

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

February 8, 2023

7:00-8:30

Riverside Estates Community Room

Present: Mark Ballard, Jack Beaton, Bronwen Cooke, Harry Daemen, Lucille Harper, Sheila Sears, Maria vanVonderan, Peter Wade

Regrets: Marla Gaudet

Minutes

Agenda Item: Meeting Minutes and Business Arising from December 14, 2022

Discussion:

Business arising:

The Al Masris' Month 13 check has been completed.

The Month 13 check in with Adnan and Hosam Sulaiman has not yet been completed due to scheduling conflicts.

The Alquass Matte family has made the decision not to move. No further action needs to be taken.

Actions:

Sheila moved to adopt the minutes from the January 11, 2023 meeting.

Seconded by Harry.

All in favour.

Agenda Item: Treasurer's Report

Discussion:

Sheila e-mailed Sarah Wiseman to ask what to do with the remaining money from the Shapiro Foundation. Should it be returned or held until the end of the year in case someone requires an emergency fund.

SAFE's contribution of the contingency fund for applications sponsored by SAFE was discussed further, following a motion made at the December meeting. It is agreed that the contribution will only be made in cases where SAFE is the sponsor/co-sponsor. An amendment to the motion made in December was discussed and agreed up.

Actions:

TD0041 to be changed from Almohammad to Almohamed.

With the above-mentioned correction, Sheila moved to adopt the financial report from January 31, 2023.

Seconded by Harry.

All in favour.

It was agreed that the SAFE Zoom account will be cancelled next December before it automatically renews.

Peter moved that SAFE will contribute 15% of the total settlement cost (not including contingency fund) for a family's first request, when funds permit. The timing of this contribution will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Seconded by Mark.

All in favour.

Agenda Item: Najlaa Alzaanin, Coordinator, Antigonish Guysborough Immigrant Support Program

Discussion:

Najlaa attended the meeting to continue to make connections with SAFE and her program. She encouraged us to ensure connection between families and the Immigrant Support Program. It was suggested that this connection be solidified at the Month 13 Check-in. It was suggested that Najlaa prepare a pamphlet that can be given to families that outlines her role.

In addition to Najlaa's role, a Y-Reach School Settlement worker has started working in Antigonish schools. A family information session is being organized to introduce this position. There is also work being done to fund an Employment Specialist in Antigonish, who would work alongside Najlaa and sponsorship groups.

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

Discussion:

-Ibrahim Balkis Bairouti family of 2, Egypt, SAFE, PSR application submitted March 2021.– interview scheduled for May 26 but subsequently postponed with no new date. Application in process. Medical completed November 29.

-Rowaida Hudhud family of 2 (linked), Lebanon, to settle in Halifax, application submitted June 2021. – no update

-Yazan Bayan, family of 1 (linked), Lebanon, to settle in Halifax, application submitted June 2021. – no update

-Abdulkader Mohmed Sabbagh family of 5, SAFE, PSR application submitted October 2021 – Egypt. No update. Requested update from Cairo Migration, December 12, 2022.

-Aysha Shoshara family of 3, One Year Window, Syria, application submitted February 2022. Application approved on July 4, 2022 and sent to Amman for processing. Update requested October 19. Emailed Sean Fraser's office to help get update on January 7, 2023.

-Abdalmajeed Al Sedawi family of 1, SAFE PSR application with co-sponsor Ammar Hudhud, submitted May 27, 2022. Received G# on October 14, 2022 after multiple inquiries to IRCC.

SAFE SAH/Community Group Sponsorship Applications, Overseas Family Updates, and Pending Family Arrivals:

-Amisi Charles Munyampara family of 3, CG: CARE PSR application. April 13, 2021. No update.

- Guelord Mikeno Mwamba family of 1, CG: CARE PSR application. April 16, 2021. No update.

-Mohammad Bairqdar family of 1, Syrian Family Reunification Project PSR application submitted November 7, 2022. Requested SAH Navigation Unit look into delay in providing G# January 25, 2023. G# received January 28, 2023.

