

## THE BUDGET COMMITTEE

### MORE THAN JUST NUMBERS

From day one, BCPVPA has had a history of member involvement to ensure transparency of its finances. This is reflected in budget development, which is a part of the larger strategic planning process. This year, the Association has been engaged in the strategic planning process for the upcoming three budget years: 20/21 to 22/23. Strategic input has been gathered from the BCPVPA Board of Directors and staff, through a survey of members, and through feedback from our educational partners, Advisory Committees, and Chapter Council representatives.

Since the environment BCPVPA works within changes continually, the plan is monitored and altered as new challenges and opportunities appear. After a plan review in January, staff develops an operational plan that outlines activities, responsibilities, measures of success and resources that are needed to work towards BCPVPA's goals and objectives. At this point the budget process begins, *as illustrated in the diagram below.*

Based on the operational plan and the Association's core services, staff develops a draft budget for the upcoming year. This budget is then sequentially reviewed by the Budget Committee, the BCPVPA Board – along with the Budget Committee's recommendations and advice – and Chapter Council representatives prior to the final BCPVPA Board approval.

The Budget Committee fulfills two important functions:

1. To review the proposed budget prepared by staff, and prepare advice and recommendations to accompany the budget when presented to the BCPVPA Board; and

2. To ensure alignment between the budget and the Association's strategic plan.

A typical Budget Committee meeting consists of much more than just ensuring that the numbers add up. First, the Committee is informed about the status of the Association's three-year strategic plan. Goals and objectives are thoroughly reviewed, along with plans for the upcoming year. Members are given the opportunity to ask questions to help determine the needed resources. Committee members are then led through the draft budget, with explanations about funding included in the various line items and how they tie into the core services and strategic objectives. This is not just about the numbers. The presentation tells the story of the Association's priorities and plans. It increases the members' depth of understanding of BCPVPA's activities so that Committee members are better prepared to provide advice and recommendations to the BCPVPA Board, and to ensure that strategic activities and core services are adequately resourced.

Recommendations are made about anything that has an impact on the budget, including finance policies and procedures. Recommendations have been made related to the Association's travel allowances, accommodation policies, reserves, and funding to support activities.

The Board of Directors relies upon the Budget Committee's commitment in thoroughly reviewing and questioning any budget line item. It is an essential step in the budget process.

The Committee meets once a year, and is comprised of two BCPVPA Directors and a minimum of five other members. Committee members can serve up to three consecutive two-year terms. Because BCPVPA's activities are designed for diverse needs that encompass urban or rural; elementary, middle, secondary or district; and new or seasoned members, the Association strives to ensure that the Budget Committee reflects this diversity. If members are interested in being part of the Committee, look for opportunities advertised in a Fall edition of eNews.

Review of  
current  
strategic  
plan

Staff  
drafts  
an operating  
plan and budget

Budget  
Committee  
reviews staff's  
proposed budget  
and prepares  
advice and  
recommendations

Board reviews  
staff's proposed  
budget, along  
with Budget  
Committee's  
advice and  
recommendations

Proposed  
budget is  
presented to  
Chapter Council  
for comments

Board approves  
budget and  
operating plan