

**DRAFT RECORD OF MEETING  
B.C. REGIONAL COUNCIL CONFERENCE CALL  
HELD MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2015 AT 6 PM**

**In Attendance:**

Bob Jackson, REVP-B.C. (Chair)  
Jennifer Chieh Ho, Racially Visible  
Paul Croes, Pride  
Parveen Deepak, Northeast B.C.  
Bert Farwell, North Vancouver Island  
Benilde Gomes, Northwest B.C.  
Linda Harding, Health & Safety  
Jennifer Horsley, Metro Vancouver  
Nic Humphreys, National Officers  
Ruby Langan, Aboriginal

Trish Martin, South Vancouver Island  
Carolyn McGillivray, Southern Interior  
Vanessa Miller, Youth  
Jamey Mills, Alternate REVP-B.C.  
Barry Tchir, Metro Vancouver  
Virginia Vaillancourt, Women's  
Ken Waldron, MWD  
Crystal Warner, Metro Vancouver  
Susan Yaciw, Southern Interior

**Regrets:**

Johann Ackermann, West Fraser Valley  
Terri Lee, Metro Vancouver

Antony Paller, East Fraser Valley  
Jim Sidel, DCL and SEE

**Staff:**

Patrick Bragg, Political Communications Officer

Kristin Schnider, EA to the REVP-B.C.

Bob Jackson called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

**FEDERAL ELECTION AND MEMBER TO MEMBER CAMPAIGN DEBRIEF**

Bob Jackson began the discussion by commenting that we are still in the early days with this new government, and there isn't a lot detail available at this time. Bob went on to acknowledge that while we may not have achieved our ultimate goal that we started with, we did accomplish our primary goal: to change the government. The recent election also brought about some stability with the election of a majority Liberal government.

Bob further elaborated that the Liberal Party made a lot of promises during the campaign period, including those contained in the letter from Prime Minister Designate Justin Trudeau to public servants. And if all these promises come to fruition the outlook is very positive. Bob went on to say that early discussions are beginning at the national level regarding the new government, and there's a general feel of cautious optimism at the NBoD. At this point, most Component Presidents are waiting to see who their Department Ministers will be so they can set up meetings and plan their courses of action.

Bob reported that PSAC National President Robyn Benson has already reached on to Prime Minister Designate Just Trudeau by letter, indicating that the PSAC is willing to work with the new government. Bob added that there are a number of things that members can do to support this work; Bob suggested that members could meet with their new MPs, particularly with those who are now part of the new government, and talk about the promises the Liberals made and when the government plans to act on them. The PSAC BC Region has established its collective 'big voice,' which should continue to be heard going forward.

Bob commented that personally he now has a Liberal MP in his riding, and Bob met with him immediately after the election. During that meeting, Bob spoke with MP Aldag about the promises the Liberals made regarding public services and the cuts made by the former Conservative Government.

Bob noted that his conversation with MP Aldag is a starting point, and he plans to continue checking in with his MP on the Liberal Government's progress going forward.

Bob then asked Patrick Bragg to report on the PSAC federal election campaign. Patrick first addressed the campaign from a national perspective, commenting on its success. Patrick noted that the campaign was well received by members. He added that members of the CLC had also commented to Patrick that it was a good campaign. In terms of statistics, Patrick provided that the national campaign did a lot of work on social media with 1.3M tweets, likes and shares on the campaign materials. The campaign's main video was viewed on YouTube and Facebook a combined total of 5.3M times. For comparison purposes, Patrick noted that the CLC's Better Choice campaign videos were typically shared 500,000 times each. So it's fair to say the PSAC video did significantly better in terms of engaging people.

Patrick went on to advise that the PSAC also contracted Environics to conduct some pre-election polling shortly before October 19. The results of that poll showed that:

- Almost 80% of respondents felt cuts to the federal public service would have a strong to moderate effect on the re-election prospects of the Conservative Government. Patrick commented that this shows that the PSAC and other federal public service unions were successful in raising the profile of federal public services over the last six months.
- Over 85% of respondents agreed that cuts to food inspection put Canadians at risk
- Almost 70% supported reopening the veterans affairs offices
- Nearly 70% of respondents viewed cuts to environmental monitoring a danger to the environment
- 60% of respondents agreed that defending our borders (i.e. increasing funding to CBSA and/or not making cuts to CBSA) was important.

