

Syria - Antigonish Families Embrace (SAFE) Steering Committee - AGENDA

Thursday, Oct 12, 2023, 6:30-8:30PM

Appleseed Court Community Room, 29 Appleseed Dr

Present: Jack, Anuj, Mike, Maria, Harry, Bronwen, Karen (notes), Eric

Regrets: Sheila

1) Minutes and Business arising from Meeting Sept 12, 2023

Minutes accepted, moved by Harry; 2nd Mike

2) Board meeting structure

Maria suggested we make some changes to the structure of our meetings: add a “business arising” items (action items) to our November meeting agenda, and follow ‘business arising’ with committee reports: finance, policy, housing, etc.

Decisions:

Harry will send out the family/ pending arrivals status report before each board meeting with any changes from the previous month highlighted. At the Board meeting we can discuss questions arising from the written report.

Actions:

Maria/Eric (Governance and policy committee) will bring more meeting structure suggestions to another meeting of the board

3) Financial Report (Anuj)

Update on matching fundraising efforts: 34 people contributed \$14,000 to date. Largest donation \$3,000; smallest \$25. Need to put final push on.

Corporate sponsorship possibilities: will require a group plan to get this going. Need to decide on a financial target. Anuj is looking for another member for the finance committee.

Anuj has developed a first draft powerpoint we can use with potential corporate sponsors

Decision:

Financial report accepted. Moved by Harry; 2nd Eric

1) SAH: Arrived Families and Sponsorship Application updates (Harry)

See attached document (changes since Sept 12 are highlighted)

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Actions

WAFSA is looking for language support for newcomers

Anuj will be getting office space from ACALA for 2-3 days/week. SAFE can use space.

Contact Anuj.

Anuj suggested that we can find a way to leave sponsorship money (see policy below) with a CG until a family arrives, with a legal commitment to the SAH that funds be transferred to the SAH at the time of arrival.

We need to develop MOUs with our CGs. This could include a training requirement for CG members. There are templates.

Decisions

Our SAH has 5 spaces remaining for 2023. Pictou Safe Harbour has all funds available for a family of 5. Harry has told them to begin the application process

POLICY: For private sponsorships, CGs are required to provide 100% of RAP, as well as settlement and contingency funds, at the point of application.

Moved by Harry; 2nd Jack; passed

4) Conferences/ workshops

Maria attended Newcomer Mental Health webinars

Supporting Clients with Mental Health Challenges
Trauma and Resilience in Refugees

Harry attended an RSTP workshop on data systems; RefSIS (Refugee Sponsorship Information System) product to hold application data. SAFE no longer responsible for data holding. The new IRCC portal will allow CGs to enter their own applications; not sure how SAH oversight works with this change.

Jack will attend Oct 17 Poverty Reduction event (Jack)

Bronwen will attend IRCC New Post-Arrival Requirements for Private Sponsorships (Oct 11/2PM or Oct 25/7PM)

Mark and Karen will attend Prentice Institute for Global Population and Economy workshop on "Moving In, Moving On & Moving Up: Exploring Population Movements to and from Rural Canada" hosted in Antigonish October 18.

Action

Maria will send information by email about trauma and resilience in refugees. PTSD has lost meaning. Use language of grief and loss.

5) Education committee:

Action

Mike taking a family member to open house at NSCC. Mike offered to invite others to

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join. (Some WAFAs people might be interested) Jack said NSCC's will arrange a private tour for potential students

6) Long term planning

Anuj suggested we look at developing a 5 year plan. It would be good to have a sense of how many families the SAH collection of community groups are wanting to bring here

The IRCC 'Pool' comes open in November

Action

Harry will send email to CGs requesting information about numbers of people groups are hoping to bring to our area

7) Housing

AlAhmed – looking for larger home

AlMashoud – family of 5. Yasser working away. Could exchange housing with Almohamad

Storage locker Knights of Coumbus storage locker. Mike has keys and is – who has keys (Mike) and is point person for access & contents.

Not much left in Sommers Rd locker. Bronwen talking about a more shared locker space.

Sleep Country in Halifax will give mattresses for free

8) Year-end celebration

Update coming soon

9) Next meeting

November 8th. 2nd Wednesday going forward