

February 3, 2025

From: Benjamin Miller, Staff Lawyer/Policy Advisor, Nonprofit Law Ontario, ONN

To: Vince Brennan, Executive Director, OAAS

Re: Evaluation of Nonprofit Law Ontario Legal Education Support to OAAS Members

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It has been a pleasure to support the members of the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies through the transition to Ontario's Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA). Through it all, we:

- Developed a [customized ONCA transition workbook](#)
- Delivered 14 workshops (32.5 teaching hours) reaching 399 (non-unique) participants
- Provided 52 original clips on a wide range of legal topics relating to ONCA and the AHOA
- Saved 70% of participating organizations at least an estimated \$152,019 in legal fees.
- For approximately 75% of participants, workshops saved time and enhanced organizational effectiveness.

Below please find a more detailed overview and evaluation of our work together.

Workshops Delivered

Date	Topic	Teaching Hours	# of Participants
Feb 22, 2024	"Bring Your Own Bylaws" (BYOB) ONCA Compliance Working Session (in-person)	5	58
Mar 4, 2024	"Bring Your Own Bylaws" (BYOB) ONCA Compliance Working Session	4	80
Mar 14, 2024	"Bring Your Own Bylaws" (BYOB) ONCA Compliance Working Session	2	65
Mar 21, 2024	"Bring Your Own Bylaws" (BYOB) ONCA Compliance Working Session	2	45
Mar 28, 2024	Open Q&A Town Hall Session	2	8
April 25, 2024	Open Q&A Town Hall Session	2	8
Jun 27, 2024	Open Q&A Town Hall Session	1.5	8
August 1, 2024	Open Q&A Town Hall Session	2	7
August 19, 2024	Conflict of Interest Deep Dive Session	2	23
August 29, 2024	Open Q&A Town Hall Session	2	6
September 19, 2024	Discipline Members and directors Deep Dive Session	2	18
September	Open Q&A Townhall Session	2	8

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November 19, 2024	We Missed the ONCA Deadline: What Now?	2	29
Jan 14, 2025	Risk Management	2	36
Toral		32.5	399

Clips Delivered

Based on our recordings of the working sessions, we were able to edit and extract 52 videos consisting of our explanation of the BYOB workbook as well as responses to a wide range of legal questions that emerged in the discussion periods. These clips are designed to operate as stand-alone resources that can provide long-lasting value on your website and other digital platforms.

Evaluation of Workshops

A post-workshop survey was provided to participants. The survey contained identical questions in all cases. We received 60 responses.

Question	Less	About the Same	More
Compared to before you took the workshop, how likely are you now to pay for a lawyer's help with the issues discussed in the workshop?	34 (57%)	19 (32%)	7 (12%)
As a result of this workshop, has the amount of work you might pay a lawyer to do changed?	37 (62%)	19 (32%)	4 (6%)

42 respondents (70%) indicated they were either less likely to pay a lawyer at all or the amount of work they would give a lawyer had been reduced. Only 12 respondents (20%) answered not being affected at all. 4 respondents (7%) were both more likely to use a lawyer and the amount of work they would give the lawyer increased.

If we estimate that 70% of participants saved money.¹ Given the complexity of the interactions between Ontario's Not-for-Profit Corporations Act and the Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act, we can confidently assume an hourly rate for at least a lawyer of

¹ Note that although the number of participants does not account for repeat attendees, as the workshops dealt with different legal issues, if the respondents reported that as a result of that particular workshop they were less likely to go to a lawyer or to give them less work, then we can say there was a further incremental cost saving.

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intermediate seniority (\$300).² Let us assume that the savings from being less likely to hire a lawyer (57% of participants) as being at least 2 hours worth of savings (\$600)³ and that reduced work (13% of participants) is at least 1 hour less of work (\$300). Based on these conservative assumptions, we come to a total cost savings of \$152,019. **We therefore have good reason to believe that funding of ONCA supports for OAAS resulted in at least a six-fold cost savings for ag and hort org sector as a whole.**

As a result of this workshop, my organization...	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree
Saved time	43 (72%)	6 (10%)	11 (18%)
Will become more effective	46 (76%)	4 (7%)	10 (17%)

Approximately, 3 out of every 4 respondents told us workshops both saved their organization time and enhanced organizational effectiveness. Approximately 84% of respondents told us that it either saved their organization time or enhanced organizational effectiveness.

Participants were also asked what if anything they liked about the workshops. Answers consistently repeated the themes of valuing clarity, thoroughness, the workbook provided, and the opportunity to ask questions. Here are a sample of responses:

- “Very well presented. Easy to understand. Informative. Good Resources.”
- “I thought Benjamin was a great host. Presented information clearly and briefly (no long drawn out explanation) but exactly what was required. He also encouraged follow up questions.”
- “Benjamin always runs a comprehensive, professional and knowledgeable session. Thank you for getting him to do a specific agricultural society session.”
- “Amount of information presented will help reduce the effort required to update bylaws”
- “The workbook is very helpful and will allow my organization to get the building blocks for our bylaws and articles back in order”

As OAAS and OMAFRA look to future legal supports for the sector, going forward, these answers clearly demonstrate the value of:

- Live resources that include the opportunity for questions and discussion
- Developing tailored information resources like workbooks to the specific needs of ag and hort organizations
- Prioritizing plain language but detailed educational approaches.

² See Law Society of Ontario Fee Schedule. Note these rates are generally lower than the actual market rate for legal services.

<https://lso.ca/about-lso/careers/working-with-the-law-society/call-for-expressions/fee-schedule>

³ This is a highly conservative assumption since we were anecdotally hearing that ONCA transitions especially in the last year were costing between \$5,000 and 10,000 each.