

Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) - BC Region

Minutes of Mainland Human Rights Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2017

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: PSAC Regional Office, 200-5238 Joyce St. Vancouver, BC

In attendance:

Committee members:

- Jennifer Chieh Ho, Co-Chair - UNE
- Ruby Langan, Co-Chair – UNE
- Cheryl Oenema, Treasurer - UCTE
- Tami Grenon, Secretary – CEIU
- Paul Croes – CEIU
- Jenny Macleod – UHEW
- Jasmine MacIver – UHEW
- Todd Smith – Agriculture
- Wendy Tongye – UHEW

Staff:

- Robert Strang

Guest

- Lorene Oukawa - greater Vancouver Japanese Canadian citizens association

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was chaired by Jennifer Chieh Ho. Jennifer welcomed everyone and she thanked everyone for attending. Round table introductions were conducted.

2. Approval of Agenda

An amendment was proposed by Cheryl to add the financial report before discussing Asian Heritage month.

Motion to approve agenda as amended:

Motion by Paul, seconded by Todd, carried.

Jennifer noted that there will be no minutes to approve at this meeting, as the last meeting was the AGM which took place on January 24.

3. Financial Update:

Cheryl reported that the Mainland HRC received \$1,200 and the current account balance is now at \$1,863. 2 cheques were issued in January to cover food at the AGM and the Cliff movie night. As soon as the new signing officers have been registered, a cheque in the amount of \$200 to cover conference registration will be issued to Todd Smith.

Motion to approve the financial report as presented:

Motion by Paul, seconded by Todd, carried.

4. Asian Heritage Month

Jennifer reported that an event to celebrate Asian Heritage Month was held on Monday, May 22. The event included a movie screening followed by a discussion/Q and A session. The Mainland HRC supported the event by contributing \$300 to cover expenses.

As Lorene was one of the event organizers, she provided a brief summary of the event theme and the movie that was presented. She also reported that she talked about the internment (incarceration) of Japanese Canadians during World War II. The purpose of the event was to celebrate Asian Heritage month by reflecting on what had occurred in the past and sharing ideas on how we can all work together to fight racism. Lorene thanked the Mainland Mainland HRC for supporting the event through its financial contribution

5. PSAC Triennial Convention

The PSAC Triennial Convention will be held from June 16 to 18. Most of the members present at the meeting will be attending. The HRC submitted 5 resolutions in total. Jennifer reported that the resolutions that were put forward covered all 4 equity groups, and she noted that one of them concerned automatic equity seats at triennial

conventions. Committee members were open to holding an additional meeting either in person or via teleconference to discuss the resolution package when it is available.

6. Events/Campaigns:

PSAC Equity Conferences - March 24 to 28

Paul reported that all resolutions that were brought forward to the pride caucus passed. The allied workshops that were included as part of the conference this year were very well received by those committee members who attended. The exercises that were presented as part of the Aboriginal allied workshop were very valuable, and the committee agreed to explore the possibility of sharing them with all Mainland HRC members.

A question was raised regarding the use of electronic voting for resolutions at future conferences and conventions. Paul noted that this is being discussed.

Upcoming Events:

National Aboriginal Day - June 21. A discussion took place regarding a possible committee meeting and presentation on that day. Jennifer and Robert to explore further.

Surrey Pride Festival - June 25. Vancouver Area Council is sponsoring a table. Members are welcome to come out to assist.

Multiculturalism Day – June 28. Todd asked if it would be possible for us to support an event that will be taking place on that day. Cheryl to research this and report back to Jennifer and Robert.

Fusion Festival - July 22 and 23 at Holland Park in Surrey. West Fraser Area Council will be setting up a table.

Vancouver Pride – August 6. Table has been booked for the event. No volunteers have been registered to date; Paul agreed to send out an email to recruit volunteers.

Sisters in Spirit – October 4. Collaboration with Women's Committee.

7. Political Action

Robert reported that there will mostly be no changes to the composition of seats in the BC legislature. PSAC will remain politically active during this time of transition. Both NDP candidates who were PSAC members were elected in their respective constituencies.

area councils have been lobbying MP's on the Phoenix pay system and other bills that are being discussed at the parliamentary level. Anyone interested in learning more about lobbying can obtain speaking notes from Robert. Jennifer also mentioned that she

would be happy to accompany members to their MP office for the purpose of lobbying on human rights issues. At present, Bills C51 and C16 are major issues, and the Minister and Justice and Minister of persons with disabilities are local MPs.

8. Additional Items:

8.1: Jennifer reported earlier on in the meeting that the committee executive will try to adhere to the following meeting schedule that was approved by members at the AGM on January 24.

Committee meetings: June 21, September 18, and November 14.

AGM: January 23, 2018

8.2: Paul provided a report on the current genocide of gay and bisexual men that is being carried out in Chechnya. Men are being tortured and placed in concentration camps due to their sexual orientation. Latvia has been providing asylum, and there are online campaigns to raise funds to transport people out of Chechnya. Current campaigns have been successful to some degree, but steps need to be taken to lobby the federal government so that they will understand the seriousness of this situation.

8.3: Jennifer asked Ruby if the HRC will be able to collaborate with the Women's committee to celebrate National Aboriginal Day. Ruby will look into this; there will be an event at Trout Lake on that day. Ruby will share information with the committee.

8.4: Jennifer reported that she spoke with 2 components about organizing a knitting club to make hats for fundraising purposes. Hats would be sold and funds raised would go to homelessness campaigns. A suggestion was raised to collaborate with the RWC and sell hats at convention.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM.

Following the meeting, invited guests delivered presentations to members. Speakers included:

- Ruby Langan - PSAC BC Regional Coordinator for Aboriginal Peoples
- Paul Croes - PSAC BC Regional Coordinator for LGBTQ
- Lorene Oikawa - President of the Greater Vancouver Japanese Canadian Citizens' Association