

## BRIEFING NOTE

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Executive Committee

**DATE:** December 1, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Draft 2026 Budget

☒ For Decision

☐ For Information

☐ Monitoring Report

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**Purpose:**

To review and approve the College's 2026 operating budget.

**Background:**

The College's operating budget provides a forecast of revenue against operating expenses for the coming fiscal year, presented in an income statement format. The budget for each account line is estimated based on:

- Fiscal year end cost projections
- Actual figures at October 31, and the account variances to the 2025 budget
- Five-year historical averages and expense trends
- Vendor work orders and quotes for planned and anticipated projects and initiatives
- Fixed costs (based on current contracts)
- Estimates for Board/Committee meetings and activities
- 2025 College statistics (number of Registrants, Students, etc.)
- Projected 2026 statistics (anticipates membership numbers)
- Contingencies for operating activity (IT, Cybersecurity, Equipment)

**For Consideration:**

Several proposed budget items differ from the 2025 fiscal year budget:

- The College works with an investment advisor to secure the best competitive rates for our investments considering current financial market trends. This proactive approach allowed us to lock in a favorable interest rate before the anticipated Bank of Canada interest rate cut, extending the investment for another year at 2.45%-3.04%. Projected investment income also reflects the fact that operating funds not allocated to investments have been transferred to a high-interest savings account to safely maximize income for the College.
- Registered Opticians revenue is projected based on increased fee of 2.5% in 2026
- Projected revenue for the new Inactive Class has been estimated based on 2025 number of inactive registrants with a 5% buffer, as we lack comparative data.

- The budget for Board meeting expenses is anticipating two in-person meetings in June and December, respectively, while all other meetings will remain virtual.
- The costs associated with strategic planning sessions are no longer accounted for as this is an event that occurs every three years
- General Operational costs have been updated to accurately reflect certain recurring expenses that had previously been captured as one-time expenses.

**Public Interest Considerations:**

The Committee should evaluate whether the proposed budget will sufficiently support the College in fulfilling its public interest mandate. Attention should be given to whether the College is allocating sufficient resources to the College's core functions: registration, investigations, etc. In addition, the Board should be satisfied that the College has allocated funds toward core operational functions such as adequate staffing, database management and strategic priorities.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Considerations:**

DEI considerations involve budgeting and allocating resources for DEI training and strategic initiatives. These include initiatives aimed at ensuring DEI is built into all policies and processes at the COO, and that registrants are supported in providing culturally safe care to their patients. The Board should assess the funding dedicated to public awareness, training and DEI initiatives to ensure adequate funding has been allocated.

**Risk Management Considerations:**

The budget is aimed at ensuring that considerations are being put in place for possible contingencies that have not been captured while funds are distributed in a way that the college can respond to internal and external risks without affecting core activities. The budget allocates funds for insurance to address potential litigation risks, along with a contingency reserve to manage unexpected operational expenses.

**Recommendations/Action Required:**

To approve the 2026 budget as recommended by the Executive Committee.

		Approved 2025 Budget	2025 Year End Projections	FINAL 2026 Budget	2026 Notes: 2026 Optician Fee: \$ 1068 (based on new fee model) 2026 Student/Intern Fee: \$ (Sept 20 - Aug 21) 200 \$ (Sept 21 - Aug 22) 200
	Revenue				
	Interest & Investment Income	\$ 236,179	\$ 236,179	\$ 164,726	Annual income expected based on investments - Interest rate drop and further drops expected as prior year interest rate was as a result of high cost of Living post covid
	Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ 17,794	\$ 85,440	\$ 75,000	Miscellaneous revenue includes: CE Activity Accreditation requests Reg Com Review fees for reinstatements +3 yrs Replacement certificate and ID badges Deficient QA portfolio fees (based on historical avg) Peer Assessment Fees, Application Fees, Status change fees, Discipline
	Rent Receivable	\$ 39,185	\$ 40,929	\$ 39,185	Rent received for shared office space from CRTO starting October 2024
	Registered Optician Revenue	\$ 3,576,735	\$ 3,592,560	\$ 3,564,450	CURRENT 2023: 3216, 2024: 3247, 2025: 3431 - include percentage renewal Budget 2026 3400 - 95% renewals and 250 prorated. Inactive class included in 2025 revenue
	Inactive Registered Optician Revenue	\$ -	\$ 87,123	\$ 84,668	2025: 257 - Renewal at 95% based on other renewals
	Intern Revenue	\$ 30,000	\$ 31,000	\$ 30,000	Intern revenue now one off for 3 years
	TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 3,899,893	\$ 4,073,231	\$ 3,958,029	

