



Great Lakes Chapter

Annual Report March 2013 to March 2014

A bit about us

“Great Lakes” became an official Chapter of IAP2 Canada in October of 2012, following the signing of a letter of intent and development of a workplan, created by a Steering Committee and many local practitioners. Our focus was to come together as a community and offer top notch networking, professional development and research opportunities for local public participation practitioners. Our Chapter extends from Windsor to Kingston; Barrie to Fort Erie; and along the corridors of Highways 400, 401 and the Queen Elizabeth Way.

The first order of business was to carry out an election process. Eight candidates submitted their names for consideration and in March 2013, we came together for the first time to start to add substance to the hopes for our newly created Chapter. We hope you enjoy reading about our journey.

Meet our 2013 Executive Team

Tracey Ehl, President
Carrie-Lynn Ognibene, Vice President
Mike Sullivan, Secretary
Laurie Bruce, Treasurer
Sherif Kinawy, Research
Karla Kolli, Chapter Liaison
Katrina McCullough, Communications
Sheila Wilson, Membership



Message from the Chair

Wow! We did it. A small, but committed group of local P2 practitioners came together to create a vision for an organization where we could connect, learn, vent and grow together. The seeds that have been planted this year are the beginning of our growth.

I believe that this growth should be slow and measured, meaningful and fun. This is in recognition of the many hats that each of us wears as people, practitioners, family and friends. These seeds have already started and will continue to bear fruit in the form of new ideas, new opportunities, new activities, new friends and hopefully, new members.

Our membership numbers though are not the only measure of our footprint. We have been involved in a number of national activities, such as the first State of the Practice Survey, and the development of IAP2Canada’s Core Value Awards Program, that will expand the reach of IAP2 and connect to others outside of our Chapter.

It has been a pleasure to work with this first Executive Team, field inquiries from practitioners who are discovering IAP2, and to meet practitioners from across Southern Ontario. As we wrap up this first year, a few special thanks are in order.

- To our team members whose terms are finishing. Sheila Wilson took on the “membership” role. She contacted everyone whose memberships had lapsed and encouraged them to reconnect. Sheila also brought a much needed, non-GTA perspective to the table, critical if we are to engage fully with practitioners across our broad geography. Thanks a million.

Sherif Kinawy has been super active, supportive and effective in both forming the new Chapter and on this first Executive Team. Sherif spearheaded our very first State of the Practice research initiatives, engaging with people from various universities and nationally. Results of the survey were presented during an IAP2 North America webinar. Sherif also planned and hosted numerous networking events, and has regularly contributed to our communications efforts. Congratulations on finishing your studies! Thank you so much!

- To our entire Executive Team for giving of your time, expertise and energy, and drawing on your networks to start and grow something new.
- To the IAP2 Canada board for ongoing guidance, information, technology and financial support. We appreciate your openness to meeting our unique needs and goals. It is appreciated. It is with excitement that we have recently expressed our support for a Chapter Agreement between IAP2 Canada and our Chapter.
- To our guest speakers, Bob Davis, Morgan Boyco and Lee Anne Cameron who made themselves and their experiences available to our membership. Thank you.



Good and meaningful public participation is critical in a wide range of activities for a wide range of organizations. IAP2 gives us a place to meet as a community of practice and get better at what we do. If you have interest and energy in any of the activities IAP2 is currently involved in, there is certainly opportunity locally, nationally and internationally. If you've got new ideas for change and growth, jump in.

Highlights of 2013

Looking within... Over the last year, our Executive Team met seven times both in person and virtually via teleconference. Virtual meetings are critical for inclusion, as we attempt to overcome our geographic dispersion. The team developed templates, a consensus based approach, as well as our strategic direction.

Members of our Executive Team have been active on a number of national committees, including Chapter liaison, which connects all of the Canadian chapters, Outreach and Collaboration, Research, and Core Value Awards. We have worked with IAP2 Canada to develop a Chapter Agreement, as well as have secured collective liability insurance. All of these activities were a necessary step to moving forward.

