2004. The motion was seconded by Dr. Andrews.

CARRIED

### **750. Adjournment.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. on a motion from Dr. Duronio which was seconded by Dr. Poirier.

CARRIED