

DRAFT

## **Vancouver and District Area Council Meeting – September 15, 2021**

Via Zoom due to Covid-19 pandemic

In Attendance:

Todd Smith (President, AGR 20044), Crystal Isaac (1<sup>st</sup> VP, UTE 20027), Andre Bessette (2<sup>nd</sup> VP, UHEW 20729), Aaron Chang (Treasurer, CEIU 20938), Jen Horsley (Secretary, UPCE 20095), Warren Wulff (UCTE 20088), Ann-Marie Friesen (UHEW 20729), Jaime Jones (UNDE 21008), Shanti Amal (CEIU 20938), Marcus Yung (UNE 20378), Ron Regala (UTE 20027), Jamey Mills – REVP, Monica Urrutia – Staff

Regrets:

Damir Moric (CEIU 20937), Marion McLarty (UNE 20150)

Meeting Called to Order at 6:02 PM

Agenda:

- 1. Welcome & Indigenous Acknowledgement**
- 2. Adopt the Agenda**
- 3. Jamey Mills – REVP (added to agenda)**
- 4. Prior Minutes**
  - June 9, 2021, attached to the meeting invitation
- 5. Ratify motion from June 24 re: softball team sponsorship**
- 6. Business arising**
- 7. Financial Report**
- 8. Standing Updates**
  - Metro Vancouver Alliance
  - Phoenix
  - Covid-19
- 9. Affiliate Reports (3 Minutes)**
  - if you want it in the minutes please send a written report to Jen Horsley.
- 10. New Business**
  - Election of VDAC delegate and alternate to the PSAC National Triennial Convention
  - Resolutions to PSAC National Triennial Convention
- 11. Round Table**
- 12. Next Meeting date**

### **Welcome & Indigenous Acknowledgement**

Todd welcomed the delegates and invited all in attendance to briefly introduce themselves as there were some new and returning delegates. Todd acknowledged the Indigenous lands that he was taking the meeting from and asked the members to reflect on where they were calling in from. Todd reflected on the upcoming new Federal Statutory Holiday, The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and the importance of using this day to reflect on reconciliation and its meaning and our own ancestors roles in the wrongs committed against indigenous peoples in Canada.

## **Adopt the Agenda (M/S/C) – as amended**

Jen/Shanti

### **Jamey Mills, REVP**

Jamey noted and said he was happy to see the new locals participating in the Area Council. Jamey spoke to the Area Council about current bargaining status and the upcoming federal election.

The first ratification session had been held earlier that day for the FB group. He also mentioned that the EB, TC, SV, PA and Common Issues teams would be back at the table in the coming weeks. Some of the issues that were being brought forward are Remote Work, Tech Change – in particular the proper use of Artificial Intelligence, Fair Wages, Contacting Out and Privatization, Work Life Balance – especially the Right to Disconnect, Leave Provisions, Closing the Gender Pay Gap, Reclassification, Eliminating Systemic Racism in the workplace, Job Security – a focus on fairer workforce adjustment provisions.

TB Mobilization is underway, in Vancouver Monica Urrutia will be the staff member responsible.

BC has a number of members representing on the Bargaining Teams

PA – Sargy Chima and Leanne Wheeler

TC – Scott Hodge

SV – Marcello Lazaro, Kristina MacLean, Bert Farwell

Also of note, CFIA and Parks teams have been elected, CRA is upcoming

Regionally, UNE Local 20378, the workers at Granville Island have ratified their new Collective Agreement.

Jamey briefly spoke about the vaccine mandate coming from the Federal Government. PSAC is in supportive of the vaccine mandate, but discipline and/or termination are not acceptable outcomes.

The Federal Election is coming up on September 20, 2021, and for most PSAC members it is a unique opportunity to vote in their new boss. The PSAC won't tell you who to vote for, but will tell the members what happened in the past and about the party platforms. There have been some Lunch & Learns around the election issues which affect our members.

Jamey announced that Sharon Barbour, the staff member responsible for Health & Safety, has taken a 1 year assignment in the Atlantic Region, Evert Ryland has been hired as a term in the Health & Safety profile.

There is the possibility of a soft opening of the Regional Office in November, depending on the pandemic progression.

There will be a 3 day Activists Summit held December 2, 3, 4, 2021 with different levels of workshops being offered – Introductory, Intermediate and Advanced. Look out for the call-out in early October.