	<b>Honorarium &amp; Expenses for Board and Committee Members</b>				
	Board	\$ 94,610	\$ 85,000	\$ 96,523	2026 Prediction: 4.25 Virtual Days (Jan - 2 Day, Mar, Oct, DEI Training), 3.5 Full Day in Person (Jun & DEC)
	Discipline	\$ 21,925	\$ 5,000	\$ 11,419	2026 Prediction: 5 Hearing Days (5 person panel, full day virtual), 8 decision writing days (1 member x 4 meetings)
	Executive	\$ 7,988	\$ 4,373	\$ 5,288	2026 Prediction: 6 Virtual Half Days, including review committee
	Fitness to Practice	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	Governance	\$ 4,425	\$ 2,845	\$ 4,425	2026 Prediction: 4 Virtual Half Days
	Investigations, Complaints & Reports	\$ 12,263	\$ 9,500	\$ 10,663	2026 Prediction: 2 Virtual Half Days, 10 Virtual Half Day Panels
	Screening Committee	\$ 4,875	\$ 2,500	\$ 4,875	2026 Prediction : 2 virtual full days interview 0.25 virtual day training only budhet for all training and just 4 person panel
	Patient Relations	\$ 2,213	\$ 1,200	\$ 2,213	2026 Prediction: 2 Virtual Half Days
	Quality Assurance	\$ 20,138	\$ 19,000	\$ 20,000	2026 Prediction :6 half day virtual and Accreditation Panel Review of 157 Accreditation requests
	Registration Committee	\$ 11,063	\$ 6,550	\$ 11,063	2026 Prediction: 10 Virtual Half Days
	Clinical Practice Committee	\$ 5,531	\$ 2,500	\$ 4,425	2026 Prediction: 4 Virtual Half Days
	<b>TOTAL HONORARIUM &amp; EXPENSES</b>	\$ 185,029	\$ 138,468	\$ 170,892	

	<b>Operations &amp; Administration</b>				
	Audit - Financial	\$ 17,350	\$ 20,873	\$ 18,218	Confirmed with auditors for 2025 Audit
	Communications				
	Public Awareness Initiatives	\$ 86,002	\$ 60,000	\$ 105,226	Social Media, Google Ad Campaigns, SEO, Blogs, OCC Sponsorship, Videos, CAG Surveys, Engagement/Outreach
	COO Communications & Engagement Activities	\$ 8,192	\$ 5,000	\$ 13,192	Annual Report, COO promotional products for Registrants, French Translations
	Consulting				
	General	\$ 34,325	\$ 55,000	\$ 38,000	Board Facilitator, Governance Consulting (Registrar's Review Process), Bookkeeping Consulting,
	Public Relations/ Government Relations	\$ 84,379	\$ 56,015	\$ 43,000	Media Training Chair + VC Government Relations Consultants Counsel
	Jurisprudence/Professional Growth CE Development	\$ 24,000	\$ -	\$ 24,000	Jurisprudence modules, Professional Judgement & Pre-Election Module, DEI CE , DEI Examiner, Assessor, Interviewer Training
	IT Consulting	\$ 150,475	\$ 77,100	\$ 100,167	IT Project Manager, Project Management Staff
	Database	\$ 121,870	\$ 120,000	\$ 100,271	Projects: includes (QA) - IDMS Q1, PPA, IQA development, PPA customization and ongoing maintenance (REG) - Online applications, new fields to reflect regulatory changes, database clean up, renewals, regulatory changes Contingency
	Board & Staff Education & Development	\$ 60,000	\$ 32,000	\$ 52,990	Training: Facilitation Coaching, Difficult Coversation/Deescalation Training, DEI Training Sexual Abuse Training, Management Training, ICR orientation, Right Touch Training HPRO Discipline training/ Governance Training, SOAR Contingency and Board expenses/ Board Mentorship PM Trainings (New Staff), Decision Writing Training, Cybersecurity Training for Board/Staff,
	Strategic Planning	\$ 135,086	\$ 85,717	\$ -	N/A

	Expert Report (ICRC/Disc)	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000	2026: Estimate 3 reports
	External Relations	\$ 56,899	\$ 35,678	\$ 21,579	Sponsorships and events , National meeting, AOE/OOA (in person), Tradeshow booth space, student events - Nacor now 1 in person from 2
	General Operational	\$ 171,922	\$ 225,000	\$ 209,915	Capital Expenses (Computer Hardware - replacement of older laptops and surface pros),Parking, Insurance, Storage, Office Supplies, Bank Fees, Credit Payment Processing Charges, Subscription Renewals (Zoom, QBO, Adobe, Doodle, Survey), 5% Misc
	IT Requirements				
	Computer Server/ Maintenance	\$ 62,538	\$ 60,100	\$ 74,839	Beanfield, ITS, Envoke, Contingency 15%
	Database Hosting & User Licensing	\$ 56,808	\$ 56,000	\$ 60,074	ASI Contract
	Website Updates/ Maintenance	\$ 15,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 15,000	Website maintenance, AI enhancement, potential changes & ASI
	Investigator	\$ 80,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 80,000	Based on current trends, 10 anticipated for 2026/ Includes investigagtion of UAP
	Legal	\$ 140,000	\$ 92,500	\$ 120,000	External legal support for ICRC, Independent legal council ILC, Unauthorized practice proceedings and <u>General Legal counsel</u>
	Extraneous Discipline	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,800	Court reporter for hearing days - 4 anticipated
	Office Equipment	\$ 9,391	\$ 9,391	\$ 9,570	Copier rental costs + 5% contingency
	Postage	\$ 8,500	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,500	Neopost, Registered Mail, Courier also considering startegic planning
	Printing	\$ 18,000	\$ 16,500	\$ 12,000	Certificates, Registration Items

	Quality Assurance - Portfolio Hard Costs				
	Consulting Fees	\$ 3,000	\$ -	\$ 3,000	
	Peer Assessors				
	Assessment Training	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,500	10 assessors @ 150 per day
	Assessment Costs	\$ 12,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 12,000	Estimate 40 at cost @\$300
	Rent	\$ 266,610	\$ 259,861	\$ 272,346	Monthly lease agreement includes base rent, operating costs, and storage. 10% contingency for increases effective Sept 2026.
	Salaries & Benefits	\$ 1,860,162	\$ 1,836,656	\$ 1,954,331	Based on Salary Projection
	Benefits	\$ 120,000	126,000.00	\$ 120,000	Based on Negotiated Costs - Higher number of staff - check invoice in november for quote
	CPP Employer	\$ 83,316	74,867.55	\$ 84,450	
	EHT Expense	\$ 33,495	29,947.02	\$ 33,147	
	EI Employer	\$ 28,614	28,614.00	\$ 28,713	
	Salaries	\$ 1,505,273	1,497,351.00	\$ 1,588,827	
	Pregnancy/Maternity leave contingent	\$ 30,000	45,913.08	\$ 60,000	Usage depends on staff needs for parental or maternity leave - Plan for 2
	Vision Care Plan	\$ 4,200	2,500.00	\$ 4,200	
	RRSP Contribution	\$ 85,264	77,376.55	\$ 94,994	
	Seat Fees	\$ 14,389	\$ 14,389	\$ 27,300	NACOR, CLEAR Membeship, LSO, CNAR,Staff Seat Fees,HPRO
	Board + Comm Payroll Expenses	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 8,500	Employer contributions for board and appointed honoraria (EI & CPP)
	Strategic Initiatives - linked to COO Strategic Plan				
	Board Initiatives	\$ 87,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 90,000	Board Team Development , Indigenous Cultural Safety and Humility Project, Public Education Resources, Community Engagement Projects, UAP Practice
	Administration Initiatives	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 8,500	Staff engagement Budget , Department team building, Gift cards
	Telephones	\$ 8,570	\$ 8,500	\$ 10,508	Ring Central, Rogers, 15% contingency for possible increases
	<b>TOTAL OPERATIONS &amp; ADMIN</b>	\$ 3,644,268	\$ 3,403,693	\$ 3,558,325	
	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	\$ 3,829,297	\$ 3,542,160	\$ 3,729,216	
	<b>SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR YEAR</b>	\$ 70,597	\$ 531,071	\$ 228,812	