Looking out... Through partnerships with established organizations and building relationships with local practitioners, we have been able to connect with many. We hosted a booth and a networking session in conjunction with the Strategy Institute conference on public consultation. We also hosted a networking and learning session about best practices in digital engagement. Both events were attended by 10 – 20 public participation practitioners.

Members of our team authored an article in the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, Ontario Planning Journal titled, **Public Participation: Moving Beyond the Minimum**

Valuable Tools from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). We are also hosting a short session at OPPI's October Symposium.

As a Chapter, we also connected digitally by establishing a web presence on the IAP2Canada site, <http://www.iap2canada.ca/greatlakes>, distributing a regular e-newsletters, maintaining communications through our e-mail address greatlakes@iap2canada.ca, and initiating a LinkedIn Group.

Strategic Direction 2013-2014

Building on the core values of IAP2, the new IAP2 Great Lakes aspires to advance the practice of public participation by promoting a culture of **connection and sharing** among P2 practitioners (members and non-members) in the Great Lakes region.



To further vision, we will work with members and partners to deliver top notch:

- Learning opportunities
- Social events
- Communication with members and non-members (i.e. practitioners outside of IAP2)
- Development of strategic partnerships (e.g. OPPI, OAIA, etc.)
- Recognition of people and projects
- Advocacy, research and policy development

We recognize that we are a small, volunteer based organization, so we have to choose strategic priorities to ensure our sustainability. For the 2013-2014 timeframe, our priorities are to:

- Host multiple social and/or learning events each year.
- Communicate effectively with both members and non members through e-newsletters, e-mail, the web and telephone outreach.
- Undertake research, recognition and partnership development as opportunities arise.

Through these activities, we aim to demonstrate value for membership, build connections and recognition for good public participation practices and build our membership. We will review our progress regularly to make sure we are staying on track, and we will adjust course as necessary.

Membership



According to membership numbers published recently in the IAP2 Canada Annual report

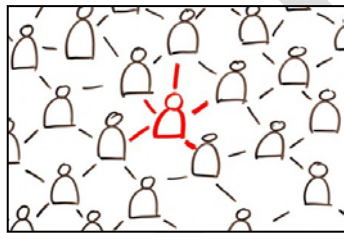
(<http://www.iap2canada.ca/Resources/Documents>), between March 2013 and March 2014, our chapter grew from 55 members to 58 members. The number does not tell the whole story though, as some previous members did not renew, and new members came onboard. This is modest growth in an area where there is great potential. We also have a long list of people who are “following” our activities and receiving regular

communications and participating in events. It is our hope that these potential members will see value in joining our Chapter, and helping to build something positive for local practitioners and responsive to local needs.

Our Finances

Great Lakes Chapter applied for and received start up grants from IAP2 Canada. These funds were utilized for a strategic planning session, and all of our networking events to date. These events have been offered free of charge to members and non members alike. Here are the details of our finances this year, as prepared by Laurie Bruce, Treasurer.

Date	Memo/Description	Revenue	Expenses	Balance
01/01/2013	Opening balance	1,207.07		1,207.07
09/15/2013	Refreshments for Strategic Planning Session		-16.95	1,190.12
09/15/2013	Room rental for Strategic Planning Session (Vaughan Public Library)		-33.90	1,156.22
09/15/2013	Strategic Planning Session – Facilitator Honorarium		-350.00	806.22
02/04/2014	Networking Session Refreshments		-136.14	670.08
	Current Balance		536.99	670.08



Thank you for the opportunity to share our year, to further IAP2 as an organization, and to work with a diverse group of p2 practitioners. If you are a member, please consider contributing your ideas and time. If you are not already a member, please consider joining. Visit IAP2canada.ca and click on "Join IAP2Canada".

All the best to the new Executive Team for the upcoming year!

/april 2014