

Women working for Women

Minutes BC PSAC Women Chairs March 29, 2012

Attendance: Jennifer Ho Vancouver, Virginia Vaillancourt Victoria,
Patt Holmes Prince George, Parveen Deepak Prince George
Roberta Gourlie Okanagan, Kelly Megyesi BC

Special Guests: Tracy Shudo Access Rep, Erica Yang Youth Rep

Review of previous minutes

Action Items:

Blog – Virginia / on hold at this time. Kelly is completing a blog on the website.

Flags – Virginia – carried forward. Logo – Kelly – still scheduled for spring.

Vancouver member Nagham Taha has started doing some design work. March 8th – on meeting agenda.

International Women's Day

Okanagan – PSAC Job Cut Hurts Women Materials distributed. Member email. Penticton and Kelowna Vigils, Women safety course Vernon.

Vancouver – Lots of activities in lower mainland. Participated in IES dinner and NDP IWD event. Celine worked on IWD in Abbotsford and they had several well-publicized events including raising \$3000, collecting 270 pairs of shoes, etc.

Victoria – Event held March 21st on International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Foods from different ethnic backgrounds. Speakers – nutritionist, etc. Great time.

North - District Labour had a Women and trades presentation. IWD breakfast and member Kiera MacCormick did up postcards, fridge magnets, bags, etc for tables. Roses and door prizes at regional women's committee meeting. New sisters attended the meeting. It was a great solidarity event as we took our Standing Together pictures. Artwork from youth and other unions on Women's Day decorated the walls. It was a great way to network with other union members and a great information on resources in the community for women.

BC - Conference call hosted by P Ducharme hosted by and R Benson/ A Cote First call all women.chairs across Canada reporting out on activities

Website updated with Women Chair's statement and IWD featured. Link sent out via Patrick. Participated in screening of the film Miss Representation and would recommend to the chairs to watch it if they get an opportunity. Once the video is available for sale we should purchase one. Participated in the development of the BC Fed Women's Committee downtown celebration which was held March 10, 2012. Attended the Vancouver dinner and an IWD breakfast.

Triennial Convention

In the lead-up to last triennial the Women's Conference had a very successful resolution process. However at the triennial no women's resolution hit the floor. This convention a few of our resolutions are coming in at a higher priority.

Childcare #4 on general resolutions
Violence Against Aboriginal Women #7
Leadership training for women #8

These are the resolutions we will be trying to have passed. Virginia felt that men as well as women are our allies and we should all be talking it up even before convention. Jennifer to email us the resolutions from her kit and everyone agreed to fully promote. Tracy and Parveen outlined different ideas for promoting the resolutions including taking these resolutions to area councils, etc.. Patt suggested that Kelly mention the priorities at the regional meeting.

It is unfortunate that the resolution to have a National Women's committee rated #94. We were hoping to have full-time staff representation and to have the regional chairs working together.

Kelly will be attending as an observer and Jennifer and Roberta are delegates.

Kelly has put together the start of an action to have a visual display at convention. Asked the group for input into ideas. Starting plan includes buttons, all the same except a variation of colour depending on region. Kelly has designed the button and shared with group. Parveen not sure about having the different colours as she didn't want anything to be divisive. Group felt that the similar design would be the main part. Following group discussion... some ideas included ribbons for the pins, having a cloth on the table for writing on, writing on the wall – what the Harper cuts mean to Canadian women, resolution talking notes for our key resolutions, raffle, free draws, women's survey or women fact true/ false sheet, finish this sentence, pamphlets, etc. Kelly will be on National call on Monday and will take some of these ideas forward. BC picked purple for their colour.

Congratulations – Patt wanted to add a special congratulations to Sisters Virginia & Jennifer. Virginia for her presentation at the union school as a panelists and Jennifer for her work at the school even when sick. This needs to be celebrated and other women need to hear that these are women that have come up through the women's program.

BC Regional Women's Conference – 2013. Kelly will check into the planning for this. Kelly mentioned that she is hoping to have a very creative approach to the conference, possibly an aboriginal theme, and that women leave the conference with a drive to get more involved. Virginia asked if we could find the evaluations from last conference. Discussion of some of the problems from last conference. It is the hope that if we are well organized we won't run into the same issues. Erica made a suggestion that we incorporate Diversity in the conference. Kelly will follow-up to see if she can access previous evaluations.

Training

All were in agreement that training is needed. After financial discussions earlier today, it was determined that there are definitely training dollars that we should be able to access. Patt commented that in the past there was always training for women committees. There has been training for chairs, co-chairs, treasurers and in some years there has even been more than one training session. We have definitely fallen behind with this and we need to put some plans together.

Okanagan Update – Women’s Course.

Date is set for middle of September. Kelly has developed the brochure and application and it will be kicked off in May. It will be important for all chairs to attend and it is hoped that the course is successful and that the chairs will want to hold it in their respective areas. If possible we will also try and have some separate training for the chairs at the same time.

Summer Institute – Kelly agreed to check into dates for this. The chairs are keen to have participation and have seen the commitment and work coming out of the 2012 institute. This is generally not fully paid for but members can apply for a subsidy. [following the meeting Kelly checked with BCFED and this is done every second year so the next course will be 2013]

Membership – Virginia raised the issue of our members not getting our information. We need to ensure that our messages are being disseminated and not stopped. Discussion of crossing over between the other equity groups and through the area council.

December 6 - Kelly floated the idea of taking our individual Dec 6 events and trying to co-ordinate a BC wide event. She asked Virginia if she would consider taking lead on the event and Virginia was in agreement with the possibility of that. The general feeling was that a BC wide action was a good idea especially if we could tie it in with media. Each region is very different so chairs should take some time to think about the idea. Also, they should consider whether they would be willing to contribute money from their budgets for a joint action.



As our meeting was after hours – group was unable to continue meeting as everyone was too tired. Stop the Cuts and Round Table differed to next meeting. It is unfortunate that time can’t be allotted during daytime hours and women chairs would like Kelly to continue to advocate for time during council meetings.

Next meeting – via conference call- end of May or early June.
Please let Kelly know your availability for May 27, May 31, June 7.

**Thank you to everyone for the absolutely great participation.
Thank you to our guest Tracy and Erica. Your time is appreciated.**