



PSAC Okanagan Human Rights Committee

September 28th, 2020

- Present** Kelly Megyesi CEIU 20972, Linda Woods UNE 20140, Maria-Luiza Romano AGR 20027 Dawn Bassett AGR 20043, Jeanne Olineck CEIU 20914, Carolyn McGillivray CIU 20045, Karen Sutton CIU 20045, Robert Strang PSAC
- Welcome** Maria-Luiza (mtg chair) welcomed everyone. Jeanne suggested that we acknowledge the land & Karen read her recent statement given at the PSAC online evening.
- Minutes** Reviewed - no changes. m/LW s/KM – all in favour
- Financial** Opening balance June 1, 2020 \$1304.19. Five cheques cashed: \$25 travel, \$70.05 Queening donation, \$24.14 shipping, \$75 course sponsorship, \$64.68 stickers for a total of \$258.87. Deposits: \$34.27 share deposit. Ending balance as of August 31, 2020 \$1079.59. RAMA cheque for \$100 outstanding. Motion to **accept treasurer report.** m/KM s/LW – all in favour.

Summit

Discussion on the summit and the proposal from the summit that chair emails be replaced with a committee email. Executive was in favour of the proposed new group contact. Dawn attended the summit representing our Human Rights committee. While she would have preferred an in-person session she liked the zoom format. She felt it was a long day but did appreciate the visual. She commented on the section on challenges and barriers for regional committees - especially the segment on member apathy and burnout. Karen participated in the summit via zoom, as well, and enjoyed having input from everyone. She appreciated hearing from participants on coping with the new form of business. Kelly also participated (representing BC Women's Coordinator). She chose to participate via phone as she had been doing too much zooming. Highlights were the energy and the idea discussions.

Projects/Events

Heron

Maria-Luiza spoke about our committee structure of 4 chairs - 4 events. Maria-Luiza and Kelly recently participated in a community event to save the local great blue heron's protected area. The heronry is located close to Maria-Luiza and is constantly under attack. ML & KM along with other activists spoke at the Vernon City Council hearing. Under our community action lens, Maria-Luiza proposed to make a quilt to be used as a fundraiser for the Heron Society. It would involve a small cost as Maria-Luiza donates time and material. The committee had a big discussion on environment/ human rights and each member had an opportunity to contribute to the discussion. Land usage, migratory birds, clean air, community involvement, united nation declaration, land protection, indigenous issues, water were some of the points raised. The discussion concluded with a motion to support quilt costs up to \$100 for the society to use as a fundraiser event. m/KM s/CM & LW – all in favour.

Migrant Workers

Jeanne introduced the discussion on the plight of migrant worker in our area and it was decided to proceed with an action. Group discussion on the issues facing migrant workers including the recent expulsion of Okanagan workers from Byland nursery in Kelowna <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/temporary-foreign-workers-fired-bylands-nursery-1.5659639>. Donation has previously been sent to RAMA and Robert has been liaising with them. Our plans for an event have been put on hold due to COVID. The group formulated a plan to bring migrant issues to their MP's. Robert will do up a letter that we can use for the meetings. He will also provide assistance and talking points. Robert will contact RAMA to see if there is any other way we can help. Karen asked Robert to do something with Patrick to be sent out to the southern interior. Action - no employee should be treated that way. Points raised in the discussion included; slavery, Canada can do better, the right for residency should be for all, the people are taken advantage of, etc. Maria-Luiza talked about our committees work on this subject including meeting with migrants and two of our building communities events.

Indigenous

Carolyn talked about setting up meetings in the south with the Oliver Band. Might be good to reach – out when Robert is out there and possibly incorporate some sort of learning event as well as building up a network in this area. Connecting may provide new ideas for our committee. Maria-Luiza was in agreement and felt that it would also let them know that we are here and willing to partner. Karen has a contact from the Osoyoos Culture Centre (Jenna) and we could look at a tour and film (perhaps modified format for covid). One idea was seeking permission, or recording the file, and doing an education piece on reconciliation. Robert talked about Susie Blythe's council presentation on the Orange shirt day with Phyllis Webstad <https://www.orangeshirtday.org/phyllis-story.html>. Karen spoke about the presentation. Kelly participated in a government web presentation and mentioned that her component is working on an orange shirt participation initiative. Kelly also talked about a dynamic speaker that she would like to access for our next building communities event (post covid).

Terms of Reference

Due to great discussion, the time needed to discuss the terms of reference was limited. It was suggested that we start working section by section. Dawn and Karen preferred to see it as a whole and agreed to work on it outside of the meeting. Terms of reference to be moved to next meeting.

Next Meeting

While we have already more than completed our meeting requirement, it was agreed that we would still schedule the next meeting for Dec 5th, 2020 10 am via zoom.

Closing

Maria-Luiza thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting.