



# Minutes

## Horticultural Technician Trade Board Meeting

August 31, 2016 at 9:30 a.m.  
A. M. (Mac) Cuddy Gardens, Fanshawe College  
28443 Centre Rd.,  
Strathroy, ON, N7G 3X2

### Trade Board Members in Attendance

Richard Rogers  
Sally Harvey  
Martin Mostert  
Xin Hui Peng

### Trade Board Members not in Attendance

Nadia Blackburn, Vice-Chair  
John Soychak, Chair

### Resource Persons/Guests in Attendance

Jeff Hicks, Landscape Ontario  
Alex Gibson, Landscape Ontario, Eastern Region  
Michael Pascoe, Fanshawe College  
Cameron Anderson, Service Divisional Board

### Staff in Attendance

Alice Power, Program Coordinator<sup>i</sup>

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#### 1. Call to Order/Welcome

R. Rogers offered to Chair the meeting, and the Trade Board agreed. The meeting started at 9:30 with a tour of the A. M. (Mac) Cuddy Gardens, Fanshawe College's teaching garden.

#### 2. Approval of Agenda

It was suggested that an item "Succession Planning and Recruitment" be added under Industry Update.

**ON A MOTION MADE BY M. Mostert, SECONDED BY S. Harvey AND CARRIED**, the agenda was approved as amended.

#### 3. Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**4. Previous Minutes**

**ON A MOTION MADE BY M. Mostert, SECONDED BY S. Harvey AND CARRIED**, the minutes of the March 11, 2016 meeting were approved as presented.

**5. Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit (ATTC)**

C. Anderson provided an update on the status of the ATTC. Landscape Ontario is willing to write to the Ministry of Finance, as well as get support from other national landscape horticulturist organizations, such as the Canadian Nursery Landscape Association (CNLA), to join forces and advocate for the ATTC for the Horticultural trades. The Trade Board requested that a copy of the letter that the Service Divisional Board sent to the Ministry of Finance on this issue.

**6. Apprenticeship Training Standard Review**

The Program Coordinator reported that she is trying to determine the extent of revision the Horticultural Technician Apprenticeship Training Standard may need to align with the new National Occupational Analysis (NOA) for Landscape Horticulturist. The Trade Board discussed the need to incorporate the new section in the NOA, “Applies horticultural principals”, into the Apprenticeship Training Standard.

M. Mostert reported that he has conducted a comparison of the new Landscape Horticulturist NOA and the current Horticultural Technician Apprenticeship Training Standard. The Program Coordinator will copy and share M. Mostert’s notes with the Trade Board as a starting point for the discussion. S. Harvey will set up a shared document in “Google docs” to be used for the review process and the Program Coordinator will re-send the Apprenticeship Training Standard and provide a date to provide comments.

The Trade Board discussed who is qualified to sign off the competencies in the logbook. It was agreed that the statement in the logbook is general, and the qualifications that these individuals require should be discussed when the Apprenticeship Training Standard is reviewed. It was reported that there are occasions when some employers are not willing to sign off on the skills.

**7. College of Trades Update**

**7.1 General Update**

It was announced that as of May 6, 2016, the Government of Ontario decided that the regulatory and administrative oversight of the Ontario College of Trades will be transferred from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD), formerly the Ministry of Training, Colleges of University (MTCU), to the Ministry of Labour (MOL).

The Board was advised that a training session will be held for Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Trade Boards on September 22, 2016 at the College.

**7.2 Registrar’s Report**

The Trade Board was provided with the Q1 and Q2 2016 Registrar’s Reports prior to the meeting. The highlights of the Registrar’s Reports were discussed with the Trade Board.

**7.3 Membership**

The Trade Board reviewed the most recent membership numbers of the College. It was reported that there was an increase of 1.0% in the first quarter of 2016. There were approximately 7,000 members that did not renew their membership in the spring during the renewal time period. However, as of June 30, 2016, there were a total of 232,021 active members. It was noted that

expired members are sent out notices of suspension (for non-payment of fees) and are given 60 days before they are required to pay a reinstatement fee in addition to the membership fee if they wish to renew their membership with the College.

#### **7.4 Communications and Marketing**

The Program Coordinator provided an overview of Communications and Marketing activities for the first quarter of 2016. It was noted that the College recently won the Global International Association of Business Communicators' Gold Quill award for the *Trades Today* magazine. It was also noted that the newsletter is continually increasing in readership. In addition, there has been a good pick up of College-written stories in mainstream media outlets. It was noted that there is an article in the summer edition of *Trades Today* about Landscape Ontario becoming a group sponsor for acting on behalf of employers and sponsor apprentices in the Eastern region.

It was further reported that visits to [www.collegeoftrades.ca](http://www.collegeoftrades.ca) continue to increase, with the Public Register being the most popular feature on the website. It was mentioned that a Request for Proposal (RFP) has been sent out to have the website redesigned.

The "Veterans and the Skilled Trades" video was presented to the Trade Board, as well as the new Hire with Confidence website ([www.hirewithconfidence.ca](http://www.hirewithconfidence.ca)) was reviewed by the Trade Board – a pilot project to help people search, apply and hire for jobs and apprenticeships in the skilled trades. Only members of the College are able to post on the job board, which will hopefully act as an incentive for employers to become members of the College.

The Trade Board discussed the challenges with the apprenticeship system, noting that the most significant issue is the fact is that employers are not aware of the apprenticeship system and how it works. There has been significant change in a relatively short period of time and it was suggested that there is a need to get a clear message out to employers about apprenticeship programs. It was noted that Landscape Ontario is currently preparing videos about various aspects of the industry. The Program Coordinator suggested that Landscape Ontario may want to consider providing a video about the industry to the College, which could potentially be shared on the [www.earnwhileyoulearn.com](http://www.earnwhileyoulearn.com) website.

