

Jim Busser for BCMA Honorary Secretary Treasurer

How much does our BCMA spend each year? More than a million on your Board, and five on committees.

The current referendum and election tied up the staff for days on end, stuffing 140,000 printed pages. Toss in 60,000 envelopes and delivery costs, and the burn rate is well over \$40,000. It is inconceivable that, in 2010, your Board refused to move to electronic voting then quoted on a one-time basis to just cost \$30,000.

I also petitioned the Board to report all honoraria and expenses paid to directors on committees, but had it insisted to me that such disclosures would violate privacy legislation. Now that the BC College of Pharmacists posts online each of its directors' expenses and payments across all of their work and for all to see at bcpharmacists.org > [About us](#) > [Board](#), our own Board's position has to be highly suspect.



Thirty six directors... some with hands on the steering wheel for two decades, costing us between \$1 and \$6 million per year to support and with no clarity as to what's been achieved. We must demand better.

Diagnosis

The Board is lost in the wilderness, and in the courts. It has resources, but refuses to spend them to engage us. It plants the seeds of forums only to fence them in, limit their light and water, and stick them back in a dark room. It nominates only those directors and ordinary members it prefers onto Audit and Finance and other paid committees.

Root causes

Our Board's directors were inadequately trained and mentored, and they hear only what they want to hear. They lack vision. They also lack accountability, and a framework of checks and balances, because the members have been too busy with their own, factional issues to care.

Ways forward

Each group wants more money, while failing to agree on anything else that is to be achieved.

Membership has to become part of the solution. It needs to put in place an effective Board whose directors will engage and openly account to members.

The governance package of 2008 collapsed under its own weight. Members, caught up in the details, lost sight of the fact that all they really need is a capable set of directors, and the means to remove or replace those whose actions or inactions run astray of our values.

Members should want the bylaws to enforce the right checks and balances, on the right combination of directors, to ensure their accountability.

Capable directors would have taken the right steps and welcomed term limits.

You can vote to "ACCEPT" term limits and, while you are at it, elect a new Audit committee at the AGM.

Do these things, elect us and we will facilitate your ongoing engagement.

Vote Charles Webb for Chair of General Assembly
Vote Jim Busser for Honorary Secretary Treasurer

Jim Busser for BCMA Honorary Secretary Treasurer

Dear Colleague,

Having served the BCMA as a district delegate and director from 2008 to 2011, I see it as my duty to report that our Association needs major reform.

Despite years of well intended rhetoric very little progress has been made towards improving the functionality of our meetings; the quality and balance of the information distributed to the membership; or the value our Association receives for the considerable resources expended.



The stakes here are higher than many members may realize. And the entrenched interests against reform deeper.

Of the \$10 million our Association collects in Annual Dues, it presently spends over \$1 million a year to support its 36 directors. Supplemented with public funds, it spends a further \$4 million to support around 80 committees, many paid. Appointments to some of these committees are controlled by a subset of the directors who, in many cases, appoint one another. Some directors hold more than half a dozen positions, with no clear accounting to the membership.

While Charles Webb – my running mate – and I support payment of a fee for directors' work, we are not convinced our Association is delivering adequate value for the dues or taxes we all pay.

A consultant hired by our Association recommended in 2009 that the Board:

- Adopt term limits;
- Limit the number of committees on which directors may serve to two; and
- Populate other committees with regular members.

When Charles and I sought to inform members in the district we represented of these recommendations, other directors insisted that we were misquoting the consultant. When that proved incorrect, we were dissuaded from communicating to our members.

Later that year I proposed the consultant's recommendations as bylaw amendments, and then withdrew them under a promise – never since kept – that the Board would quickly move forward with substantial and accountable change.

Instead, the Board has spawned 3 more committees with the Board Chair appointed to all.

This December past, Charles and I resubmitted the proposal to bring in term limits, along with a proposal tying bylaw amendments to their discussion at a meeting of the general membership.

In response, the Board:

- Resolved to outline their opposition to these proposals in an information circular to be mailed with your ballots;
- Did not allow us to include, in the same envelope, an explanation as to why we believe these reforms deserve your support; and
- Appears ready to limit the authority of ordinary members to bring similar proposals in the future.

This history of self interest, foot dragging, and rhetoric have galvanized us to stand for the Board Executive in this election.

A vote for Charles and I is a vote for increased transparency in our Association's operations; improved engagement of the membership; and a reduction in our democratic deficit.

Past presidents have, in the *BCMJ's* September issues:

- Hoped to "improve the Annual Meeting so that it becomes a forum [where the membership's] concerns...can be acted on;" (Golbey 2005)
- Asked whether, when referenda are released to the membership, information ought to be included "in a package [discussing] the cons as well as the pros; (McDiarmid 2006)
- And committed to providing "the pros and cons [on an issue] when the membership as a whole needs to make a decision," (Appleton 2007)

With your support, we can move beyond good intentions and fine words to meaningful action.

Vote Jim Busser for Honorary Secretary Treasurer
Vote Charles Webb for Chair of General Assembly
Vote for a revitalized and relevant BCMA