# Transcript of video interview with Dan Oldfield, candidate for President

Catherine Schellenberg: Today I'm speaking with Dan Oldfield, candidate for president. We have five questions for you today.

First question, Dan. **Given that the Board of Directors is the governing body of the PNA, describe how you will lead the board through the priorities, changes and opportunities you've identified for the association?**

**Dan Oldfield:** Yeah, well, my view of the board is that I'm one among equals. So leading the board, I think, is helping the board come to mutual conclusions of what's important to us. And then once that's done, to hold each other accountable for accomplishing what we said we intend to accomplish. During every year, every term. So that's basically how I will go about it. It's what I've done historically. Nothing is done by one person, whether it's the president of the Union or the president of the organization or president of a company, you need other people, you need team players, you need everyone involved. So the key is agreeing on what you're going to do, and then holding each other accountable from my perspective.

Catherine Schellenberg: Thank you, Dan. **Second question for you today, since recruitment has been identified as a priority, what would you change about our current structure or practices to support recruitment and how can we leverage our recent successes to encourage recruitment?**

**Dan Oldfield:** Well, let me start off from the back end of that. We have had recent successes and we've had them because we're touching on things that matter to people. So the secret with recruitment is to make sure that you matter, that you're relevant, and that includes your priorities, that includes leadership, that includes everyone who is involved in this. So I think we have to continue to look for those opportunities and to seize upon them, by the nature of what they are. I don't believe that you contrive these things, I believe that you look at what matters and in the case of the PNA, what really matters are things like pensions, not just pension surpluses, but the overall health of the pension, health benefits, those kinds of things. And creating that community, the ability to talk to each other, exchange our concerns, our thoughts, our memories. So all of those play into being relevant and I think we are doing some of the right things now. Obviously some areas are succeeding more than others and what we want to try to do is, I think, get everybody up to the same speed, throw as much as we can in the way of resources at that, including effective communication. Making sure that we're gathering in the right places and finally, that people are committed to the mission of recruitment.

We have to grow the organization, we have to grow it for a couple of reasons. One is, you know, a simple fact is that we lose members every year, we lose about 200 every year. So just to stay even, to stay where we are, we have to get those. But that's not good enough. And I think one of the things that the whole surplus situation and the OSFI regulations have taught us is that we need numbers to impress the decision makers, to let people know that we're serious, that we actually do represent retirees, and it's not good enough to just say, well, you know, we need more than 50%. That's painfully obvious. We need a lot more than 50%, we do need 2/3 or 3/4 of all retirees being part of this association. It also makes us stronger in a sense that we have more potential. Contributors, one of the things about volunteer organizations is the work often falls on too few hands, so recruitment serves the purpose of refueling the organization and making sure that we have people that are that are ready to be engaged. So yes, it's a significant task. I think we've had successes. We actually know the strength of one-on-one.

The other part, of course, is improving our relationship with CBC and when I say improving it, improving it in regards to the whole recruitment effort. We know there are, you know, some 5000 individuals out there that could be members of the organization. Our challenge is getting to them, finding out where they are. It’s a lot different than being in the workplace where you can go and talk to somebody. We have to actually find them. Privacy laws have deterred some of those efforts. So having the CBC and pension administration help us in terms of outreach to these individuals, without violating any sort of confidentiality, is going to be key as well. So we know how to do it. We just have to do it.

Catherine Schellenberg: Excellent. Thank you, Dan. **Third question for you, what efforts are needed to unify our association geographically, linguistically, culturally, regardless of the positions we previously held with CBC?**

