

Syria-Antigonish Families Embrace
Steering Committee Meeting

February 8, 2022
7:00-8:30 pm
Online Zoom

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

Minutes

Agenda Item: Minutes and Business Arising

Discussion:

Business Arising:

- Volunteer request: only a few responses from the request sent out. Is it worth posting the request to other sites?

Actions:

Marla moved that we adopt the minutes from the January 11, 2022 meeting.

Seconded by Mary.

All in favour.

Bronwen will post all approved minutes to the OneDrive for Steering Committee reference and will send approved minutes to Dan Austen to be posted on the SAFE website.

Marla will post volunteer request to Antigonish Life and will ask Sarah O-Toole to distribute to new physician families.

Harry will have volunteer request put in St. Andrews bulletin and **Bronwen** in St. James bulletin.

Lucille will send volunteer request to St. Ninians.

Agenda Item: Treasurer's Report

Sheila Sears

Discussion:

Sheila has submitted the year end review paperwork to the accountant.

SAFE is now asking for a 15% contingency fund from each co-sponsoring family. If it is not used, it will be returned.

A letter has been sent to, or contact has been made with, most co-sponsoring families regarding the funds needed for the contingency fund and the recent increase in RAP.

Lucille sent a letter to the ECCU re interest earned on Term Deposits. The ECCU will be able to honour the previous agreement on the remaining 3 TDs but with future TDs, interest earned on a TD that is cashed prematurely, will not be issued.

Sheila has requested confirmation from the RSTP that there needs to be a separate bank account for each sponsorship, rather than just having TDs.

Currently, Lucille, Sheila and Bronwen are the co-signers for the SAFE account at ECCU. Harry has agreed to help Sheila with finances and to replace Bronwen as co-signer. All Steering Committee members were asked if they would like to be a co-signer, no one, other than Harry, accepted this responsibility.

Actions:

Sheila moved to accept the January, 2022 Treasurer's Report.

Seconded by Harry.

All in favour.

Sheila moved that Bronwen Cooke be removed as a signatory and that the committee approve Harry Daemen as a signatory.

Seconded by Mark.

All in favour.

Harry will take a copy of the approved minutes (showing the above motion) to ECCU so that he can be added as signatory.

**Please note that Marla left the meeting at this time, was unable to return for the remainder of the meeting and so did not vote on any motions that follow.

Agenda Item: Sponsorship Requests

Discussion:

SAFE continues to wait for the 2022 numbers from IRCC. Therefore, we are not in a position to make any decisions about future sponsorships at this time.

Agenda Item: Sponsorship Applications, Overseas Family Updates, and Pending Family Arrivals

Discussion:

The one year window application has been submitted by Husam Sulaiman and we have not yet received a confirmation from IRCC that the application has been accepted for processing.

Walaa Hadhad family arrival—received word on February 2 that arrival date expected in next few weeks

Qasim Azaiza family—arrival now expected February 28, 2022

Al Hariri, Abdul Razak family of 2—submitted Request for Arrival Confirmation and Quarantine plan on Dec 24, 2021.

Mohammad Bairqdar, family of 1—November request from Syrian Family Reunification Project, Inverness—underway

Alqass Matte family, Westville—completed their interview January 19, Ankara and will soon do medicals

Actions:

Lucille will contact IRCC after February 24 if no word about Al Hariri family.

Agenda Item: Almasri Family Update

Action:

Harry will organize the 3 month review and update in March

Agenda Item: Sulaiman Family Update

Discussion:

One month review was completed. Well supported by Osama and Alaa. They want more English lessons. They have been referred to the Newcomer Health Clinic at ISANS.

Agenda Item: Al Issa Family Update

Discussion:

The 3 month review and update was completed. Everything seems to be covered and the family is well supported by relatives and Claire MacNeil. Mark has touched base with Claire about employment.

Agenda Item: Fundraising

Discussion:

Sheila took part in an RSTP session about fundraising. It was suggested that organizations ensure that their website is connected directly to a donation site (eg. Canada Helps). Other fundraising ideas include: online auctions, having a matching partner, and selling 50/50 tickets. Another idea to raise money and awareness is to host a newcomer art show.

The online auction is being organized now. Students will approach some specific businesses.

Actions:

Sheila asked that if we know of any businesses that would be interested in contributing to the auction (through regular contact or frequent business), that we let her know.

Agenda Item: SAFE AGM

Discussion:

March 22 was suggested as the date for the AGM.

Norine sent a couple of suggestions for keynote speakers.

We will need a nomination committee. Bronwen, Harry and Mary's terms end; they can be renominated for another term.

According to the bi-laws, there can be up to 12 people on the Steering Committee. Shall we ask one of the newcomers to join?

Actions:

Sheila will check with accountants to ensure that financial review will be complete by March 22.

Lucille will contact Jennifer Bond at Refugee Hub to ask if she is willing to be the keynote speaker.

Jack and Othman will form the Nomination Committee.

The AGM will be held online. A celebration for the Ghentawis and Al Talebs will be held in the summer when it can be held outside.

Agenda Item: St FX Summer Camp, Dan Robinson

Discussion:

Dan Robinson can access some funding from Sport Nova Scotia for a summer camp for Syrian-Canadian children in town. He would need SAFE to act as a partner.

Actions:

All agreed this is a good idea.

Marla will contact Dan to confirm that SAFE will be a partner.

Agenda Item: Policies and Procedures

Discussion:

All volunteers will read and adhere to the Code of Ethics.

Actions:

Sheila will work on finalizing the Code of Ethics and send out to the committee for approval.

Lucille will gather all approved policies to be put on OneDrive. **Mark** will receive policies from Lucille and will put on OneDrive.

Bronwen will send out the Interpreter Policy for approval.

Policies will only go on OneDrive when approved. Policy file names will include the date that it was approved.

Agenda Item: Next Meeting

Tuesday, March 1, 2022 at 7pm (NB: NOT March 8).
