

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

December 7, 2021  
5:30-7:45 pm  
Online Zoom

Present: Mark Ballard, Mary Ballard, Jack Beaton, Bronwen Cooke, Harry Daemen, Marla Gaudet, Lucille Harper, Sheila Sears, Othman Soufan, Peter Wade

The celebration for the Ghentawis and the Al Talebs was postponed and the SAFE Steering Committee moved to being online due to rising number of Covid in our community.

**Minutes**

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**Agenda Item: Minutes and Business Arising**

Discussion:

Business Arising:

**Lucille** will e-mail the Pictou group re meeting to explain new RAP rates

Lucille raised the issue of the prohibitive costs of audited financial reviews at the most recent SAH meeting. For SAFE, we do not need audited statements for 2021, only starting in 2022.

Lucille reported that in the SAH Annual Report, SAFE requested 20 spaces for 2022. Spaces can be given back at the end of the summer if we do not anticipate using them.

It was suggested that we meet with the co-sponsors of TD0051 about SAFE's current financial responsibilities to this sponsorship.

**Mark and Sheila** will work together to compose a letter to send to each co-sponsoring family regarding the increase in RAP rates. Members of SAFE will then meet with each family to discuss how the liability will be addressed. The letter will be translated into Arabic. The expectation will be that for families that are fully funded by co-sponsors the liability will also be funded by the co-sponsors.

Actions:

Harry moved that we adopt the minutes from the November 9, 2021 meeting.

Seconded by Jack.

All in favour.

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**Agenda Item: Treasurer's Report**

Sheila Sears

Discussion:

SAFE will pay the December rent for the Townsend St. apartment (\$750). There is a possibility of subletting this apartment. Pete will discuss this with the Hadhads.

Actions:

Sheila moved to accept the November, 2021 Treasurer's Report.

Seconded by Pete.

All in favour.

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**Agenda Item: SAFE Documentation and Confidentiality Consideration—Program Integrity Framework**

Discussion:

Given the sensitivity of the work we do, it is important that, as Board members, we sign a confidentiality agreement. Often Boards have a Code of Ethics and also sign a confidentiality agreement. We must find the balance between confidentiality and transparency. Can we sign a statement that we have read and understand the Code of Ethics?

Actions:

**Lucille** will resend the Code of Ethics for members to review.

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**Agenda Item: Northshore Local Immigration Partnership**

Actions:

Jack discussed some of the strategic plan of the Partnership, described its history and purpose. The Partnership can act as an advocacy group and will help to inform issues such as English language training, housing, employment.

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**Agenda Item: Sponsorship Requests, Overseas Updates, and Pending Family Arrivals**

Discussion:

Walaa Hadhad family arrival—response date November 11 from Saudi Embassy to e-mail inquiry about application simply noted “application still under process”

Husam and Adnan Sulaiman—arrived December 3.

Al Awad Family (Inverness)—arrived November 26.

Qasim Azaiza Family—medicals completed—response from Amman Embassy states application is pending final decision. Hatem has made further query, waiting to hear.

Mohammad Bairqdar, family of 1, November request from Syrian Family Reunification Project. Lucille is working with Claire MacNeil to complete the application.

Abd Almajeed Al Seedawi, family of 1, Group of 5 (Hadhad and Hudhud families) sponsorship—request for SAFE to be a SAH

Action:

**Sheila, Lucille, Marla, and Othman** will meet with the Hadhah Hudhud Group of 5 to explore the idea.

**Lucille** will set up a meeting with the families for January.

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**Agenda Item: Expression of Interest Document**

## Discussion:

A question arose about our agreement concerning the number of families we will have on the waiting list. In previous discussion, we agreed that the document will read No more than 10 applications on the waiting list.

Will we consider demonstrated vulnerability?

Thinking about future sponsorships, we need to consider seriously our succession plan.

## Actions:

**Lucille** will add to the document: "Sponsoring families will be responsible for unforeseen changes in costs as mandated by IRCC".

**Lucille** will send out a final draft to be approved by e-mail.

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**Agenda Item: Almasri Update**

## Actions:

**Harry** will send an update by e-mail.

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**Agenda Item: Ghentawi and Al Taleb Update**

## Discussion:

A thank you to Mary for her work on ensuring dental work was completed and funded.

## Actions:

**Marla, Jack and Bronwen** will complete Month 13 reviews with both families. Najlaa or Othman to translate.

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**Agenda Item: Afghan Sponsorships**

## Discussion:

We have not heard back from Yogesh Ghore and Linda Jones.

Sheila suggested that SAFE put out offers as a SAH to Groups of 5 and CGs.

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**Agenda Item: Volunteer Recruitment**

## Discussion:

Committee Leads: What are we doing now? What more do we need?

Could have a "job fair" format

## Actions:

We will have a special meeting on January 18 to plan an event.

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**Agenda Item: Next Meeting**

Tuesday, January 11, 2022

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