

**West Fraser Valley Area Council
Knight and Day Restaurant
May 11, 2015**

Present: Johann Ackermann, President (UTE Local 20029), Richard Hyatt, Secretary (UTE Local 20050), Jennifer Chieh Ho, Education Officer (UNE Local 20088), , Tracy Bestland (USGE Local 20011), Shirley Torres (UNE Local 20278); Jacquie Belanger (GSU Local 20008); Heather Kenny (UTE Local 20029)

Regrets: Michael Small, Treasurer (UTE Local 20029); Jeremy Amor – Vice President (UTE Local 20029), Celine Ahdekon (UNE Local 20088), Monique Bakker (UEW Local 20147), Bob Jackson (PSAC – REVP/CFIA Local 20044), Susie Blyth (CEIU Local 20910)

Guests: Robert Strang (PSAC Regional Office); Karoline Klug (PSAC Regional Office); Aaron Ekman (BC Federation of Labour); Deoraj Mahabirsingh (UTE Local 20050), Antony Paler (East Fraser Valley Area Council)

Called to Order at 5:30 PM

1. Adoption of the Agenda

Add PSAC Convention before Meeting Location; Under Political Action NWLAC. Move BC Fed Report moved to after the adoption.

Jennifer moved Shirley seconded the adoption of the agenda as changed. Carried.

Introductions were done as we had some visitors.

2. \$15 Minimum Wage Campaign Presentation

Aaron Ekman provided an overview of the \$15 Minimum Wage Campaign. Some key points he cover were as follows:

This campaign came from a resolution at the BC Fed Convention

Income and equality. Wages vis a vis prices. A disparity of people on top and those at the lower levels. Top 10% of income earners own 49% of the wealth. BC is 56.2%.

Bottom 10% of the wealth is -.3%. These are people don't have any savings but that they owe. People who are unable to afford and participate in the economy.

A direct correlation between union density (Unionized Workforce). There is a decline since 1980 and in BC has been greater decline.

Workforce in BC is approx 1.8 M. 120,000 make minimum wage. These are kids, first time workers. What is the big deal according to the government? Actually some stats are that 1/3 over the age of 35 live on minimum wage. 60% of these are women. 81% are single parents.

27% of the workforce makes less than \$15 per hour. Equates 500,000 people in BC.

Who supports this? Women 85% Men 71% People over the age of 55. 90% NDP voters and 67% Liberal supporters.

Jennifer indicated that there were local groups working on this campaign. Aaron was thanked for his presentation and for coming out to the meeting.

More information on this campaign can be found on the website for Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/newsroom/updates/raising-bcs-minimum-wage-15-makes-good-economic-sense>

3. Approval of Minutes

Jennifer moved and Shirley seconded to adopt the Dec 9, 2015 minutes. Carried

Richard moved and Jennifer seconded the minutes of Feb 23, 2015 minutes. Carried.

4. Financial Report

Question on deposit of dues that were submitted. As of April 30th, local 20050 cheque has not been cashed and the dues cheque was issued in December 2014. Johann will follow up with Michael.

From the last meeting there were changes made to the budget, and did not receive a revised copy of the budget with the report.

According to the statement, we have spent \$504.74 to date and \$9,296.28 is in the account. This amount would include undeposited dues cheques.

Richard moved and Jennifer seconded to receive the financial report. Carried

5. Education Report

Jennifer reported the following:

Summer Institute in Portland, Oregon for Women Activists. Fighting for a Fair Future. Brochure handed out to be shared with any women in the workplace who may wish to attend. May not be able to get funding assistance as it is in the US. \$700 for the course registration and a cost for any accommodation.

Jennifer indicated that she would like to invite another speaker from Poverty Reduction to meeting of the WFVAC to discuss this very topic.

Robert advised there would be a meeting to establish PSAC courses. Courses will be coming in the fall. There will be a lot of course offered which would include the standard Grievance Handling and Advanced Duty to Accommodate.

