

**Syria-Antigonish Families Embrace  
Steering Committee Meeting**

August 10, 2021  
7:00-8:30 pm  
Online

Present: Mark Ballard, Jack Beaton, Bronwen Cooke, Harry Daemen, Lucille Harper, Othman Soufan

Regrets: Mary Ballard, Marla Gaudet, Sheila Sears, Peter Wade

**Minutes**

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**Agenda Item: Minutes and Business Arising** Lucille

Discussion:

Business Arising: The RAP Review group will meet August 19.

Actions:

Harry moved to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2021 meeting.

Seconded by Jack.

All approved the motion.

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**Agenda Item: Treasurer's Report** Lucille

Discussion:

When Tri-Heart merged with SAFE, some funds were transferred to the SAFE account. An agreement was made that the money will be used for sponsorship of the Al Hawa family or, if sponsorship does not proceed, the money will be given to the Al Hawa family for their travel loan and other expenses.

Actions:

Harry moved to transfer the Tri-Heart money to a Term Deposit until it is needed.

Seconded by Mark.

All approved the motion.

A Steering Committee meeting will be held on August 31 to further discuss finances.

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**Agenda Item: Family Arrivals** Lucille

Discussion:

Walaa Hadhad and Sulaiman Brothers: no further word. Apartments secured. Awaiting notice of arrival.

Almohamd Family: some extra paperwork is in progress.

Westville Fair Hearts: Lucille has been in touch with the embassy to ensure that the application is in progress and proceeding through the steps as expected.

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**Agenda Item: Applications Underway 2021**

Lucille

Discussion:

Abdulkader Mohmed Sabbagh, family of 5, residing in Egypt. Yaser Almashhoud to co-sponsor. Funds committed. Awaiting for funds to transfer to our bank account and then application will be submitted.

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**Agenda Item: Changes to By-laws—3 Year Board Terms**

Lucille

Discussion:

A notice was sent to all members of the SAFE e-mail list. 26 responded, wishing to be Members of SAFE, including the 10 members of the Steering Committee. 18 responded, wishing to be Friends of SAFE. Some of the long-standing members of SAFE did not respond.

A special meeting needs to be held with members to approve revised by-laws. In person? Online?

Actions:

**Lucille** will send another notice to long-standing supporters of SAFE who did not respond to confirm their intentions.

**Bronwen** will connect with the families sponsored by SAFE to encourage them to become members.

A Zoom meeting will be held September 14, 2021 for by-law approval.

An in-person meeting/celebration will be held two weeks after NS enters Phase 5 of Covid restrictions.

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**Agenda Item: Housing Programs**

Marla

Discussion:

Deferred until September meeting.

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**Agenda Item: Labour Mobility Luncheon**

Sheila

Discussion:

REN in Pictou County, with support from the Shapiro Foundation, has created a Skilled Refugee Program, focussing on bringing skilled workers to a nursing home in New Glasgow. Refugees have been recruited from a camp in Kenya to come as immigrants to Canada (through an immigration stream, separate from the refugee stream). The family does not receive RAP, but income comes from the work being done as a skilled worker.

SAFE could benefit from learning more. There may be interest in connecting with organizations such as SAFE that could support family members who come through this program.

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**Agenda Item: Re/settling in Rural Nova Scotia: What we are Learning**

Jack

Discussion:

In this webinar, an update was given on three current research projects out of St FX. Adam Perry described transportation as being a key part of settlement in the car culture in which we live. Owning a car provides an independence that is very important to immigrants.

Norine Verberg discussed the importance of language training for employment and recertification. She identified the need for students 21 years and older to be able to continue their highschool education and the need for NSCC to tailor its programs/supports to make training/recertification more accessible to those with extensive work experience.

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**Agenda Item: Questions to Candidates for the Provincial Election**

Lucille

Discussion:

Topics to address:

1. Easily accessible, affordable housing available to families who have not been in Antigonish for a long time (Lucille)
2. Support for EAL training (Jack)
3. Streamlined public transportation (Harry)
4. Employment opportunities (Mark)

Actions:

Questions will be submitted to **Lucille**, Lucille will e-mail questions to candidates, and then e-mail responses to SAFE members/friends and post of SAFE FB page.

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**Agenda Item: Keppoch Summer Program**

Bronwen

Discussion:

Bronwen is working with Alanna Davidson, intern at the Keppoch, to organize an event for families this fall. Details to follow.

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**Agenda Item: Policies and Procedures**

Bronwen

Actions:

SAFE Volunteer Interpreter Policy—deferred to September meeting

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**Agenda Item: Next Meeting**

September 14, 2021. Online.

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