



Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

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Dear Alan, Tracy and Eastern Valley Regional SCIA Board:

The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) at their annual meeting each year welcomes formal resolutions from any of their 50+ county/district associations across Ontario. These resolutions provide a grassroots voice on issues to be brought forward to the delegates for debate and formal support or opposition through voting. OSCIA's policy has been to leave the debate (and voting) up to the delegates while staff and board directors may provide comment for clarification if required.

On behalf of the Association, I would like to provide this update on resolution #7 – OSCIA Website and resolution #8 – OSCIA Financial Visioning Committee, which Eastern Valley spoke to during the OSCIA 2021 virtual annual meeting.

Resolution #7 – OSCIA Website:

Our website is continually evolving, and we are committed to introduce the necessary changes and enhancements, so it continues to meet the wide variety of needs of our membership, programs and the broader farm community. We acknowledge your suggestion to hire an independent third party but given the current financial challenges, the Association has chosen to assign the task to our new IT Manager-Gabriella Perry who will work with the internal website committee to identify and implement improvements as needed.

A thorough evaluation of the main website is underway. A survey probing user experience has been developed and will soon be shared through the Grassroots Matters e-blast, giving members the opportunity to provide feedback. Focus groups are planned for late summer/early fall to help interpret the findings and determine next steps.

We encourage you to watch for the survey and take the opportunity to pinpoint issues and provide your ideas. We will endeavor to provide periodic updates on the project to keep members informed.

Resolution #8 – OSCIA Financial and Strategic Visioning Sub-Committee:

Our Financial and Strategic Visioning Sub-Committee has been working diligently over the last three years to explore ways to reduce operating costs and explore opportunities for multiple revenue streams. The sub-committee continues to be chaired by Chad Anderson.

There are many examples of success where we have curbed operating expenditures, both in our day-to-day operations in Guelph, and in how we plan major events such as the annual general meeting. A

terrific example of which was the decision to move out of 1 Stone Road after 24 years to a new office location at the north end of Guelph. (Look for the Cop Advances story in the July/August issue of Country Guide magazine.).

OSCIA is also encouraged by new program opportunities that are being offered through AAFC's Agricultural Climate Solutions, and ECCC. Our role in leading the Living Lab-ON initiative makes us ideally positioned to secure additional opportunities that align with our skills and are squarely in our wheelhouse.

We are not limiting our potential role in new initiatives to government-funded programs either. Efforts continue to better understand the requirements of providing verification services for sustainability and certification programs so we can be in the best position possible as opportunities open up.

The idea of hiring a business advisor as expressed in the resolution will not be ignored, but for the time being we are mobilizing selected staff and the board members on the sub-committee to move this important piece forward.

The sub-committee quite regularly reports to the board of directors as we share your desire to see the association in a well-balanced and reliable income position.

Sincerely,



Andrew Graham
Executive Director, OSCIA

Copy to:
OSCIA Executive Committee