It's clear that the work we did raising the public awareness on the cuts played a role in some of the commitments the Liberal Government made to public service workers, public service unions and to Canadians more generally. In particular, the Liberals promised to:

- Reopen the nine veterans affairs offices that were closed, including the offices in Kelowna and Prince George
- Reopen the Kitsilano Coast Guard Station
- Repeal parts of Bills C4, C59, and C10
- Repeal Bills 525 and 377

Patrick added that it will be our job to hold the Liberal Government accountable in terms of following through on these promises.

Patrick then addressed the Region's federal election plan. Patrick advised that activists, Locals members and Area Councils really stepped up and got involved. He added that it's safe to say this the most the Region has ever done around any election, particularly a federal election. Patrick then provided some regional statistics:

The member-to-member campaigns was active in several target ridings throughout the province, including Courtenay Alberni, South Okanagan-West Kootenay, North Island-Powell

River, Port Moody- Coquitlam, Surrey Newton, Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke, and Prince George-Peace River-Northern Rockies.

With the information received to date, there were 300 phone calls made to members, and 60 percent of those calls resulted direct conversations. During those conversations, members were asked to commit to voting, and the vast majority of members confirmed their intention to do so. Patrick added that this sentiment was further confirmed on the recent telephone town hall meeting (TTH) where 100% of the participants said they would vote on or before Oct. 19.

Again with the information received, Patrick advised that 400 doors had been knocked, with over 150 conversations occurring on the doorstep with members. Election materials were left at the remaining 250 members' homes. As with the phone conversation, the majority of the member that we reached confirmed that they would be voting, and that they would be voting 'A-B-C' and/or NDP.

Patrick reminded those on the call that the Regional Office is still waiting on information from the Southern Interior, Prince George and North Vancouver Island. Patrick stressed that it's critical that the membership lists that were sent out are returned to the RO so the statistics can be compiled and reported as required.

Patrick then conveyed his thanks to all those who worked on the member-to-member campaign or those who worked directly on NDP campaigns. Bob reiterated Patrick's comments, confirming that members deserve a lot of credit for all they were able to accomplish across the province: worksite plant gates, 'get out the vote' and membership appreciation events, phone banks, door-knocking, etc.

The Region's federal election plan included the recent TTH, and Patrick reported that it was – from his perspective – a good call. While the number of members who picked up the phone was lower than the previous bargaining TTH, the level of member engagement was higher. Members stayed on the call longer (or participated for the entire call) versus previous TTHs. Several member voicemails were also left after the call with question or requests for additional information. Patrick added that he did not receive any negative feedback regarding the TTH.

The Region's federal election plan also included a regional mail-out that was sent to PSAC BC members. The pamphlet sent out explained the importance of voting for change, what the PSACBC vote pledge campaign was and where to get more information on it (i.e. [www.psacbcvotes.ca](http://www.psacbcvotes.ca)), and how to vote in the federal election. Based on the responses received from members, the mail-out was well received. Patrick added that the REVP Office had received one written complaint via post expressed the opinion that it's not the PSAC's job to tell members how to vote.

On October 9 an email was also sent from REVP Bob Jackson to PSAC BC members. Within each email, the recipient's riding was identified; if the recipient was in a riding with an incumbent NDP candidate, the member was encouraged to vote for that named candidate. Those without incumbent NDP candidates were encouraged more generally to vote for the NDP. Patrick advised that he was a bit worried about how members would receive this message from the REVP. However, of the 4,600 emails sent only a dozen negative responses were received. The primary concern voiced in the negative responses was either (1) they didn't want the PSAC telling them how to vote, or (2) they planned on voting for the Conservative Party.

After further discussion, Paul Croes commented that members had worked very hard on a couple of the NDP campaigns in the target ridings. In particular he referenced Finn Donnelly's campaign, noting

that it wasn't the safe-seat it was initially made out to be. He was amazed what the member volunteers were able to accomplish in that riding. Paul went on to comment that he was floored by the number of people posting 'selfies' of themselves voting at polling stations on October 19 with the caption, "I'm voting for change." Based on social media posts alone, it appears that voter turnout was higher than in previous elections. Paul concluded his comments by stating that the number of members who got involved in this election was quite empowering, adding that we now need to convert that election focus to member engagement. All agreed with Paul's comments.

