

**Meeting of the Atlantic Regional Council Finance Committee
March 7-8, 2024**

The Atlantic Council Finance Committee held their first meeting of the cycle in person and virtually.

Members in attendance were:

Darlene Bembridge, chair

Kim Asling-Ings

Brian Oldford

Katie Murphy-Langille, staff advisor

Below are the three agenda items that were discussed over the day and a half.

1. Outstanding Claims

The PSAC travel policy Section 2.2.2 states that claims must be submitted within 90 working days which is also referenced on page 9 of the Atlantic Regional Council Toolkit. It was noted that many claims in the region go unsubmitted for months and often times longer, up to and including years.

The finance committee wants to create awareness that events in the members expense portal (MEP) become dormant after 90 working days and the event must be reactivated by both the finance officer in Ottawa and the finance officer (EA) in the region and after that time the event only remains open for 7 days for the member(s) to submit their claim.

By not adhering to the 90 workday claim submission, not only are the 3-year convention budgets affected, but allocation within the director's constituency budgets are impacted as well. Additionally, it creates more administrative work for both the finance branch and the regional office which impacts current workload priorities. This work equates to spending members dollars on chasing claims when the onus should be on the membership to submit claims on time.

Due to the fact many members are not adhering to the 90 workday time frames to submit claims, the Executive Office in consultation with the AEC will be developing a clearer policy around claim submission.

As regional council directors, we should be leading by example and adhering to PSAC's policies, regulations etc.

2. Regulation on Directors Funds

A discussion on directors' funds took place in regard to allocation and accountability. During this discussion the committee reviewed and updated a previous regulation on Other Expenses and drafted a new regulation on Directors Expenses. The regulations outlined below will be discussed

and voted on separately. Both of these regulations are linked directly to the 2023-2026 Budget Cycle.

REGULATION 1

OTHER EXPENSES POLICY

1.Application

This regulation applies to Regional Council Other Expenses. It will assist in covering costs that do not have a specific budget line. Council members attending an event may request funding for two (2) costs noted in 2.1.3.

The 3-year convention budget determines the allocation for the Other Expense budget line as is to be used within the 3-year cycle.

2.Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Access to Other Expenses

2.1.1 Requests to access Other Expenses can be sent via email to the REVP, the Executive Assistant to the REVP, and the Regional Political Communications Officer.

2.1.2 The request must include the following: Event, location address, dates of event and estimated cost.

2.1.3 You may request two of the following costs if they are not reimbursed by any other organization.

- (i) transportation;
- (ii) accommodation;
- (iii) per diem;
- (iv) lost wages; or
- (v) registration fees

2.2 Council Directors who receive event funding shall submit a report to the REVP within sixty (60) days of the event. The report shall include the value of the event for them and/or other members and the topics covered.

REGULATION 2

DIRECTORS' EXPENSES

1. Application

This regulation applies to the Regional Council Directors Expenses. Annual funding has been approved at the Triennial Atlantic Regional Convention to facilitate the work of the Directors and to promote more visibility within the region.

The 3-year convention budget determines the allocation for the director's constituency budgets to be used within the 3-year cycle. This line item can be carried forward to the following year(s) within the 3-year budget cycle, but only ½ of the annual amount allocated per Director can be spent in a Convention year.

2. Role and Responsibilities

2.1 Access to Directors' Budgets

2.1.1 Requests to access directors' budgets are to be sent via email to the REVP, the Executive Assistant to the REVP, and the Regional Political Communications Officer.

2.1.2 The request must include the following: Event, location address, dates of event and estimated cost.

2.1.3 Each Director is responsible for tracking their specific budget in a google document provided by the REVP's office. The document must include the estimated cost of activity and once the claim is submitted, updated with the actual cost.

2.1.4 The REVP may deny requests to attend future events if claims are not submitted within the 90-workday period, for the previous events attended.

2.1.5 For air travel, all requests must be made through the Executive Assistant to the REVP. However, for hotel arrangements, please make those personal reservations, if you are able, under a standard room type and claim your expenses on the portal.

2.2 Director's Visibility Tools

2.2.1 The following costs not associated with attending events will come from the directors' budgets once within a 3-year budget cycle.

(i) One optional piece of union made PSAC clothing for visibility purposes coordinated by the REVPs office.

(ii) Business cards, if required, ordered by the REVPs office.

(iii) One headset, in order to protect the health & safety of simultaneous interpreters. If requested, will be ordered by the REVPs office for your participation in PSAC virtual meetings.

3. Convention Budget Review

The budget that was adopted at the 2023 Atlantic Convention was reviewed. The largest change in this budget was the Directors Expense and Other Expense line items and the regulations have been clarified as noted above.

Also discussed was the REVP allotment/promotional items budget line, which is \$3,000 over the current budget cycle. General discussion on what items should potentially be acquired for this cycle to allow for member visibility. The Atlantic Zaman Graphic was purchased (colourful graphic identifying all 4 Atlantic provinces) and the committee felt it should be used on future PSAC promo items. If anyone has any suggestions for promo ideas, you may let the REVP office know for their consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Members of the finance committee