#### **7.5 Compliance and Enforcement**

The Compliance and Enforcement statistics from the Q2 Registrar's report were presented to the Trade Board. It was noted that there have been at least two greenhouse operators charged for hiring or performing work of installing exterior irrigation systems, which is within the scope of practice of a plumber – a compulsory trade. It was questioned if there would be a similar issue with the installment of low voltage lighting.

It was reported that the Ontario government announced on August 17, 2016 its intention to introduce legislation this fall that would, if passed, regulate the province's home inspection industry in order to better protect consumers. If passed, the proposed changes would require home inspectors to be licenced with proper qualifications; set minimum standards for contracts, home inspection reports disclosures, and the performance of home inspections and establish an independent Administrative Authority to administer and enforce the home inspection licencing legislation and associated regulations.

#### **7.6 Evaluation and Assessment Update**

It was reported that the College received 1,417 Trade Equivalency Assessment (TEA) applications in Q2. The high volume of applications and long processing times has led to some new processes at

the College, as noted in the Registrar's Report. In particular, it was noted that there is now an opportunity for previously denied applicants to appeal the decision within a set period of time.

### **7.7 Policy Update**

The Trade Board was briefed on the Program Evaluation Process (PEP) currently being piloted by the College, the objective of which is to strengthen the skilled trades system in Ontario by focusing investments in viable trades, revitalizing programs where necessary through regulatory changes or promotional efforts, and developing impact analyses to track future trade development. It was suggested that stand-alone trades will need to meet certain apprenticeship registration thresholds to prove their viability.

## **8. Service Divisional Board Update**

The Trade Board reviewed the Minutes of the April 4, 2016 and June 16, 2016 Service Divisional Board meetings. The next Service Divisional Board meeting is November 17, 2016. C. Anderson presented the highlights from the last meetings.

## **9. Program Update**

### **9.1 Membership Statistics**

The Program Coordinator provided College membership statistics for the period of April 8, 2013 to August 3, 2016, which included the distribution of apprentices by region.

### **9.2 Red Seal Program Update**

It was reported that new Red Seal examinations have been sent out for a jurisdictional peer review. The Program Coordinator will be seeking representatives of the trade to participate in a workshop to consider the comments from the jurisdictional review and make a final decision on any changes that may need to be made.

The workshop to develop a new Red Seal Occupational Standard (RSOS) for the trade of Landscape Horticulturalist is on January 15-20, 2017. Employees, employers and instructors are involved in this process to develop the occupational standard, which blends the tasks identified in the National Occupational Analysis (the tasks performed in a trade) and defines performance expectations (in what manner and how these are performed). This workshop is part of the harmonization initiative that began in 2013.

## **10. CAAT (Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology) Update**

M. Pascoe provided a brief update on the Fanshawe College Horticultural programs. It was reiterated that while the diploma programs are successful, the apprenticeship program is not sustainable. The issues are with the current system, the lack of awareness of the program by employers and, as mentioned previously, employers not releasing apprentices to go to school until late in the season, all the hurdles, the cumbersome process to get apprentices registered, and that the system does not allow an apprentice to register for the in-school program on short notice, even when a seat becomes available in the program. There are 36 students that will be starting the diploma program, while there are tentatively 11 apprentices registered. Twelve apprentices are required in order for the program to run or be viable.

## **11. Industry Update**

Alex Gibson reported on Landscape Ontario's (LO) group sponsorship pilot project in the Eastern Region. It is being offered as a service to members and non-members of LO. LO is taking on the responsibilities of being a sponsor to assist employers, particularly smaller employers, to take on

apprentices, as well as help them navigate the administrative process. The pilot has been successful in getting apprentices signed up. It was mentioned that a flow chart was prepared to help guide apprentices through the registration process. It was further noted that employers respond best to being contacted directly, particularly during the busy season from May to October, when they may rarely read their mail. This one-on-one approach to advertise the program also helps as they can be guided through the process, gain an understanding of the merits of the program, and in turn become more willing to release the apprentice in order to participate in in-school training.

J. Hicks reported that LO is seeking data that would assist it in understanding who its target audience should be in order to increase the number of apprentices in the Horticultural Technician program. The Program Coordinator advised that since the trade is a voluntary trade, the College only has data on current apprentices as they are required to be members of the College. There is limited information on the number of journeypersons, and generally these are individuals who have recently written their Certification of Qualification (C of Q) examination and, as such, have paid a membership fee. There is no requirement for these individuals to continue to be a member of the College after their annual membership fee expires.

The Trade Board had a lengthy discussion about the viability and sustainability of the apprenticeship program. M. Pascoe reported that Fanshawe College puts a significant amount of resources, time and energy into ensuring that the apprenticeship program is maintained. The Trade Board discussed and theorized about why the industry is not supporting apprenticeship.

## **12. Succession Planning and Recruitment**

S. Harvey advised that she will be resigning from the Trade Board as she is taking on a new position as Executive Director of Landscape Nova Scotia and Landscape Newfoundland & Labrador. It was noted that S. Harvey is still working with her company in Ontario. S. Harvey was asked to become a resource to the Committee as required.

The Trade Board requested that N. Blackburn be removed as a member of Trade Board as she has not attended the last three meetings. With these changes noted, this led to a discussion by the Trade Board on the need to recruit new members. In addition, the Trade Board elected R. Rogers as Vice-Chair of the Trade Board, replacing N. Blackburn.

## **13. Next Scheduled Meeting**

The next meeting of the Trade Board is scheduled for March 10, 2017 at the Enercare Centre, Exhibition Place, Toronto.

## **14. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

“Richard Rogers”

Richard Rogers, Acting Chair

March 10, 2017

Date

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<sup>1</sup> Recording Officer