Jamey asked if anyone had any comments or questions.

Jen put forward that her employer, Purolator had dropped their vaccine policy that day and that she had some concerns around dates and that some of it seemed to fall more to the disciplinary side. Discussion arose out of this involving Jaime, Shanti and Warren.

### **June 9, 2021 Minutes (M/S/C)**

Jen/Warren

#### **Ratify motion from June 24 re: softball team sponsorship**

Todd spoke briefly about this motion and the history of the Area Council holding a baseball tournament as a fundraiser for the Metro Vancouver Alliance. The team that was supported mostly consists of PSAC members, many of whom had participated in the tournament in the past.

#### **Business Arising**

There was no business arising out of the previous minutes to be discussed.

#### **Financial Report**

Aaron gave a report on the Area Council's current finances, not many transactions. One cheque outstanding for Crystal Isaac as reimbursement for carbon offsets purchased for the Granville Island support event. We are waiting on the invoice for the MVA dues, so the line item has not been expended yet.

Ann-Marie asked if there was any update on the possibility of etransfer being used to pay local dues, Aaron responded that the Area Council still needed to decide on the email address to attach to the account.

#### **Standing Reports:**

##### **Metro Vancouver Alliance**

Jen talked a bit about the MVA and what they have done in the past. Currently the MVA is still looking for new Member Organizations and bringing previous member organizations back into the organization. They will be holding a virtual workshop on September 24 and 25 that is free to member organizations focusing on the Key Principles for Building Public Relationships and Taking Effective Action towards change. Sign up here:

[https://www.metvanalliance.org/mva\\_training\\_september\\_24\\_25?utm\\_campaign=invitation\\_to\\_sep\\_training&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=metvanalliance](https://www.metvanalliance.org/mva_training_september_24_25?utm_campaign=invitation_to_sep_training&utm_medium=email&utm_source=metvanalliance)

##### **Phoenix**

Todd started by noting that he had attended an all-staff townhall where some incorrect information was given out about damages.

Ann-Marie asked if anyone else had experienced pay issues with deductions on a 3 pay period month?

Jaime noted that there had been some issues with delayed pay on the September 1 pay, but that it may have been more related to the financial institution than Phoenix and that it had been resolved the same day.

Jamey noted that the Phoenix pay issues were now well into year 6 of overpayments, underpayments or members not getting paid at all. There are still around 150,000 unresolved cases and thousands of those are outstanding issues from pre-2016. Current trends of unresolved cases are around Termination, inter-departmental transfers, leaves, management being inconsistent on leave approvals. There is to date no timeline for damage payments for retirees and former employees. The taxation issue is still being dealt with on a legal level.

### **COVID-19**

Currently no updates. Todd said that his office had announced a possible return in January.

### **Affiliate Reports**

No affiliate reports were given.

### **Election of Delegate and Alternate to PSAC National Triennial Convention**

Monica went through the election process and the VDAC bylaw that governs who is eligible to vote.

Delegate

Warren Wulff – Nominated by Todd, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jen - acclaimed

Alternate

Jen Horsley – Nominated by Todd, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Warren - acclaimed

### **Resolutions to the PSAC National Triennial Convention**

Todd let the delegates know that there had been an informal meeting held the week before to discuss possible resolutions to be brought forward to the meeting and work had been done to bring some resolutions that went to PSAC BC Convention up to date or to improve language based on the debate held at that convention. Each resolution was presented and moved and seconded to be sent to the convention.

### **REVISIT PUBLIC SERVICE HEALTH CARE PLAN – ACUPUNCTURE**

BECAUSE our members are increasingly being prescribed treatments of an ergonomic and remedial nature; and

BECAUSE these treatments are either not covered by Sun Life or are difficult to obtain due to requirements (example acupuncture treatments need to be performed by a medical doctor which is difficult to find in BC):

THE PSAC WILL petition Treasury Board to revisit practitioner requirements for acupuncture treatments covered by the Public Service Health Care Plan.

