

RWC General meeting – October 10, 2018

Members in Attendance:

Nancy Sermons (Chair)	DCL 20500
Colleen Girard (Vice-Chair)	UNDE 1008
Kay Ahmadi (Treasurer)	UTE 20028
Karolyn Jones	UCTE 20220
Shannon Brierly(T)	CEIU 20947
Kelly Sidhu (T)	Regional Women’s Coordinator – BC PSAC Regional Council

Regrets:

Deb Foster	CEIU 20941
Leanne Hughes	CIU 20042
Nia Gillies	CEIU 20975
Lia Versavel	DCL 20500

Meeting called to order 5:15pm

Acceptance of the agenda with amendment of order of agenda items

Motion: Colleen Girard

Second: Karolyn Jones

Carried

Victoria Women’s Transition House – Presentation given by Elizabeth O’Brien and Carol Bilson

Link to services can be found at <http://www.transitionhouse.net/> . Discussion topics and information provided have been directly quoted from the website of the Services they provide.

24-Hour Crisis Line

The Crisis Line provides support and information and can lead to emergency housing for women who are experiencing abuse now. Family and friends of abused women as well as professionals can also call for support and information.

The Crisis Line is operated by professional staff and trained volunteers. Staff and volunteers are caring, knowledgeable women who provide information about resources in the community, help to create a safety plan for women at risk of physical violence, and help women create a plan to make safe choices. Counsellors and volunteers are compassionate and non-judgmental.

Shelter Services

The Shelter provides safe, supportive accommodation for up to 30 days for women with or without children. This service is more than just safe housing, it's a place of renewal and support. A wide range of help is available including:

- Advocacy and help to access community programs and services
- Information and referrals to lawyers, income assistance, low-income housing etc.
- Information on legal issues (such as custody and access)
- Education and counselling on the dynamics of abuse
- Help to develop a safety plan
- Weekly support groups for women in the Shelter on issues such as self-esteem, self-care and assertiveness
- Assistance with transportation to appointments
- Access to a library of books and videos on issues related to abuse, life skills and healing

Additionally, the Shelter provides programs specifically for children who have come with their mothers and have witnessed the abuse in their homes. When children leave their homes and come to a strange place, they are often very frightened and confused.

The children's staff and volunteers provide support and counselling for children, parenting assistance and support, child care, and often just fun normal activities that the children have perhaps not experienced for a long time. A fully equipped playroom provides a haven for children to regain their childhood.

Stopping the Violence Counselling Program

Out of its Community Office, Transition House also offers individual counselling for women who are currently experiencing abuse or who have experienced abuse in the past. In addition, support groups offer further help for women. A wide range of issues are addressed including:

- Recognizing abuse
- Understanding the dynamics of abuse
- Exploring the psychological and emotional impact of abuse
- Developing a safety plan
- Strengthening self-esteem
- Strengthening and learning new coping strategies
- Developing assertiveness skills

, threats or criminal harassment by an intimate partner or ex-partner. Clients are given support as they proceed through the criminal justice system, given referrals to community agencies and provided with short-term counselling.

Our service provides the victim with:

Emotional support

Assistance with:

- Court orientation and court accompaniment
- Victim impact statements
- Criminal injury compensation applications
- Liaison with criminal justice personnel

- Developing a safety plan

Information on the criminal justice system including:

- Court proceedings
- Victim notification
- Case status and court dates
- Protective orders
- Sentencing and post-sentencing matters

This program works collaboratively with community agencies to ensure that the province-wide Violence Against Women in Relationships Policy (VAWIR) is followed.

Domestic Violence Emergency Response System

This innovative program provides high level emergency response for women at greatest risk of serious injury or death. This program requires involvement with the criminal justice system and assessment by a team, including relevant police agencies.

Senior Women's Programming

Groups specific to women age 50+ provide support and education on a wide range of issues, such as:

- Recognizing abuse
- Understanding the dynamics of abuse
- Exploring the psychological and emotional impact of abuse
- Developing a safety plan
- Strengthening self-esteem
- Strengthening and learning new coping strategies
- Developing assertiveness skills
- Relationships with adult children

Individual support is also provided to assist women with the transition to independence: housing resources, applications for services, connecting with community resources.

Safe Home

The busy environment of the Shelter is sometimes overwhelming for older women. Transition House offers older women an opportunity to reside, for a short period, in a safe home located in the community, while accessing supportive services offered in other programs.

Nancy thanked the Transition House for coming and speaking with us. Nancy and Colleen offered information regarding the upcoming Candle Light Vigil December 6th event at Holland Park, which marks the anniversary of the Montreal Massacre. Nancy offered an invitation to the Transition House to have a speaking role at the event. Nancy will follow-up with the transition House.

The committee offered colouring pages and crayons to the Victoria Women's Transition House to take back to the Society. The donation was well received.

Treasurers Report:

Kay Ahmadi presented the treasurers report. The balance of the account being \$2,609.26. The only amounts spent by the committee since the last meeting was a conference call charge of \$23.78 on 12 May.

The equity shares of the account as of Aug. 31, 2018 are \$137.98

Motion: Kay Ahmadi

2nd Karolyn Jones

Carried

Discussion on December 6th Event:

Guest Speakers: The committee recommended 2 guest speakers with suggestion of Marion Alto and a speaker from the University of Victoria Women's group. A verbal invite was also given to the Victoria Transition House.

Location is at Holland Park on Dallas Rd. There is a monument placed there for the event. Timing determined at 5:30pm.

Colleen to reach out to Patrick Bragg for a poster to be posted and sent out through the PSAC BC website.

Planning meeting will be scheduled for November.

Events in Future:

Kelly Sidhu mentioned the following events to the committee:

1. Institute for Women's training – In the states normally but will be back in Canada. The course is 2-3 days in Vancouver. Subsidies may be provided upon application. The committee may want to consider funding a member to attend.

New Business

Nov. 20th – Vancouver Island Women's Leaders Reception – Nancy provided information on the event.

Discussion had on validity of such events. Question posed by Karolyn on how we foster support for political parties. Suggestion was made to use Survey Monkey through the Women's committee to understand the view of the members for the support of candidates in the 2019 elections. Kelly spoke on the event in November brought forth by Nancy stating it would give us a good opportunity to speak to the candidates.

Further discussion on Ministers etc. and how they can help our members as well as the committee.

Here for Canada Campaign – Kelly Sidhu spoke on the PSAC Here for Canada Campaign

Mandate – The committee had a discussion on its mandate. Whether or not there was one in place or the initiative to have a planning session and come up with a mandate in the New Year. More to Follow.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:15pm

Motion: Nancy

Second: Colleen

Motion Carried