

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Fazal Khan, Registrar

DATE: March 4, 2024

SUBJECT: Timing of the 2024 Election

☒ For Decision

☐ For Information

☐ Monitoring Report

Purpose:

To discuss the timing of the 2024 Board Elections.

Background:

Board elections are typically held in early October, with a nomination period that takes place in July/August.

In recent years, there has been a relatively low level of participation in board elections, and as a result there has been a need to hold supplemental nomination periods. This may be partially due to the nomination period taking place during the summer months when many opticians are on holiday.

For Consideration:

To encourage greater participation, the administrative team is proposing to conduct the nominations and elections cycle earlier in the year prior to the summer, rather than during.

In addition, the Registration Regulation that will be coming into effect on July 1, 2024, will result in the need to amend the bylaws with respect to eligibility for election and eligibility to vote. An election held prior to July 1 would alleviate the need to finalize the amendments on an expedited basis in time for nominations opening in the Fall.

During initial conversations at the Executive Committee, it was noted that an election held earlier in the year may have some impact on existing board member engagement in the case where an incumbent seeking reelection may disengage if they lose their election bid.

Options discussed included:

- i) Spring Nomination and Election. Both the call for nominations and the election are completed prior to July. This option capitalizes on the busy spring continuing education

and tradeshow season where the College can create awareness and interest amongst the registrant base.

- ii) Spring Nomination and Fall Election. This option would capitalize on the Spring tradeshow season for awareness however, having the elections in the Fall may address the concern raised about board member engagement dropping off early in the year if the board member is not re-elected.
- iii) Status quo.

Public Interest Consideration:

Integral to fulfilling our public interest mandate is the necessity to maintain quorum. It is critical that the board have the appropriate complement of members at the board table to transact the business of the College. With the historic lack of engagement with our previous elections, it is critical that the Board consider alternate ways of generating interest in the process.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Considerations:

To have a board that is reflective of the registrant base, all efforts must be extended to encouraging participation in the governance of the College and to remove barriers to participation. The Summer season is typically one where families are taking vacation and are disengaged from work affairs. Expecting the registrant base to engage during this period may be a barrier to participation.

Recommendations:

While the Executive Committee favoured the option of splitting the nominations in the Spring and holding the elections in the Fall, noting that the new Registration Regulation is coming into effect July 1, 2024, for this cycle only, the Executive is recommending both the nominations and elections for this year take place this Spring.

Action Required:

The Board is being asked to give direction to the administration with regards to the timing of the elections for 2024. Direction on 2025 would also be beneficial to the administrative team for planning purposes.