

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

January 11, 2022  
7:00-9:10 pm  
Online Zoom

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

Regrets: Othman Soufan

**Minutes**

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**Agenda Item: Minutes and Business Arising**

Actions:

Harry moved we accept the minutes from the December 7, 2021 meeting.

Seconded by Pete.

All in favour.

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**Agenda Item: Treasurer's Report**

Sheila Sears

Discussion:

Increase in RAP payments: Mark and Sheila have composed a letter to notify co-sponsoring families of the increase. An additional paragraph was added about co-sponsoring families being responsible for emergency financial support.

East Coast Credit Union: The ECCU can no longer give full interest on term deposits that are withdrawn before the full term is reached. This was previously an arrangement that SAFE has had with ECCU. This may mean that we consider other options for how we segregate funds for each family.

Actions:

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

Seconded by Pete.

All in favour.

**Sheila** will find out more information about who is responsible for providing emergency funding to families—sponsorship group? co-sponsors?

**Lucille and Mark** will write a letter to the Board Chair of the ECCU to ask for reconsideration of the term deposit agreement with SAFE.

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

### Discussion:

Walaa Hadhad family arrival—December 10 response to inquiry from Sean Fraser’s office from Saudi Embassy to inquiry about application simply noted no decision has been made. Request to SAH Navigation Unit for a file status update received a similar response.

Qasim Azaiza family—arrival expected February 4, 2022!!

Meshal Alawad—Inverness—interview scheduled for January 24 at Amman Embassy.

Rana Ghentawi—medical tests completed.

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

Abd Almajeed Al Seedawi, family of 1, Group of 5 (Hadhad, Hudhud family)—SAFE can not submit request to IRCC until we have 2022 spaces approved.

Al Hariri, family of 2—confirmation received by IRCC, now waiting for NAT

### Actions:

**Lucille** will draft a letter to Hadhads and Hudhuds to discuss our wait for SAH spaces for 2022, financial commitments related to the sponsorship, and the group’s settlement capacity related to this sponsorship.

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## **Agenda Item: Almasri Family Update**

### Actions:

Harry sent out an e-mail to the Steering Committee, summarizing the 1 month meeting held with the family.

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## **Agenda Item: Sulaiman Family Update**

### Discussion:

Due to Covid cases spiking, contact with Adnan and Housam has not been ideal. However, they have gotten settled, are becoming familiar with Antigonish, have set up bank accounts, gotten their SINS. Are awaiting PR cards.

### Actions:

**Bronwen** will help with application for HST/GST rebate.

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## **Agenda Item: Check-ins with Families**

### Discussion:

Contact needs to be made with families at 1, 3, 6, 9 and 13 months post arrival. Ideally, 3-4 Steering Committee members will meet with a family at each of these points through the year. Meetings for several recently arrived families need to be arranged in the coming days.

Mark has sent out e-mails to the three families requesting meetings for check ins.

Actions:

**Harry, Pete, Mary and Othman** will meet with the Almasri family.

**Jack, Bronwen and Interpreter (?)** will meet with the Al Awad/Al Issa Family (Inverness).

**Lucille, Sheila, Mark and Interpreter (?)** will meet with Adnan and Housam Sulaiman.

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#### **Agenda Item: Allssa Family Update**

Actions:

**Mark** to connect Issa with ISANS employment.

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#### **Agenda Item: Azaiza Family Arrival Preparation**

Discussion:

Pete has secured an apartment rental on James St. starts this coming Saturday.

Some research will need to be done regarding isolation given varying vaccination status among family members.

Actions:

**Mark, Lucille, Jack, Othman and Pete** to have a pre-arrival call with the Azaiza family.

**Sheila** will set up airport transit.

**Pete** will organize furniture and send Lucille a list of items to request from the SAFE e-mail list as donations.

Esmaeel Al Hariri will buy food and prepare a meal.

**Harry** will help the Azaizas complete documents and forms.

**Mary** will help the family register for health cards and arrange for family members to get vaccines if eligible.

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#### **Agenda Item: Zoom Account**

Actions:

Mark moved that he talk to Othman about the options of continuing to use his Zoom account or researching having a SAFE Zoom account for approximately \$200/year.

Seconded by Harry.

All in favour.

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#### **Agenda Item: Volunteer Recruitment**

Discussion:

All volunteers need Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check done and need to have read the Code of Ethics.

Actions:

All committee leads please send Lucille a list of roles that volunteers can play on your committee. **Lucille** will distribute these requests to the SAFE e-mail list in hopes that some volunteers can be recruited.

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**Agenda Item: Process for Accepting, Evaluating and Approving Requests**

Actions:

All approved the document “Expressions of Interest to Sponsor Refugee Families: Process for Accepting, Evaluating and Approving Requests”.

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**Agenda Item: Code of Ethics**

Actions:

**Lucille** will circulate the current Code of Ethics document, for approval by Steering Committee by e-mail.

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**Agenda Item: Next Meeting**

Wednesday, January 26, 2022, 6:30 to 7:30. Sheila will give a presentation on the Program Integrity Framework.

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