



Monthly RVAC Meeting

Date: 19/Feb/2015

Location: 11 Holland Avenue, Ottawa

CO-Chairs: Carl Laguerre and Zelma Buckley

Minutes prepared by: Elizabeth Pecana (Secretary)

Present:

Carl Laguerre
Zelma Buckley
Antoine Moise
Paul Abi-Mansour
Behiye Cinkilic
Hayley Millington
Elizabeth Pecana
Joanne Robinson

Regrets:

Sandra DiGnagbo
Debbie Thomas
Aryn Keshavjee
Paulette Barker
Sandra Griffith-Bonaparte
Michael Clement
April Malhota
Steve Sharma

Guest

Marie Francoise

Resource Person

Amarkai Laryea

Meeting called to order by Co-Chair Carl Laguerre at 6:06 PM.

1 - Adoption of the Agenda

A motion to accept the Agenda was made by Sister Hayley Millington and seconded by Sister Elizabeth Pecana. **All in favour except Brother Paul Abi-Mansour who voted against the motion.**

2 - Minutes of the December 2014 Meeting

Brother Paul pointed out an omission in the minutes under Item 3b – Feedback from the HR Recognition Awards Event. He said that the discussion went on for too long on this subject, indicating that it was not a proper investment of time.

Motion to accept the minutes as amended was made by Sis Joanne Robinson and seconded by Sister Elizabeth Pecana. **All in favour. Motion carried.**

3 - Business arising from December 2014 Minutes

Brother Paul stressed the need to focus on racially visible issues affecting our membership as a whole. This generated some discussion on the floor. Sister Hayley Millington commented on the need to network and engage the community to support racially visible issues. Brother Carl talked about budgeting time spent on social issues. He added that a separate meeting should be called to identify our action items while continuing to support social/community engagements. Brother Antoine said we need to add more voices to join our cause, not to subtract voices.

4 - Black History Month Movie

Location: Pat McGrath boardroom with three TV screens.

Date: 26 February 2015 if available after consultation with Sister Mado Bachand. If not, it will be held on 24 February 2015.

Movie: Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom (First Choice), Black or White (Second Choice)

It was decided to invite all the PSAC committees to this event. There was some concern about the imminent timing of the event.

Brother Carl passed around a Senate promotional with Black History activities for the month of February 2015.

5 - International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21)

Sister Zelma met with Brother Tony Nicolas from the Aboriginal Action Circle. They both agreed to do an activity together on March 21, 2015 since the problem of racial discrimination was common to both groups. However, despite follow up, there does not seem to be much progress on the proposal. Sister Zelma suggested a Panel Discussion on racial discrimination. Since Islamophobia is on the rise in Canada, it was consensus to have a Speaker from the Canadian Arab Community. Brother Amarkai will provide names of potential speakers. JK Wylie room is booked for this occasion.

6- Pamphlet for the Regional Committees

PSAC NCR Education Committee has launched a drive to produce a pamphlet that showcases the mandate and description of each committee, designed to attract member participation.

7- CLC Election Preparation Conference Ottawa

Date and Location: 27 - 28 February 2015 at Delta Hotel Ottawa

It is a political action conference equipping people to hold conversational dialogues to build political support, to reach out to different communities and engage in effective campaigning.

8 - Leadership Training and Regional Priorities

Union leaders feel the need for a makeover, moving from a service model to organising and engaging the membership. This training is happening all across the country. All participants will be paired up with mentors.

9 - Immigration Case

The case of the two year old son stranded in India has caught the attention of the media. Ignorance of Canadian immigration laws and heavy handed uncompromising approach of immigration officers have resulted in a fractured family. Since legal recourse has been denied, appealing to the Minister of Immigration on compassionate grounds to re-unify the family is the only remaining option. To this end, Brother Amarkai is tasked with drafting a letter of appeal on humanitarian and compassionate grounds to reunite the family. The Executive will review and approve before sending it to the Minister.

10 - Committee Training by Amarkai

Since Human Rights is a huge topic, Brother Amarkai needed a sense of what we wanted and where to begin. Brother Carl advised him to start from the basics and move up from there so that all can benefit from this training.

It was consensus that this training could prove to be a draw for member participation. Brother Amarkai was tasked to prepare a bilingual write-up about his course which would be distributed to RVAC membership. Brother Carl suggested that after we were done with Business Arising from the Minutes, we hand the floor over to Brother Amarkai for the training.

11 – Varia

- Sister Elizabeth talked about emailing the list of elected RVAC officers to the membership
- Sister Joanne talked about the Health and Wellness Seminar which is scheduled to be held Saturday, 11 April 2015 from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm, at 233 Gilmour. Admission is free. Light lunch included. Discussions on support for family caregivers, budgeting, estate planning, cluster living
- Brother Antoine talked about his participation in the Union Development Program.
- Brother Amarkai said that he would email the quote for a pin magnet to the executive. The pin would showcase RVAC's mandate.

- Sister Zelma wanted an update about the RVAC training as discussed with Sister Johanne Labine. Brother Amarkai said plans were in motion and that he was scheduled to meet with Sister Johanne about the training.
- Sister Sandra DiGnagbo is part of the General Resolution Committee. She needs to build support for a couple of RVAC resolutions. She is seeking to connect with delegates or people who know delegates who will be going to the PSAC Convention.
- As previously discussed, the Equity Delegates who were elected at the various Equity conferences in November 2013 are not considered members of the National Human Rights Committee (NHR). The Female Racially Visible members Delegate who resides here in the NCR, asked to attend the meetings as an Observer and a ruling was made that she could not. Sister Zelma has brought to the attention of the committee a document that lists the make-up of the NBOD Committees and it identifies the Equity Delegates as members of the NHR Committee. She thinks that this is a concern that should be taken to the PSAC as it will be difficult for Equity Delegates to speak on issues impacting members across the country when they have no involvement with the issues that are being brought to the NHR committee. Sister Zelma promised to send the document to Brother Amarkai.

With no further items to discuss a Motion to adjourn was made by Brother Antoine and seconded by Sister Elizabeth. **Motion carried at 7:50 pm.**

Next meeting, 19 March 2015 at 5:45pm