

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Members with Disabilities Action Committee (MDAC)
May 4, 2017
Pat McGrath boardroom, 11 Holland Ave**

A // In Attendance:

- Behiye Cinkilic (UNE)
- Marc Masson (UNE)
- Michel Tondreau (GSU)
- Brigitte Coghill (NRU)
- Jo-An Munday (UNDE)
- Alan Craig (UTE)
- Denise Camus (CEIU)
- Benoit Durand (UNE)
- Rob Leo (UNE)
- Carla Ross (UNE)

B // Absent:

- Peter Hyduk (UNDE)
- Grace Morgan (UHE)
- Louise Belisle (UNDE)
- Greg McGillis (GSU)

C // Sending Regrets:

- Jay Castonguay (PSAC Rgn Rep)

D // Guest:

- Shelly-Anne Morrison

1 // Call to Order/ Introduction

Meeting was called to order at 17:30 hr and members and guest(s) introduced themselves.

2 // Adoption of Agenda

The meeting agenda was reviewed and accepted:

- Motion : - Michel Tondreau
- 2nd : - Marc Masson
- Carried

3 // Guest Speaker

Shelly-Anne Morrison, a speaker with tunnel vision was invited to discuss her advocacy and the technology available to assist people with similar challenges. Tunnel vision refers to the loss of peripheral vision in the eye; they can only see things which are visible within a perimeter of a circular frame. It would be the equivalent to going through life peering down a straw, and accepting the limited view at the other end as being all that could be seen.

Her advocacy takes her to festivals to consult with organizers about accessibility to working with the city to make certain that public areas are safe for people with related conditions. For example the descending stairs at Confederation Park from the Mackenzie King Bridge now has grooves etched at the bottom so that people with visual impairments can feel their way down and distinguish that they have reached the end. She also teaches people how to approach disabled people who may require help. The good Samaritan is directed to politely inquire, "If they can help", and if the answer is Yes, then ask, "What can they do to help?" Shelley is also heavily involved in sports. She is a triathlete and advocate for her fellow triathletes.

During Shelly-Anne's oration, a number of her day to day assistive devices were presented, from a white cane to a page reader. She also exhibited a fancy piece of technology, eye glasses with a mounted display which provides users with added, detailed visual information. Because of her

collective activism, it has helped Canadian society progress towards an accommodation mandate. This is illustrated in elevators that now announce the floors to the upcoming OC Transpo initiative to broadcast on exterior speakers the number and direction of the transit vehicle.

4 // Review and Adoption of Minutes from April's meeting

The minutes from the last meetings were reviewed and small grammatical additions were made. Motion to adopt with changes accepted:

- Motion : - Michel Tondreau
- 2nd : - Marc Masson
- Carried

5// Matters arising from last meeting (s)

i/ 2017 PSAC NATIONAL EQUITY CONFERENCES, March 24 – 28

This Toronto conference provided delegates with the opportunity to take part in various workshops, caucuses, equity conference elections and resolutions debates.

MDAC was well represented at the event with Michel, Alan, Jo-An, Grace and Behiye in attendance. They found the speakers fascinating and they highlighted some of the more memorable ones who had a flare for the dramatic. The audience was encouraged to discuss their own limitations and it was noted that depending on where you lived in Canada, one person's physical/ hidden health issues can be seen/regarded differently and be accommodated differently.

Some suggestions that our members made to improve the conference concerned the protracted resolution/ election discussions, debates and voting which served only to waste time and limit the number of ideas crossing the floor. It was recommended that more emphasis be placed on maintaining a time limit in these respective areas, while stream lining the process.

i/ Budget

To be discussed next meeting.

One area to review concerns providing tips to our food delivery people. Since our cuisine has always arrived on time and prepared just the way we like it, would it be feasible to provide gratuities to ensure future excellent service?

iii// MDAC Website Update/ Logo

We are looking forward to the live posting of MDAC's new website design and reducing the layers of clicking from the host PSAC NCR website to arrive at our perspective page.

6 // Volunteer selection for manning the MDAC Table at the Regional Triennial Convention"

Louise said she would still be available on Saturday, and it was also suggested that one person may not be enough to staff the table. As an incentive to our membership to help work the table, the NCR has agreed to pay for parking and the lunch, if receipts are provided. Mileage over 40 kms will also be covered. Our MDAC promotional cards have been translated and are ready to be displayed on our promotional table along with the rest of our proud swag.

Behiye discussed the conference agenda, some noteworthy workshops and the resolution's voting format. It is anticipated that MDAC's four previously submitted ones will make it to the floor for debate. With Denise, Behiye as our delegates and Jo-An as our observer, we will be well represented and confident that they will be able to clarify any questions that may arise concerning our disability related resolutions and help facilitate a positive vote.

There was a quick discussion on the newly proposed Bill C-27 which is seen as an attack on good defined benefit pensions that could allow employers to break their pension promises to thousands of workers and retirees across the country. There will be a rally to the Prime Minister's office during the first day of the NCR Triennial Convention to protest the Bill.

7 // Round Table

The committee bestowed a Big Welcome Back to our member Benoit; because of family responsibilities, he had to step away from MDAC for a couple of years. Now that he has returned, he marked his vigorous homecoming with a discussion on the Joint Union/ Management Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion Program that was launched in the fall to examine/ strengthen diversity and inclusion in the Public Service. It was noted in our group dialogue that some union organizations applaud this curriculum as a step in the right direction, while others see it as “window dressing” to highlight an issue, that won’t really be addressed. It was concluded that MDAC members should trust their gut instinct when determining their participation in this project.

Denise expanded on one of the 2017 PSAC NATIONAL EQUITY CONFERENCES discussions concerning the barriers that Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) are facing in Canada. The program is primarily known for allowing employers to bring in workers to do jobs that are going unfilled in Canada, but the plan has been criticized for being abusive and exploitive. Some of the arguments point to the TFW wages being less than their Canadian counterparts to foreign professionals arriving to find that their credentials are not recognized and are then obligated to take on menial labor because those are the only jobs available. In many cases workers are duped into believing the TFW is an entry point to immigration and some temporary foreign workers are exploited because their work permits are tied to the employer who brought them to Canada which means they are not going to complain or if they do complain they could lose their job. MDAC must get involved; we are encouraged to address this issue within our personal/ professional networks and help bring this modern day indentured servitude to an end.

MDAC had a group discussion regarding our agenda which is now electronically provided a week in advance of our meetings. Our members welcomed the information early and understand that they can add/ modify the topics to the list of items prior to it being actioned. In regards to sanctioning the previous meeting’s draft minutes from being forwarded early, this is to ensure that miss information or confidential facts are not disseminated to our general membership and possibly passed on to the rest of the public. Technical information that has been presented at the preceding meeting, that the minute taker did not fully understand or information that was supposed to

be confidential like names or pending case details that were accidentally recorded, will have a chance to be modified during the subsequent in-progress meeting. Once the draft is approved, the minutes are posted live on our website.

Please Note: For accommodation reasons, the draft can be provided to individual members on a case by case basis.

Jo-An mentioned about the poor bathroom situation in her office and her not being accommodated. Members shared some of their experiences and provided some advice. This subject will later be discussed with the presence of an expert on the subject.

11 // Conclusion

- **Date of Next Meeting :** - June 1, 2017
- **Adjournment:** - 19:30 pm.
- **Minutes prepared and accepted :**

Marc Masson
Secretary

Behiye Cinkilic
MDAC Chair

Date

Date