-Bashir Hussein Nur family of 2, CG: CARE, PSR application submitted December 15, 2022. Bashir is from Somalia and living as a refugee in Uganda. G-Number on January 25, 2023 with confirmation that it has been approved at the Ottawa end for further processing.

-Khoshbo Lodin, family of 1, CG: Canada Afghan Women Embrace (CAWE). Operation Afghan Safety (OAS) application submitted on December 23, 2022 and accepted for processing December 29, 2022. Application sent to Islamabad for processing on January 3, 2023. Khoshbo is in Pakistan. G # provided.

-Marie-Josée Nirere family of 3 with dependent adult son linked with Mpenzi Elysee, adult son. CG: Pictou County Safe Harbour. PSR application submitted January 1, 2023. Rwandan family in Kenya refugee asylum.

Agenda Item: Sponsorship Requests Approved by SAFE

Discussion:

- Ahmed Algoma Alhasan family of 3, Lebanon, request to sponsor from Shorook Alhasan. Lucille, Sheila and Alaa met with Shorook to discuss possibility of family coming through immigration route.

Depending upon meeting English CBL Level 4. – Alaa following up. No update.

- Osama Suleiman Al Talib family of 4 linked application with Ahmed Abdul Kader, Lebanon, request to sponsor from Bilal Abdul Kader, PSR application underway. Will submit once funding has been received. Met with Bilal Abdulkader on December 12 to discuss efforts to raise necessary sponsorship funds. Bilal is working on this.

Agenda Item: SAFE Sponsored Family Updates

Hadhad-Darbi Family: Ghassan is working on achieving certification as mechanic.

Almohameds-Alahmad: CCB application sent back for more documents to be included in application.

Diane Farrell at Sean Fraser's office is helping expedite the process.

Alahmad Family: SAFE to purchase new bidet.

Al Hariris Family: Looking to move to a new apartment.

Agenda Item: SAFE SAH Sponsored Family Updates

Discussion:

Meshal Al Issa: has moved to Halifax.

Alqass Matte Family: have decided not to move. Sheila and Lucille met with FAIR Hearts to review 6 month check-in.

Burhanuddin Zaheer Family: settled, well supported.

Agenda Item: SAFE SAH Spaces for 2023

Discussion:

We should have 20 spaces:

-CARE is requesting 4 spaces for potential BVOR family

-Pictou County Safe Harbour is requesting 9 spaces: family of 3 in Egypt; family of 4 in Lebanon; 2 single adult brothers in UAE.

-St FX staff and faculty group (Wafa) are requesting 2 OAS spaces for Burhan Zaheer's 2 brothers who are still in Pakistan. Pakistan is threatening to return Afghan refugees to Afghanistan.

Actions:

Sheila moves that we act as the SAH to the Surosh Ahmed Sadat family of 2 and Qaimquiamuddin Qaiam family of 1, with Wafa as CG.

Seconded by Pete.

All in favour.

Agenda Item: SAFE Board Development Session

Actions:

Pete will send a thank you to Frank.

Plan for board development sessions after the new board begins in March.

Agenda Item: SAH Workshops and Meetings

Discussion:

SAH training and engagement meetings with IRCC, Halifax, March 21.

SAH Evaluation Toolkit Workshop: Mark attended. Similar to what we have been doing with Frank. The toolkit examines how the SAH functions and evaluates. Not really a toolkit that is appropriate for small volunteer based SAHS such as SAFE.

Actions:

Harry and Mark will attend the SAH training and engagement meetings.

Agenda Item: Planning for AGM, March 2023

Discussion:

Nominations: if you have any suggestions please forward names and contact info to Jack and Pete. It was agreed that it is OK to leave a couple of spaces empty on the Steering Committee so that interested volunteers can be brought onto the Committee throughout the year, rather than having everyone join at the same time.

The Executive will be elected by the Steering Committee once the Steering Committee is formed.

March 7 Steering Committee Meeting Jack and Pete will invite prospective Steering Committee members as an introduction.

Suggested keynote speaker: Burhan Zaheer.

Actions:

Date of AGM: Tuesday, March 28 or Wednesday, March 29 at 7:00.

Bronwen will check on St. James Hall for the location.

Mark will complete the Annual Report.
