



FINAL

**MINUTES – SPECIAL MEMBERS MEETING of
The Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association of Ontario
Tuesday, June 21st, 2022 – 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Held through Zoom Video Conferencing**

PRESENT:

Quorum was achieved: A total of 26 members participated in the Special Members Meeting; 8 by Zoom, 1 by Phone and 17 Proxies.

List of Voting Members:

As of June 20th, 2022 MEAO had 63 members.

See attached list of the 26 voting members for the Special Members Meeting.

1. Welcome

Denise Magi, President of MEAO extended a welcome to all members and guest speakers Jeff Swystun of Swystun Communications and Alan Belaiche, MEAO's lawyer.

Denise Magi chaired and Adrianna Tetley was the moderator for this Special Members Meeting. The Special Members Meeting was Zoom video recorded with the consensus of the attendees for the sole purpose of minute taking.

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m.

Agenda:

1. Welcome
2. Jeff Swystun of Swystun Communications to present a brief overview of the name change process that the board of directors went through
3. Alan Belaiche, Solicitor – to explain legalities of changing the name
4. Q and A
5. Vote on the Special Resolution

Purpose of this Special Members Meeting:

The purpose of this special members meeting is to vote on MEAO's proposed change of name.

Why MEAO Needs a New Name: presentation by Denise Magi, President.

The Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association of Ontario (MEAO) became a registered corporation in April 1992.

At the beginning, the corporation focused on the Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. By 2010 the corporation expanded its focus to other comorbid conditions and therefore, became known as an organization representing and supporting the medical conditions of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS), Fibromyalgia (FM) and Environmental Sensitivities/Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (ES/MCS).

In 2018, the organization began a refresh process which was to include an update of the corporation's By-Laws, revised Objects, a change of name, and a new website. Each process took substantial time and in most cases extra funding and legalities. So far, the organization has tackled its By-Laws, its Objects and now it's time for the change of name.

Thirty years is a long time with the same name – The Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association of Ontario. While most people have come to understand that MEAO represents all three conditions, the reality is that we need to continually remind people that we do not just represent ME/CFS.

The reality is we need a name that encompasses all three of the medical conditions that we support and represent being Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS), Fibromyalgia (FM) and Environmental Sensitivities/Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (ES/MCS).

The time is also right. There is increasing interest in combatting these conditions that result in pain, social isolation and debilitating fatigue.

To that end, we need to change our name and tell a fresh, compelling story. A name that reflects the work we do to advocate for a system of care for Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS), Fibromyalgia (FM) and Environmental Sensitivities/Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (ES/MCS); that better speaks to the work we do to communicate with the Ontario Ministry of Health for release and implementation of the Action Plan Report of Dr. Brian Schwartz of Public Health Ontario, regarding the implementing of the recommendations of the Task Force on Environmental Health.

MEAO wants to reassure its members whether under a new name or the old name, MEAO will continue to advocate for a better system of care for those with ME/CFS, FM and ES/MCS, their families, caregivers and friends so everyone can lead a more fulfilling life.

Due to the difficult task of finding a new name, the MEAO board of directors realized it needed some professional assistance and as a result, entered into a structured process to arrive at the new name. Jeff Swystun, CMO of Swystun Communications, a globally recognized branding expert, volunteered his time to work with the Board. Jeff informed MEAO of trends in non-profit and association branding; framed the situation for context and took board through a process to identify a potential name.

2. Jeff Swystun's Presentation:

Jeff presented the high-level overview of the process and the brand story.

Based on good feedback from members, Jeff has volunteered to redraft the brand story.

The brand story is not a public document but rather a few statements that tell the essence of what we are all about and to inform other documents.

Denise thanked Jeff Swystun for his voluntary time and help with this process. It is much appreciated by the Board and members.

3. Legal Process:

MEAO's lawyer Alan Belaiche supports the proposed name change, which demonstrates the importance of the brand and the success of the organization. Alan feels that the proposed name **CareNow Ontario** displays a sense of timeliness, urgency and portrayal of the advocacy work of the organization. The new name in conjunction with a tagline, can encompass all three conditions.

Based on the NUANS report, no other registration in Canada was found that occupied the same type of organization that deals with health conditions and advocacy.

