

BC Human Rights Committee Minutes of May 10, 2006 meeting

In attendance -

-Vancouver RO: *Tracy Shudo (chair), Sanda Turner, Rex Go, Deanna Wilson, Parveen Deepak, Monica Urrutia (PSAC staff – minutes)*

-via teleconference: *Floyd Knelsen, Todd Harding, Craig Langston, Carolyn McGillivray*

Regrets: Sargy Chima (there were telephone difficulties), Mandi Schubert, Katie Kassam, Carol Pegura, Ravinder Kunar

1. Introductions, review of terms of reference

-Tracy led a round of introductions, particularly welcoming new members to the committee

-Monica shared excerpts of the committee's terms of reference to give new members an idea of the committee's mandate (full text is on the Regional Website Human Rights page)

2. PSAC Convention report back

-Monica shared that Carol Pegura, as the person who went to PSAC convention as an Observer on behalf of the BCHRC, could not report back at this meeting due to a personal emergency, but will be submitting a written report and will be glad to answer any questions at the next meeting

-general comments shared: disappointed that there was little business completed during the convention; more determined that the HRC should have more resolution writing workshops, and more specifically, floor strategy training; some discussion on resolution asking for delegate status to Convention for women, mentioned that 'strongest' opponents were other women themselves; attended as an observer, now more determined than ever to be a delegate so can speak to the issues; resolution to split the Unity conference passed with little problem; some clarification on HRC co-existing with equity-group specific sub-committees (e.g. and HRC in a particular region can exist at the same time as a Racially Visible committee in the same region)

Related to this discussion, Carolyn shared that the PSAC Equal Opportunities committee has been advocating for a Human Rights specific Grievance Handling course. The committee has been promised a "Frequently Asked Question's" sheet and a course for stewards. Should be coming to our region soon.

3. National Aboriginal, Inuit, Metis (NAIM) network – information dissemination idea

-Monica shared that there is a NAIM presentation available, which includes a PowerPoint segment. It could be an idea to have as a topic for a future meeting. It should include the B.C. representatives on the NAIM.

-further discussion also shared that some of the current active members may have already received the presentation once or twice, so we should instead target a larger more general membership meeting to present this information.

4. Report back on National Council for Visible Minorities (NCVM) Western Conference

-Katie attended this event (learned about the event as a result of the BCHRC's February meeting).

-Monica shared the information Katie emailed. Monica read out the NCVM backgrounder, Katie's new role for NCVM-Vancouver, and that they are planning a gathering for November 30, 2006. **Monica** will post the backgrounder as requested by Katie, onto the Regional HRC website.

5. Review of January action plan

-Monica briefly reviewed the January action plan with the committee. In particular, highlighting some of the major ideas not yet implemented:

- create a poster to raise the profile of the committee
- desire to hold more educational meetings
- continuing the self-identification campaign

6. Wheels in Motion activities

-Craig shared that there are "Wheels in Motion" events, sponsored by the Rick Hansen foundation, happening all over the province. He would like to create a team of 5 to participate in the track event happening in Burnaby at the Swan Guard Stadium.

People can be sponsors or pledge. Craig and Tracy committed to the team so far. Carolyn is willing to donate. Todd is involved in his local "Wheels in Motion" event.

Craig will send more specific information to be disseminated to the committee members and posted on the website to help recruit for the team.

7. Issue roundtable

-Sanda shared current challenges with Statistical Survey Operations who is a Separate Employer that is constantly reducing work hours below the 12.5 hr/wk requirement for members to qualify as an "employee" and therefore a "member" of the PSAC. This impacts activists who are very involved in their union, and creates an additional challenge of trying to find someone to replace those who leave. Some comments were to think about how our daily activities (e.g. census forms) can be helping keep people employed (i.e. field interviewers) or not (i.e. filling out the form on-line).

-Tracy shared that there are a lot of students in her worksite doing the same work she is doing but for several dollars an hour less. This is clear exploitation of younger workers. Carolyn commented that the PSAC passed a policy on student employment with strategies and actions included, while also appreciating the fact that CEUDA has been doing a lot of this work on students for a number of years.

-Tracy also shared that Employment Insurance recently sent out one million flyers to employers informing them how to file their Record of Employment (ROE's) on-line. This definitely affects members she works with because it is cutting back severely the work that had been done for years and years by hard-working public servants.

-Todd shared that EI in Kamloops has all of their files electronically and that many commented they can see job loss down the road due to technology.

Overall comment on this issue: there are hopes that the new team of leadership in the PSAC will be able to take an active role on this issue.

-Monica commented that a lot of this discussion is definitely relatable to the current “Defending quality public services” policy paper and campaign passed at convention last week. And also shared that most collective agreements have some aspects of “technological change / Work Force Adjustment” measure that members need to be vigilant in asserting these rights

8. National Day Against Homophobia

-This is May 17th.

-Carolyn came across some information regarding this. She will email it to Monica for distribution.

-Todd already received a package and will post it in his workplace.

9. Next meeting: Tuesday, June 6, 2006, 5:45 – 8pm

Food: **Tracy Shudo**

Chair: **Carolyn McGillivray**

Minute taker: **Rex Go**

Ideas for next meeting: **Todd** will be presenting an important advance for those with sight impairment (e.g. screen reader technology); a brief Convention report from **Carol Pegura**. Also there should be some discussion on who is running for Alternate Regional Executive Vice President, and if the committee will be raising questions, etc. to the candidate(s).

Any other suggested agenda items should be forwarded to Monica before Friday, June 3rd.

The committee agreed that it will take a break during the summer and reconvene in September. Craig suggested that the NAIM presentation could be slotted for the September meeting, perhaps with a Salmon BBQ to appeal to people? – more discussion needed.

Meeting ended at 7:30 p.m.