

PSAC Okanagan Human Rights Committee

October 24, 2016 MINUTES

Present

Kelly Megyesi, Maria Luiza Romano, Linda Woods, Elaine Parker,

Minutes

Reviewed minutes - msc

Financial

Balance as of October 1, 2016 2019.26

Migrant Event

Speakers \$300 & \$100

Hotel meal and accommodation for speakers (CAPRI) \$1152.10

Contributions from Womens & Area Council \$750.00

Ticket revenue \$ 246.00

Anticipated closing financial statements 2016 will be 1523.16 and the charges for this call will be paid in the new year – under \$20.

Msc

Migrant Worker Event Report

BUILDING COMMUNITIES III

Migrant Workers & Human Rights

October 15th, 2016

Capri Hotel – Kelowna

Special thank you to Maria-Luiza and Linda for selling the tickets. We had a wonderful mix of participants and it was very moving to hear the migrant workers speak.

After a scary start with equipment the session went well and participants enjoyed the event. Thank you to Robert (PSAC staff) for all your work, bringing the speakers, etc etc. It really made a difference to have such great support.

“Who picked the tomato?”

How expensive is the tomato?

Talk to your children – do you know where the tomato came from?

Challenge – talk to a migrant worker

PARTICIPANT	ORGANIZATION
Carmen Belanger	HEU / CUPE
George Yeulett	HEU
Luisa Fortes	migrant worker
Jinky French	World Financial Group
Theda Cozby	VDISS
John Shakespeare	VDISS
Kusum Wijesekera	IWEN / GECCO / One Billion Stronger
Victoria Oppertshauser	IWEN / KCR
Olivet Carullo	Kelowna Community Resources
Dale Farrow	Activist / Observer
Eileen Robinson	
Peter Kerr	Amnesty International - Kelowna
Cliff Turner	
Louise Gibson	Observer - NDP
Doug Gibson	Observer - NDP
Judy Hunter	
Marlene Kish	
Molyn Dolor	Observer
Wes Kmet	BC. Forum
Maria Tokarchuk	Activist / Observer
Karen Abramson	
Pat Munro	
Peter Chataway	
Anne Marie Brun	
Mario Lanthier	
Maggy	
Jim	
Linda Woods	PSAC - organizer
Ruy Romano	PSAC
Kelly Megyesi	PSAC - organizer
Robert Strang	PSAC BC Region
Maria Luiza Romano	PSAC - organizer

Places visited/contacted in Vernon and Kelowna:

MP (Mel Arnold) Office (Penny Renik)
North Okanagan Youth & Family Services Society
MLA (Eric Foster) Office - Min Sidhu
Community Futures - Leeann Wilhelm
Social Planning Council for the North Okanagan - Annette Sharkey
Vernon & District Immigration Services Society
Vernon Mayor Mr. Akbal Mund and City Council
NDP
Liberal Party
Green Party

NDP Kelowna
Amnesty International
Kelowna Community Resources

Highlights of the event:

1. Validation for the workers:

The event was an important forum for migrant workers to talk about their experiences in Canada, the work they do here and their relationships with employers.

2. Challenges:

Workers mentioned the difficult decisions they had to make to come to Canada, leaving their young children on the care of family members; the negative effects that moving have on relationships, leading to the break up of family ties. They mentioned how in Canada their standard of living depends on employers, some talking about good and enriching working relations, while others talked about the difficulties and exploitation they faced, the hardship that comes with change of employers and the search for more respectful work relations.

3. Hope

Although aware of the lengthy process to be able to bring their families to Canada (up to 9 years) all workers talked about their expectations for a better life in the future, a validation of their efforts and all challenges faced during this period.

ML to send, via email, the motion to Okanagan Womens Committee asking for \$375.00 as contribution for the event - done. Waiting for people to answer; results will be announced during the meeting Saturday Nov 5th.

Elaine to look for info on Dec 10 Being Human Rights day. United Nations website

Event in Spring 2017: Quilts to raffle during the Conference in March 2017

Event in Fall: Deep Diversity/other ideas

Diversity Event in March - next meeting Jan 21 to include an action the plan for selling tickets on worksites before the event, and during that.

Submitted by Maria-Luiza

Human Rights Day December 10

Group discussion. Elaine will track down posters.

Planning

Still thinking of using the quilts at the National Equity Conference. We will see who will be attending and work out into the new year.

2017

Meetings for the year tentatively set-up and we will have Patrick post.

January 21, 2017

April 8, 2017

June 24, 2017

October 21, 2017