**Dan Oldfield:** There there's enough community there. I would say that the question implies that there isn't unity now, and I and I, and I would probably take issue with that. I think there is unity, and I think it's unity around those key elements of we're all in the same pension plan. We all should have the same concerns about the security of our pension, the strength of our pension. We have access to the same benefit plan, health benefit plan. So the issues themselves for example are pretty common regardless of whether you're on the West Coast, the East Coast, whether you speak French or you speak English, whether you were a technician or an administrator or a journalist, I think that that the community, being CBC, is brought together by those things in retirement that really and fundamentally matter. You know, the fact that I was a reporter in my time is really unimportant, in the sense that I was part of the greater CBC family and we have a lot of shared experiences. I always start with the view that that, that we are standing on shoulders, that the reason the CBC is as great as the CBC is and has been and can be even greater in the future is because of the people who came before us. A lot of people go into organizations thinking everything that happened before them was wrong or not good enough. I kind of take an opposite view. I think that there were a lot of good decisions. I think there are a lot of opportunities there for us to come together and not just socially, but I think come together around the issues, and we have seen some of that in this whole surplus discussion and the OSFI process. So I'm optimistic about that. I think there already is a high degree of unity among the PNA family, if you will, the PNA group. I think we need to build on that. And I think we have lots to offer. We have, we have lots that is relevant to retirees. I think one of the jobs we have is to just remind the CBC that it has a tremendous asset in the PNA. You know, that group of retirees are probably the strongest supporters of public broadcasting in this country, can be brought together for the good. There's a lot of good memory, there's a lot of a lot of really smart people in our organization and it's something to tap into. So I think I would agree that we need to make sure that people can feel together and can feel united. But I think we've taken a lot of the right steps and I think we're building on a solid foundation.

Catherine Schellenberg: Excellent, thank you, Dan. **Now you touched on this next question in one of your previous responses. How will you develop or improve our relationship with the CBC?**

**Dan Oldfield:** We've begun work. It's, you know, I when I was with the Guild, we embarked on a very, I think very important mission, which was to improve and develop the relationship between CBC management and the Union, and you know that exercise demonstrated the need to understand people for who they are and what they care about and even though our interests may diverge at certain times, we still overall have many of the same interests. And I would say that you know a lot of people we are talking about are going to be pensioners one day too, and we have within our organization a past President, we have officers of the corporation, who are part of our organization, who know how important it is that we create a single voice and speak with that voice.

So I think it's a conversation at a time, I think it's about sitting down, it's about mutual respect, it's about working it. There's no magic wand to this. I think notwithstanding the arbitration and the sort of bitterness around some of that, the process we've gone through in terms of satisfying the consultation and support around this distribution of pension surplus has been extremely helpful in building some trust. It's certainly built avenues of effective communication. So I'm feeling good about it. We have lots of work to do and it’s something that's not going to happen organically, it's something that has to happen with direct intent. You know, I think that's something I will certainly be focusing on and it is, I think not a unique role for the President, but it's an important role for whoever would be President of this organization.

Catherine Schellenberg**: Finally Dan, why do you think you'll make a difference if you're elected?**

**Dan Oldfield:** I hope I make a difference, I mean, but I, as I said earlier, this isn't this is the situation of one person making differences, it's about everybody making a difference. You know, I'm a firm believer that the role of leaders is to create more leaders. And so I hope that I can accomplish that. I hope I can bring a sort of steadying hand on things that we run efficiently, that we communicate effectively among ourselves and with our members. I think my experience, you know, both as a journalist and for 25 years as a lead negotiator and senior staff rep for the Guild has provided me with a certain set of skills that lend themselves well to this position.

I thought very hard about whether, you know, we're not getting any younger and committing to a three-year term, and I don't take for granted. And so I think if you're going to do it, you're going to do it and take it seriously. I think I have, certainly I have the basic tools to do the job I believe, and I think I will make a difference, but I won't make a difference because I'm me or I act alone, we’ll make a difference because we set clear agendas, that we come up with plans to deliver on those agendas, and that we hold each other accountable for the tasks we take on and not in some arbitrary or vague way, but in very specific measurable way.

And so that's what I will be focusing on if I'm selected as president of the organization. I’m looking forward to the challenges, because I think we can have a fairly exciting future. We also have to be ready to take on, there's threats all over the place, you know, defined benefit pensions are sometimes, you know, begrudgingly remain in place and we just have to make sure that we're doing all we can to prove the benefit and preserve the benefits of those. So yeah, I think I'll make a difference, but I won't do it all by myself. I won't be doing it all by myself.

Catherine Schellenberg: Dan, thank you very much for taking the time to speak with us today.

**Dan Oldfield:** Pleasure.