With respect to Treasury Board (TB) collective bargaining, Bob commented that it would be a tall order to expect the team to begin bargaining with the new government this December. However, the teams will be meeting together in Ottawa at the end of the month to talk about how we will approach the upcoming round. By that time, we will know who in the new government is leading the Treasury Board. We may also have some indication from the Employer in terms of how they may approach this round of negotiations. Bob added that he wasn't sure how this change in TB bargaining will impact CRA negotiations, which are still ongoing. He added that it will be interesting to see where bargaining goes.

Carolyn McGillivray then asked why the TB bargaining teams are meeting at the end of the month given that they will not be meeting with the Employer. Bob answered that the TB bargaining teams have not met since the early summer and they need a chance to reconnect. For the TC team, they have a new negotiator to meet with. Bob added that by the end of this month there may be some indication of where the government plans to go; teams will want to talk about a possible shift in priorities or strategy in light of the new government. Teams had already been scheduled to meet in Ottawa this December. However, given the change in government and the fact that teams will not be meeting with the Employer the meeting schedule has been scaled back to three days rather than the original five.

Paul Croes commented that with the new cabinet being unveiled this Wednesday, having the TB bargaining teams meet at the end of the month is very opportune. It sends a message to the new government that we haven't forgotten about bargaining.

Jennifer Chieh Ho then asked Patrick if he had heard anything else from the CLC in terms of next steps for political action and the provincial election. Patrick answered that the discussion had come up during the CLC Federal Election Working Group meeting. The group recognized that we need to build on the momentum with the PSAC membership and more generally in the labour movement regarding political action. They noted that while the provincial election isn't until 2017, the campaign starts now. We have to keep members engaged around politics and around political action. In terms of next steps, Patrick advised that the Provincial Election Working Group will be established through at the CLC through the BCFED's Standing Political Action Committee. As more information is available, Patrick will share it with the Regional Council.

#### **Columbia Institute and Partners in the Horn of Africa Fundraiser Dinner**

Bob Jackson advised that the REVP Office had been approached by some Affiliates and encouraged to purchase tickets to the upcoming fundraiser dinner in Vancouver on November 30. The dinner has been organized to raise funds for the Columbia Institute and the Partners in the Horn of Africa. The cost of a table of ten is \$750. Bob noted the dinner immediately follows the face-to-face Regional Council meeting, and it may be challenging for Regional Council in the Metro Vancouver area to attend. He added that he had forwarded the information to the DASH Committee Chair for her feedback, and Virginia had raised a few questions. Bob then asked Virginia to speak on her concerns.

Virginia advised that she was looking for some clarity on how the seats would be allocated to members if a table was purchased. She also wanted to know what would happen to seats that went unused, adding that it would be good if unused seats could be reallocated to the community. Bob answered that in the past similar dinner tickets have been allocated to members in good standing on a first-come, first-served basis through the Region's email distribution lists. However, there have been times when we've had some difficulty getting members to attend events and tickets have gone unused. Bob added that he liked the suggestion of reallocating any unused tickets to those in the community, and would look into the possibility with the event organizers.

Carolyn McGillivray commented that normally a request like this is accompanied by an analysis and recommendation from the full DASH Committee. Why wasn't the full DASH Committee solicited for their input? Virginia answered that while the full DASH Committee wasn't advised of this request ahead of the Regional Council conference call, she did take into consideration the Committee's aim to provide support to the local community and local organizations. She added that she wasn't able to find anything any additional information online with respect to how the Columbia Institute uses the funds in the community.

Kristin Schnider then clarified that while the Chair of the DASH Committee had been consulted with respect to the dinner and the purchase of tickets, any Regional Council funds used to purchase dinner tickets would fall under the Advertising and Visibility budget line rather than the Donations and Membership budget line as per the budget line descriptions that were passed at the PSAC BC Regional Triennial Convention. Consequently, a recommendation from the DASH wasn't necessarily required prior to a decision by the Regional Council.

After further discussion, Bob suggested the Regional Council conduct an email vote on the issue. That would give Regional Council more information and time to review the request and determine whether or not the Regional Council should purchase tickets to the event. After a few members voiced their agreement with this suggestion, Bob confirmed that the REVP Office would send something out the following morning. Bob added that the Regional Council would have the reach a decision by the end of the week to ensure that enough time was available for further action as necessary.

#### **MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

Before adjourning the meeting, Bob reminded the Regional Council of the upcoming meeting November 27-29 at the Laurel Point Inn in Victoria. Bob then thanked all for their attendance on the call, especially those calling in from Ottawa.

The meeting was then adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Minutes recorded by: Kristin Schnider

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