Once the members approve the Special Resolution with 2/3 member support, the application will be sent to the Government of Ontario for approval

4. Q & A:

i. *Did the organization perform a NUANS search?*

MEAO's Response

Yes, a search was performed and the name CareNow Ontario was reserved for 90 days pending application approval from Companies Branch. The search identified a few companies that contains Care and Now but the lawyer feels that the name is distinctive enough to get approved.

ii. *What type of URL will be used for the website?*

MEAO's Response

To be determined. Jeff Swystun confirmed that both .org and on.ca are available for \$2.99 each.

iii. *What other names was suggested to the board during the naming process?*

MEAO's Response

Jeff presented 8 names to the board for consideration, none included all three medical conditions in the name. Examples were Care Today, Stand up for Care, Care Matters, Energy Well, Up and Out, Stronger steps and One Million.

- iv. **Was an international search performed to see how other countries named their organization to deal with the three medical conditions?**

MEAO's Response

No international search was done.

- v. **Member Eleanor Johnston requested that the minutes reflect that there are a number of members that are concerned that changing the name to CareNow, which is the name of the report of the Task Force on Environmental Health, will mislead MPPs and the public to thinking our organization's sole focus will be on implementing that particular report recommendations.**

MEAO's Response

This concern was mentioned at the information meeting that was held on June 7th, 2022. MEAO has been using Care Now long before the task force report and in fact used it in the business case. The implementation report has not been publicly released yet and our organization is much bigger than the report.

5. Special Resolution of the Members of MEAO regarding MEAO's Change of Name:

Board member Adrianna Tetley presented the background overview about MEAO's name change.

Special Resolution:

BACKGROUND:

1. The Corporation was incorporated under the *Corporations Act* (Ontario) by Letters Patent dated the 24th day of April, 1992 (the "**Letters Patent**");
2. The Letters Patent were amended by Supplementary Letters Patent dated 13th day of November, 2020;
3. The Corporation has recently determined that a change of the Corporation's name would be appropriate;
4. A change in the Corporation's name requires that the Corporation submit an Application for Articles of Amendment;
5. The *Not-For-Profit Corporations Act, 2010* (Ontario) requires that a change of corporation name needs a Special Resolution of the Corporation's Board of Directors and of its members.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS A SPECIAL RESOLUTION THAT:

1. The Corporation apply for Articles of Amendment to change the name of the Corporation

From:

THE MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

To:

CareNow Ontario

2. Any two directors or any one director and one officer are authorized to take all such actions and to execute and deliver to the Ministry of Government Services all such documentation, including the Application for Articles of Amendment, as may be required to effect the change of the corporate name.

Moved by: Laurie Menard

Seconded by: Keith Deviney

MOTION CARRIED: 20 in Favour, 6 Opposed

A roll call vote was conducted via Zoom.

Members requested that their opposition be recorded in the minutes:

Eleanor Johnston, Alison Rae, Jeanne Samonas, Louis Samonas, Andrew Samonas, Marcotte Samonas

MOTION CARRIED

COMMENTS:

- ***A member expressed a concern that many former support group ME/FM leaders and former board members were not aware of the MEAO name change proposal?***

MEAO's Response

MEAO sent information session invitations to over 400 individuals from our database.

- ***Projected Cost for the name change?***

MEAO's Response

- *Website redesign - budget previously set.*
- *NUANS report - cost is minimal (< \$100).*
- *Legal – minimal time.*
- *Marketing Consult - pro-bono.*

NEXT STEPS:

- Alan Belaiche to submit the resolution/application to Government of Ontario.
- Jeff Swystun to redraft brand story based on comments.

- Resume progress with redesign of website pending new name approval.

Adjournment:

Motion:

Be it resolved the Special Members Meeting for today, June 21st, 2022 be adjourned

Moved by: John Doherty

Meeting Adjourned

The Special Members Meeting adjourned at 2:13 p.m.

VOTERS LIST – 2022

Last Name	First Name	Zoom / By Proxy / By Phone
Al-Awadi	Fadi	By Proxy
Coatsworth	Cam	By Proxy
Deviney	Caroline	By Proxy
Deviney	Keith	Zoom
Doherty	John	Zoom
Gemmell	Christina	By Proxy
Graham	Anne	By Proxy
Halapy	Erika	By Proxy
Harris	Darnel	By Proxy
Johnston	Eleanor	By Phone
Magi	Denise	Zoom
Menard	Laurie	Zoom
Morrison	Theresa	By Proxy
Naftolin	Pink	By Proxy
Pike	Chris	By Proxy
Rae	Alison	Zoom
Rovito	Rita	By Proxy
Samonas	Jeanne	Zoom
Samonas	Louis	By Proxy

Samonas	Andrew	By Proxy
Samonas	Marcotte	By Proxy
Tetley	Adrianna	Zoom
Tetley	Casey	By Proxy
Tetley	Kim	By Proxy
Tetley	Peter	By Proxy
Vandenbroek	Mary - Lou	Zoom