

Syria-Antigonish Families Embrace

Steering Committee Meeting

May 11, 2021

6:00-8:00 pm

Online

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

Minutes

Agenda Item: Minutes and Business Arising from April 13, 2021

Discussion:

Harry declined taking on the position of Vice-Chair.

Actions:

The minutes were approved.

All in favour.

The Vice Chair position has yet to be filled.

Bronwen is working on assembling the Eid gifts for the Ghentawis and Altalebs and writing cards for other families in the Muslim community in Antigonish.

Marla continues to support the Al Hariris in their search for housing.

Agenda Item: Treasurer's Report

Discussion:

Significant revenue came from the grant for English learners, money from Tri-Heart for the sponsorship of a family (moved to Term Deposit #42), and the withdrawal of a Term Deposit (Ghentawi TD).

Actions:

Sheila moved the adoption of the April financial report.

Seconded by Harry.

All in favour.

Agenda Item: Sponsorship Applications

Discussion:

SAFE PSR application to sponsor

- Abdulkader Mohmed Sabbagh family of 5

- Rowaida Hudhud family of 3

CARE PSR application to sponsor
- Guelord Mwamba
- Charles Munyampara family of 3

Marilyn Shinyei, of the Unitarian Universalist Church, Halifax, has agreed to monitoring the Hudhud family 4 times each year and be available if anything urgent arises. Marilyn is arranging that a young man will support Yazen in getting acquainted with the city and helping him to make connections in the community and with supporting organizations such as ISANS.

Actions:

Lucille will set up a call with Riyadh and his wife to discuss expectations related to being a co-sponsor.

Agenda Item: Sponsorship Requests

Discussion:

A request has come in from the Abo Al Hawa family, for a family of 8. No funding is available at this time, money would need to be raised. Concerns were raised around the availability of translators, drivers to drive a family of 8, and housing for a family of 8.

At the moment, SAFE has 10 families on the waiting list.

Actions:

Lucille will send a message to Alaa Abo Al Hawa advising him that we are unable to accept another request until one of the families on the list arrives in Antigonish. We request that Alaa resubmits his request in 2022.

Agenda Item: Family Updates

Discussion:

Ghentawis: Rasha and Mohammad are hoping to enroll in a program for youth employment through ISANS.

Agenda Item: Grant Proposal Updates

Actions:

Othman will contact the County to inquire about the Community Partnership Grant, for which SAFE submitted an application.

Agenda Item: Violence Perpetrated Against Families Overseas

Discussion:

Lucille has heard several reports of violence perpetrated against families that are waiting to come to Nova Scotia. Lucille has been working through Sean Fraser's office and the Canadian embassy to try to have a couple of the case files marked urgent.

Agenda Item: Refugee Walk/Run**Discussion:**

The event will take place May 31 to June 20, the International Day for Refugees. Families will contribute their stories of fleeing Syria and becoming refugees. The hope is that by the end of June we will be able to gather in community units and then a larger event will be possible.

Thanks so Harry for taking this project on.

Actions:

Please recruit team captains to form teams and set donation goals.

The SAFE Steering Committee will form a team.

Agenda Item: Policies and Procedures**Actions:**

SAFE Interpreter Policy: Recommended for approval, with suggested changes. The policy will be approved next meeting.

Code of Ethics: **Sheila** will make minor changes before the policy is approved in June.

Volunteer Screening Policy: **Marla** will include a short piece about SAFE tracking CRCs that have been renewed and ensuring that this is done in a timely manner.

New Driver Policy: Approved unanimously.

Agenda Item: YMCA Local Immigration Partnership

Discussion: The local immigration partnerships exist across the country. The propose is to bring together representatives from sponsoring groups and SAHs. The hope is to create a solution and action oriented response to welcoming families to communities in rural Nova Scotia. The group will meet as a council 4 times per year and then as working groups that will meet more often. Lucille has asked, but not gotten a response, to whether or not this group can/will engage in advocacy.

Actions:

Jack will apply to join the Council.

Agenda Item: Next Meeting

June 8, 2021. Note that it was agreed that we will begin the meeting at 7:00pm.