M/S/C Jen/Andre

### **NATIONAL YOUNG WORKER CONFERENCE**

WHEREAS union succession should be a priority for all PSAC regions; and

WHEREAS the PSAC should recognize the need to invest financially in our young workers' program; and

WHEREAS young workers may have long careers within PSAC-unionized workplaces and we should engage them early; and

WHEREAS currently young workers do not have constitutionally mandated conferences neither regionally nor nationally and lack such a forum to network, learn, and build solidarity;

WHEREAS a national young workers' committee, funded by PSAC and supported by the Alliance Executive Committee (AEC), would allow PSAC to be more equipped for union succession planning and development:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT a PSAC National Young Workers' Conference, funded by the PSAC and supported by the AEC, be held once per cycle; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the first PSAC National Young Workers' Conference be held in the next cycle 2022-2024.

M/S/C Andre/Jen

#### **PRIORITIZING MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING**

WHEREAS Mental Health and wellbeing are a priority for Canadians; and

WHEREAS the PSAC has identified Mental Health as a bargaining priority; and

WHEREAS not all Canadians have insurance coverage from their employer for mental health counseling and psychological services, which average \$125-\$200 per session which can be cost prohibitive for those seeking help; and

WHEREAS 1 in 3 Canadians will experience a mental health problem in their lifetime:

BE IT RESOLVED that the PSAC will develop a lobby kit for members and begin to lobby the Federal and Provincial governments in the next three-year cycle to publicly fund psychological counseling services for all who require them in Canada, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the PSAC will support and promote the Canadian Mental Health Association's policy paper "Mental Health in the Balance: Ending the Health Care Disparity in Canada."

M/S/C Crystal/Shanti

#### **INCREASE EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROVISIONS FOR PARENTAL LEAVE**

WHEREAS parents have the choice to receive Employment Insurance (EI) benefits for Parental Leave over a 35-week period at 55% of their insurable earnings or over a 61-week period at 33% of their insurable earnings; and

WHEREAS many parents, particularly single parents do not have access to employer top-ups and cannot afford to live on only 33% of their income; and

WHEREAS universally accessible childcare, which does not currently exist in Canada:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT PSAC lobby the federal government to increase EI Parental Leave benefits from 55% to 75% of insurable earnings for parents who choose to receive benefits over 35 weeks; and

increase EI Parental Leave benefits from 33% to 55% of insurable earnings for parents who chose to receive benefits over 61 weeks so that parents come closer to a living wage while on Parental Leave.

M/S/C Crystal/Shanti

#### **THE FIGHT FOR STUDENTS AND INTERNS**

WHEREAS the PSAC recognizes that co-op students, summer students, and interns are an important part of the modern federal public service; and

WHEREAS student and intern employees by virtue of not being unionized face challenges in the workplace that their unionized colleagues do not; and

WHEREAS every worker deserves fairness, respect, and the strength and backing of a union; and

WHEREAS what we wish for ourselves we wish for all workers:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC develop and implement an ongoing campaign to lobby for student and intern employees to be defined as employees in relevant federal legislation until they are able to become union members.

M/S/C Jen/Shanti

#### **REVISIT PENSION SURVIVOR DEFINITION**

BECAUSE the world is becoming more open to non-traditional relationships; and

BECAUSE not all members may have an eligible spouse and/or common-law partner or children to receive a survivor benefit:

The PSAC WILL petition Treasury Board to revisit their definition of a survivor in the Public Service pension plan to be similar with naming a beneficiary.

M/S/C Ann-Marie/Andre

#### **LEAVE WITH OR WITHOUT PAY FOR OTHER REASONS (699 OR 6990 LEAVE)**

WHEREAS PSAC members have been hugely affected by COVID19; and

WHEREAS many PSAC members are unable to obtain reliable and safe family care; and

WHEREAS members working for the federal government have had to use leave with pay for other reasons to support their working from home with their families; and

WHEREAS the federal government as an employer is now asking members to use all forms of other paid and unpaid leave before accessing leave with pay for other reasons; and

WHEREAS persons affected by quarantine or illness relating to COVID-19 may need a minimum of 14 days or more leave:

BE IT RESOLVED that PSAC lobby federally for members to be able to continue using leave with pay for other reasons (699, 6990, or other leave code) as it has been intended in our collective agreements for such situations as a pandemic.

M/S/C Jen/Crystal

### **THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE**

WHEREAS the PSAC has long supported women's rights and have fought and won the right for PSAC women to exercise reproductive (contraceptive) choice; and

WHEREAS women's control over their body and reproductive rights are under threat. Given that a vote on whether or not to reopen the abortion debate was only narrowly defeated at the Conservative convention in Halifax in 2018; and

WHEREAS women's right to control their own body will likely become an election issue in the future; and

BE IT RESOLVED THAT PSAC opposes any attempts to introduce restrictive legislation; supports the rights of all women to adequate services for contraception and abortion; supports campaigns that protect women's right to choose and demands current and prospective members of parliament support this policy.

M/S/C Jen/Crystal

### **FAMILY CARE POLICY AMENDMENTS TO SUPPORT UNION BUSINESS REMOTELY**

WHEREAS PSAC has a Family Care policy that provides for family care in many circumstances; and

WHEREAS many PSAC members continue to work from home or remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic and may continue to do so going forward; and

WHEREAS many of our union activities are virtual and some may continue this way after the pandemic:

BE IT RESOLVED that PSAC amend its Family Care Policy to cover costs of family care for members involved in union activities through remote or virtual means which may be done from home or other locations.

M/S/C Jen/Andre

### **SUPPORT FOR INTOX, DETOX, REHABILITATION, SUPERVISED CONSUMPTION SERVICE AND SAFE SUPPLY IN CANADA**

WHEREAS there is a real, ongoing and urgent opioid crisis in Canada; and

WHEREAS more than 12,800 apparent opioid-related deaths occurred between January 2016 and March 2019 in Canada; and

WHEREAS there is an ongoing threat to the funding of existing and new services provided in Canada led by right-wing movements, despite recommendations for increasing these services by agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO):

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC lobby all levels of government for increased funding and support for intoxication, detox, rehabilitation, supervised consumption services, and safe supply; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the PSAC lobby all levels of government for intox, detox, rehabilitation, supervised consumption services and safe supply that take the special needs of all vulnerable clients into consideration.

M/S/C Ann-Marie/Andre

Discussion: Jen noted that in the Committee report from the upcoming National Women's Conference there had been questions in the rationale about the definition of "Intox" and that anyone speaking to this resolution should be prepared to define this for those who may not be informed. Andre answered that Intox has also been referred to as daytox, meaning no overnight stay involved in the treatment. He also noted he liked that this resolution included all options, including safe supply.

### **INDIGENOUS COLLABORATION – LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

WHEREAS there exists a document titled "Protocol on Cooperation and Communication" with the First Nations Leadership Council (BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and Union of BC Indian Chiefs) and BC Federation of Labour; and

WHEREAS the Protocol sets out a mutual objective to "Provide opportunities for relationship-building between the Parties, such as inclusion at each other's events;" and

WHEREAS Reconciliation is an action and not a just a word; and

WHEREAS PSAC can achieve this commitment and objective by building relationships with local Indigenous communities through requesting and reimbursing Indigenous community members to provide Land Acknowledgements at public events:

BE IT RESOLVED that local, provincial, and national PSAC bodies will always seek local Indigenous community members to offer Land Acknowledgements at all public events and will always gift them culturally appropriate honorariums.

M/S/C Crystal/Andre

Discussion: Andre asked if this was the same resolution that had been at the PSAC BC Convention, Todd responded that at the meeting held the previous week we had added the culturally appropriate honorariums. This Resolution had not made it to the floor at the BC Convention, but because it was a concurrence resolution it would be sent forward. Adding it to our package and getting other bodies to send it as well will give it more weight/priority.

### **MEMBER ENGAGEMENT**

WHEREAS members are not aware of efforts made by PSAC, Regional Councils, Components, Area Councils and Locals to advocate for their rights; and

WHEREAS membership engagement is key to having more members involved in union mobilization and actions; and

WHEREAS engaging members and developing a new generation of activists ensures the union strengthens its bargaining power with the Employer to enforce negotiated collective agreements;



BE IT RESOLVED that PSAC nationally develops and delivers a workshop on Member Engagement in the next three-year cycle, which is targeted to leaders at all levels of the union: National, Regional, Component and Local; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that PSAC incorporate new tools and ways of engaging with members that reflects the changes brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that PSAC develop a Membership Engagement kit in the next three-year cycle that will be distributed through the Regional Offices.

M/S/C Ann-Marie, Jen

Discussion : Todd noted that we had previously submitted this to PSAC BC but at the resolutions meeting we had added the middle Be It Resolved to reflect the pandemic and its effects on member engagement.

### **MOVING TOWARD ZERO WASTE**

WHEREAS many organizations, including the PSAC, are making efforts to green their activities and functions; and

WHEREAS all single use items, despite their recyclability, still have a negative environmental impact;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the PSAC stop using all single-use items in all of its activities and adopt a zero waste policy by 2030.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the PSAC amend Regulation 21, the Regulation Governing PSAC Election Expenditures, which currently reads:

*4. Donated literature; posters; handouts; buttons and other paraphernalia; food and refreshments shall be included in the spending limit.*

Be amended as follows:

*4. Donated literature; posters; handouts; buttons and other paraphernalia; food and refreshments shall be included in the spending limit. Any promotional items must be made of recyclable or compostable non-plastic materials.*

M/S/C Ann-Marie/Jen

Discussion : Todd noted the timeline update to reflect what was debated at the regional convention.

### **INDIGENOUS INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCY AND ANTI-RACISM TRAINING**

BECAUSE the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action 23, 24, 27, 57, 60, 63, 84, and 92 demand “skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism” in healthcare, law, religious, education, media, public, and corporate sectors; and

BECAUSE PSAC represents Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) who are undeniably impacted by systemic racism in all workplaces across Canada; and

BECAUSE BIPOC communities are requesting solidarity from all communities, including unions, to fight systemic racism; and

BECAUSE PSAC is committed to the health and safety of all members; and

BECAUSE all PSAC members must be actively anti-racist in their workplaces to ensure the health and safety of BIPOC members;

PSAC WILL demand and lobby for ongoing employer-paid, mandatory anti-racism and Indigenous intercultural competency training for all positions within all bargaining units that PSAC represents until it has been successfully implemented by each employer.

M/S/C Andre/Ann-Marie

Discussion: Andre told the Area Council that Indigenous leaders such as himself and Jill McNeill feel strongly about the importance of this resolution. Employees need to continue to educate themselves so that they don't impact those around them, even inadvertently. Optional training has not been successful and it needs to be mandatory to make an impact on those who may or may not be intentionally impacting others. This resolution demands change, much like mandatory education on issues such as sexism, violence in the workplace have in the past.

### **Round Table**

Jen mentioned that she had won a Labour Day Contest put on by Community Savings and had won the book "On the Line: A History of the British Columbia Labour Movement" by Rod Mickleburg and was looking forward to reading it.

Marcus talked about his enrollment in a Labour Relations course through McMaster University where he is learning about the history of the labour movement and grievance and arbitration. He is taking this course to be able to help his local. He had applied for and received \$200 from the BC Region education fund towards his tuition and put forward a motion to the Area Council for more funding towards his tuition.

Motion:

Marcus Yung requests a \$300.00 subsidy for the remainder of his tuition to attend the Labour Relations course being offered through McMaster University.

M/S/C Marcus/Andre

Monica reported on upcoming education opportunities. There are two upcoming Virtual Grievance Handling courses. One is being offered October 15-17, it is currently at capacity. The second is being held October 28-30 and still has space. If one date works better than the other, still register because if someone drops out spaces will be filled in order of registration. It should be noted that members interested in this course will need to have taken the pre-requisite, Talking Union Basics.

Monica also reminded everyone that the election is in 5 days and don't forget to vote.

Andre let the Area Council know that he would be stepping down from his elected position and taking a leave from his substantive position with his employer after horrible experiences at an assignment he had taken at Statistics Canada. He has been offered a position with an Indigenous organization but hopes that he will still be welcomed as a guest to the Area Council. He wanted to thank the council for sharing space. Todd assured Andre that the Labour Movement is better with him in it and that he had made a difference.

Todd updated the Area Council that he had been elected as a Regional VP for his Component (AGR) and that it meant more work but that he is looking forward to his new role.

Todd also let the delegates know that they can expect discussion on an administrative bylaw change that will be sent out in advance of the meeting.

**Next Meeting**

November 17, 2021, 6PM

Monica noted that this is also PSAC Founders Day, so we may want to consider marking this as well.

**Adjourn**

M/S/C Andre/Jen 7:35 PM