

Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) - BC Region

Minutes of Mainland Human Rights Committee Meeting

Date: Monday, August 14, 2017

Time: 6:00 PM

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

Attendees (In person):

Ruby Langan, UNE 20150 (Co-chair)

Tami Grenon, CEIU 20944 (secretary)

Sky Belt, AGR 20044

Todd Smith, AGR 20044

Jennifer Horsley, UPCE 20095

Guest: Jamey Mills, REVP BC

Staff: Deanna Kimball

Attendees (by phone):

Shirley Torres

Mo Shahrokni, UVAE 20029

Regrets:

Jennifer Chieh Ho, UNE 20088,

Linda Harding, GSU 20008,

Cheryl Oenema, UCTE 20219,

Stephen Torng, GSU 20008

Note: items 11, 12 and 13 were added to the agenda during the meeting.

1. Acknowledge Traditional Territory

The meeting was chaired by Ruby Langan, Co-chair. Ruby welcomed everyone and she acknowledged that the committee is meeting on the unseeded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh nations.

2. Introductions

Round table and telephone introductions were conducted.

3. REVP Jamey Mills

Jamey was recently elected as the Regional Executive Vice President (REVP) for the BC region. He has been meeting with committees and councils and he wanted to take this opportunity to introduce himself to the Mainland HRC and provide an update on the work of the REVP's office.

Jamey reported that BC MPs have been contacted regarding current issues, and several replies were received by mail. Several face to face meetings have already taken place between MPs and PSAC regional representatives, and they have gone well so far. Mainland HRC members wishing to meet with their MP to discuss issues can contact the office of the REVP if they would like guidance, or if they would like someone to accompany them to meetings.

The phoenix pay system continues to be a growing concern to the PSAC and its members. Just when it appears as though things are improving, another issue arises. The following steps have been taken to address this issue so far:

1. Phoenix sub-committee was formed in June, 2017;
2. PSAC is continuing to lobby the employer through meetings with government officials and MPs;
3. PSAC is reaching out to NDP MPs by asking them to raise this issue at their caucus meetings;
4. PSAC is lobbying the employer to increase the emergency salary from 66% to 100%.

Jamey left the meeting following his presentation.

4. Minutes (May 24, 2017)

It was noted that the incorrect meeting date of January 24 was recorded on the minutes that were circulated prior to the meeting. . This will be changed to May 24, 2017.

Motion to approve minutes as amended:

Moved by Todd Smith, seconded by Tami Grenon, carried.

5. Financial

A formal financial report was not presented, as Cheryl was unable to attend the meeting. Ruby reported that the current account balance = \$1,603-06.

6. Todd's Request for Funding Assistance to Attend BC FED Conference

Prior to the committee meeting, Todd submitted a request to the executive for \$300 to attend the BC FED Conference on Union Renewal. The event will take place in Victoria from October 26 to 28. Todd has been proactive in his efforts to secure funding. So far he has received a regional conference subsidy of \$250, and he is waiting to hear from the Vancouver and District Area Council. His union local was unable to assist due to lack of available funds.

The conference will address several important issues faced by unions and the broader labour movement. Todd is a member of 2 equity groups, and he feels that his understanding of how these issues will impact equity groups will be beneficial to its members. Todd further explained that participating in this event will assist him in his union activism, as he will have an opportunity to become more familiar with emerging issues, and he will learn how other BC FED affiliates are responding to their changing workplaces and communities.

Sky asked if anyone else would be attending from PSAC. Todd replied that Jamey Mills will also be going.

Since the HRC was not able to confirm budget availability with the Treasurer during the meeting, it was agreed that we would move to accept Todd's funding request pending confirmation of available funds. Ruby will follow up with Cheryl.

Motion to provide funding in the amount of \$300 to Todd Smith for attendance at the BC FED conference on Union Renewal pending the availability of funds.

Moved by Todd Smith, seconded by Jennifer Horsley, carried.

7. Bright Beginnings Foundation Funding Request

A request for financial assistance from this organization was forwarded to committee members prior to the Mainland HRC meeting. Todd and Sky provided a brief overview of the organization. The Bright Beginnings Foundation is a charitable organization which was created through the VanCity Foundation. The organization intends to help some of Surrey's most vulnerable graduating students to pursue their dream of a higher education by providing bursaries for tuition, educational materials, transportation and living expenses while they are attending a college or university of their choice. The organization has been proactive in soliciting support from various groups throughout the Lower Mainland, and so far, they have received support from teachers associations, foundations, and private donors. The organization would also like to partner with various unions including PSAC.

The website address is www.brightbeginningsfoundation.ca. Todd reviewed the website, and it appears as though this organization is in the early stages of development. It was suggested that we could invite a representative to speak at one of our committee meetings as a starting point. Sky will follow up on this.

8. October Sisters in Spirit

Ruby reported that Sisters in Spirit is held on October 4 every year. The purpose of this event is to acknowledge and support the families of missing indigenous women and girls. Ruby suggested that the HRC could play an active role by supporting events that are currently being organized. A brief discussion took place regarding ways that the HRC could participate this year, although it was agreed that details on planned events would be helpful. Deanna will forward information on events that are taking place in the Lower Mainland to committee members so that

they can participate if they are able. This item will be brought forward for discussion at the September meeting.

9. November CLIFF

Ruby asked members for their thoughts on whether the HRC should organize a Cliff event again this year. CLIFF stands for Canadian Labour International Film Festival. In the past, the HRC has organized movie nights with popcorn. It was agreed that the Committee could promote and support events that will be taking place in downtown Vancouver. This item will be brought forward for discussion at the September HRC meeting.

10. December 10 Human Rights

Ruby reminded members that Human Rights day will be on Sunday, December 10 this year. A brief discussion took place regarding possible ways to celebrate this day. Suggestions included:

- Show a film which is relevant to our current political climate/situation;
- Organize an equity party either at a pub or at a local community centre with cultural food.

This item will be brought forward for further discussion at the next HRC meeting.

11. BC Federation of Labour - Temporary Foreign Workers in BC Need Our Help

The BC Federation of Labour is currently accepting personal supplies for temporary foreign workers. Temporary workers are currently facing a lot of challenges with respect to their employment and income, and items are being collected to ensure that they have sufficient supplies. Items can be dropped off at the BC Federation of Labour office, and they can also be brought to the next HRC meeting in September. A call for items will be emailed to HRC members.

12. Attendance at Vancouver and District Area Council Meetings

Tami Grenon was elected as the HRC committee representative to the Vancouver and District Area Council. She expressed concern that she hasn't been able to attend many of the meetings so far due to scheduling conflicts. Tami will try to attend the next meeting, but if she is unavailable, she asked if we could discuss a replacement during a future HRC meeting. Tami will keep the Executive updated on this issue.

13. Rally on Racism – Saturday, August 19

Todd reported that the worldwide coalition against Muslims will be holding a rally at Vancouver City Hall on August 19 from 12:45 to 4:00 PM. A counter rally against racism will be taking place at the same time. A brief discussion took place regarding ways that the HRC can support the counter rally. Suggestions included:

- Put up posters to support the counter rally;
- Spread the word re counter rally among our networks;
- Post something to oppose the Coalition Against Muslims on social media;

- Ask the REVP's office to provide a statement in light of the tragic events that took place in the USA over the past weekend;
- HRC can draft a letter that can be shared with Robyn Benson (Todd agreed to assist with this).