6. Political Action

a. Canada Day

This event will not be done. No volunteers

b. Surrey Pride

June 28th we would need five or six volunteers. Time 10 – 5 We need people from the Area council to participate more. 3 to man the booth. Robert will draft something that can be shared with others to engage for volunteers. Johann will be there for part of the day.

c. Fusion Festival

BC Fed will be part of this and a couple of other unions. BCGEU and HEU? July 18th and 19th.

Hours 10 – 7 next day would be 11:00 to 7:00 PM. Will East Fraser Valley want to assist? Their next meeting is scheduled on June 2nd at 5:00 PM.

d. Other Information

Information on participating in political activities was provided by Robert. Pass this out to your members. Public is starting to get upset over some of the government's actions. No day of action for May, but Vancouver will be having a week of action in June for the upcoming election. Need to turn up the heat as the election is coming up. We need to mobilize the membership to get out and talk about the issues that are affecting them so they can educate others to turn the tide away from a Conservative majority.

Johann suggested arranging a planning meeting for the June 19th activity in Surrey. Jennifer and Johann to connect with each other.

e. March 19th Mobilization Meeting

On March 19th a mobilization meeting was held at Simon Fraser University in Central City. Attendance to this meeting was disappointing. Various NDP politicians from the area were in attendance. Hon. Jasbir Sandhu, Surrey North; Hon. Jinny Sims, Newton-North Delta; Sue Hammell, MLA for Surrey-Green Timbers; Bruce Ralston, MLA for Surrey-Whalley.

The attendance was few, but the questions raised were good. There was a presentation of how the bargaining process is going and the continued stance in the protection of our sick leave provisions in the Collective Agreement.

f. New West District Labour Council

Doing an activity on promoting the Protein for People charity. There will be an event in June for this, does the Area council want to be there to promote the PSAC. Not sure of the exact date. Events are for those that are low income. Fun activities. We will not participate at this time. Brochures on this initiative were handed out.

This area council has all the different unions involved and they share on what their successes or troubles by speaking on specific topics. Jennifer is seeking suggestions on topics that could be reported back to them. Can report on events but would like on specific concerns like sick leave. Each to take a turn on coming up on topics.

We will have a standing agenda item to solicit topics from the Council for Jennifer and/or Shirley to take to the NWDLC Each meeting will ask for a volunteer on topics to report back. Robert stated he could assist as this would require to provide Jennifer/Shirley with some speaking points for a topic.

g. Asian Heritage Month

Reminder that May is Asian Heritage month. There will be an event happening on Thursday in New Westminster. CLC approached Jennifer to see if they would assist in the event along with Shirley. May 14th at the Unifor Hall. 6 – 9 PM. Panel discussion. Fun event. All are welcome.

Shirley moved and Richard seconded that the WFVAC donate \$100 for the Asian Heritage Event. Carried.

7. PSAC Convention

Johann will provide a written report at a later date. Johann provided some highlights.

Robyn and Chris were both acclaimed. History setting as these individuals both come from the same component UTE.

Hussain Youseff spoke very patiently on the current government and had a few choice words about Stephen Harper and Tony Clement. 80% of the jobs created by Harper were part time and not full time.

A former clerk of the Privy Council Alex Himalfarb spoke indicating that austerity budgets just create more problems and money should be spent to help stimulate the economy. Tax reductions don't work. Austerity drives inequality.

Shirley mentioned that there was a resolution to establish a Racially Visible Regional conference. Jennifer spearheaded this resolution and passed with success.

8. Job Descriptions

This item will be dropped from the agenda and will be reviewed closer to the annual meeting.

9. Meeting Location

This item will be removed from the agenda and we will remain using the Knight and Day Restaurant.

Next Meeting: June 22nd or June 27th. Will send an email to ask for preference.

10. Meal Expense

Shirley moved and Jennifer seconded to pay for the food including tip for \$186.00. Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM