East Fraser Valley Area Council
General Meeting
Wednesday 10th September 2025

In Attendance:

Julie Kelly	President - CIU 20045
Tabitha Swanson	Vice-President - USJE 20040
Susanne Dier	CEIU 20903 – 2nd Alt. Access Coordinator
Karen Thind	CEIU 20903
Kirsty Havard	Alt REVP – RVP USJE 20091
Alan Ostrosina	PSAC BC Indigenous Peoples Coordinator – USJE 20141
Celine Ahodekon	PSAC BC Racially Visible Coordinator
Kendy Michaloski	CIU 20045
Laura Wildly	USJE 20017
Tracy Zylyk	USJE 20011
Julie Diels-Nuefeld	PSAC Staff Rep

Regrets:

Pippa Mann	Secretary - USJE 20130

Meeting called to order at 6:35pm by Julie.

Acknowledgement of Indigenous Territories:

Julie provided the Indigenous Land Acknowledgement.

Agenda:

- Call to Order
- Acknowledgement of Indigenous Territory
- Introductions
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Previous Minutes – 16th April 2025
- Presidents Report
- Finance Report
- Approval of Purchase of Survivors Flag
- Election for Treasurer position
- Events Updates
- Presentation of Resolutions for Tri-annual convention (Discussion only)
- PSAC Staff Advisor Update
- New Business/Roundtable
- Adjournment

East Fraser Valley Area Council
General Meeting
Wednesday 10th September 2025

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion to approve **(M/S/C) Julie/Alan/Carried**

Approval of the previous minutes 16th April 2025

Minutes from planning session also provided (June 2025)

(M/S/C) Julie/Alan/Carried

Presidents Report:

Julie provided the Presidents Report (attached)

PRESIDENT REPORT September 2025.pdf

Finance Report:

Financial report was presented by Karen.

Request for approval of purchase of a survivors flag - $105

(M/S/C) Julie/Laura/Carried

Election for Treasurer Position

Julie Diels-Nuefeld conducted the Election.

Nominated – Karen Thind – Confirmed Nomination

(Nominate/Second) Kirsty/Laura

Nominated – Susanne Dier – Confirmed Nomination

(Nominate/Second) Karen/Alan

Karen and Susanne spoke to their nomination. Alan thanked them both for stepping up and how far the Area Council has come in the last 3 years.

Election conducted – **Karen elected for the position.**

Oath of Office taken.

Events Update

This year the Area Council has had 5 successful events to date.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – Tuesday 30th September – 11:30-3:30 - Sardis Park, 6898 School Lance, Chilliwack.

This event offers a time to reflect, connect, and engage with the community in a meaningful way. The day will begin with a cultural opening, followed by local artisans, food trucks, and informational booths from various community nonprofits. Activities for children will also be available. This free event is an opportunity to learn, reflect, and contribute to a more inclusive future.

PumpkinFest – Saturday 18th October – 1-3pm - Aldor Acres Family Farm – 24990 84 Ave, Langley

Registration is up on the website, depending on numbers who register, we can get additional funding. On entry they will get a sticker for admission, we have the Petting Zoo party area, where we will have an information booth and Halloween snacks. Everyone will get a voucher for a pumpkin picked form the pumpkin patch and a bag of animal feed. They can stay as long as they want, we have the party area for the 2 hour period.

Presentation of resolutions for Tri-annual convention

Suggested resolutions

TITLE: CALL FOR A REALIZED ACT OF RECONCILIATION

ORIGINATOR: EAST FRASER VALLEY AREA COUNCIL

LANGUAGE OF ORIGIN: ENGLISH

WHEREAS: On October 1st 2009, the PSAC Statement of Principles on Indigenous Peoples Rights state in part "... It is incumbent on us an union to develop the capacity of our full membership to engage in the kind of awareness-raising, leadership and political action that draw attention and action to the struggles faced by Indigenous Peoples"

WHEREAS: in order to effectively challenge the inequality that exists for Indigenous Peoples, we demand for the creation for a 'Member at Large' seat on the Alliance Executive Committee (or Equivalent) to further represent the interests of the PSAC Indigenous membership, with full voice and vote. "Nothing about us without us"

BE IT RESOLVED that section 12 (2)(a) of the PSAC constitution, the composition of the AEC be amended to include a permanent At-Large Indigenous Representative with full voting rights.

Word Count: 138

Alan gave the background on this resolution.

Kirsty brought forward the following Resolution.

Resolution Title: Timely Appeals for Denied Disability Insurance Claims

Whereas members are frequently denied Long-Term Disability (LTD) claims by Sun Life and left without income, creating serious financial hardship; and

Whereas some members return to work before they are medically ready, or unsuccessfully seek medical retirement, with only limited supports such as 26 weeks of EI-Sickness available; and

Whereas appeals to the Disability Insurance Program Board of Management (DIPBOM) face delays of 12–18 months due to record volumes and insufficient government resourcing; and

Whereas growing recognition of mental health conditions as legitimate disabilities means high appeal volumes will continue;

Be it resolved that the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) lobby the federal government to properly fund and staff the DIPBOM so that appeals are reviewed and decided within a maximum of three (3) months.

Supporting Rationale / Background Notes

Members who apply for Long-Term Disability (LTD) benefits through SunLife often face denials, leaving them without income during a period of significant vulnerability. While appeal rights exist—to SunLife directly, to the Disability Insurance Program Board of Management (DIPBOM), and through private legal action—many members are either unaware of these options or face extreme delays in accessing a fair hearing.

When members are denied LTD benefits:

- They are **unpaid during this time** and often experience severe financial hardship.
- Some attempt to **return to work prematurely**, risking further harm, simply to regain income.
- Others apply for **medical retirement to access their pension**, but such applications are often denied.
- There are **very limited public supports available**. The most common is 26 weeks of EI-Sickness benefits, which provides only temporary relief.
- Many members are ineligible for provincial disability programs because their claim is disputed and they remain technically employed.

The appeals process is meant to provide a fair and timely review of denied claims. However, the DIPBOM is currently facing unacceptable delays of **12 to 18 months**, largely due to record numbers of appeals in recent years. This situation has been compounded by the

federal government's failure to allocate adequate resources, despite repeated calls to increase funding and staffing for the Board.

While some suggest this backlog may ease post-COVID, the **increased recognition of mental health injuries as legitimate disabilities**—combined with systemic challenges in insurability—strongly indicates that higher numbers of appeals will persist in the future. Without sufficient government action, delays will continue, leaving members without income and without justice.

This resolution calls on PSAC to lobby for urgent resourcing of the DIPBOM so that all appeals can be heard and resolved within a maximum timeframe of **three months**. This is an ambitious but necessary goal to ensure members are not left in limbo for more than a year without income, benefits, or clarity about their future.

Voting on the Resolutions will take place at the next meeting as well as voting for our Delegate to the Tri-annual convention.

Staff Updates

The Fall Education is on the website to sign up (Course Listings – PSAC British Columbia)

WFA Sessions will be available shortly. There will be 1 hour sessions for members and 3 hour sessions for Local Executives.

On next years budget, there will not be a donation line, so that Councils/Committees can focus on member engagement events. Any requests for donations will need to go to the DASH Committee, this will not include affiliation fees.

Reminder that if you have a member either going on or on LWOP, they can complete the Membership in Good Standing Request Form. Membership in Good Standing Request | Public Service Alliance of Canada

Provided the link for the PSAC Life Insurance for members. Will provide clarification as to if it is valid for retired members. Coughlin - Group life and critical illness insurance | Public Service Alliance of Canada *The insurance coverage ceases at the earlier termination of PSAC membership, your retirement or age 80.*

Posting for Regional Rep closes on Friday.

Roundtable

Kirsty – Asked regarding components and WFA. USJE is going to see it in October. Service Canada has already started and 92 people have been let go in the Western Region of which 14 are in our area.

Kendy – CBSA is starting to go after members on medical accommodations (over 2 years) CSC is also doing this.

Tabitha – Is on the Board for Chilliwack Pride and they are potential disbanding the organisation due to lack of board members. Will keep us updated.

Celine – Thanked us having her at the meeting.

Julie – Motion to pay for the dinner at the meeting $233.84 – Second – Kendy – Carried

Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm

Next Meeting

Wednesday 12th November 2025 – 6:30pm