

**Syria-Antigonish Families Embrace  
Steering Committee Meeting  
April 13, 2023  
6:30-9:00  
Riverside Estates Community Room**

Present: Mark Ballard (chair), Jack Beaton, Harry Daemen, Sheila Sears, Maria vanVonderan, Eric Renaud, Anuj Jain , Karen Fish (minutes)

Regrets: Bronwen Cooke, Mike Nearing

**Minutes**

**Agenda Item: Meeting Minutes and Business Arising from March 29, 2023 AGM/ Business Mtg 2023**

Actions:

Harry moved to accept the minutes. Jack 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favour

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**Agenda Item: Treasurer's Report**

Discussion:

SAFE earned \$7,177 through the online auction auction.

Sheila will arrange to highlight our earnings on the FB page

Actions:

Sheila moved that we pay \$600 for a thank you flyer that will be inserted in the Casket. Maria 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favour.

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

SAFE SAH Spaces for 2023:

An advance issue of 10 spaces was rec'd by email notice earlier in February. Note this does not impact BVOR or OAS positions. We should have 20 spaces:

- CARE is requesting 4 spaces for a potential BVOR family.
- Pictou County Safe Harbour is requesting 9 spaces:
- A family of 3 in Egypt;
- A family of 4 in Lebanon;
- 2 single adult brothers the UAE

Family check-ins

Reviewed status. Discussed alternate translators for family check-ins. Jack suggested identifying non-family members as much as possible.

Actions:

- ? will ask Good Life if free memberships possible
- Jack will ask about gymnasium booking at Regional High School

- Check-in SAFE people should send an email to Sue Adams to let her know a check-in has been done

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**Agenda Item: Housing**

Discussion:

- SAFE is looking for a 3 BR house for a family. Harry will research house on Church street
- Anuj is looking at mortgages for non-Syrian refugee families. He will report back.

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**Agenda Item: YReach school support worker**

Discussion:

Jack reported that Nova Scotia's Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI) has contracted with the YMCA for services outside Halifax.

LSI also funds a school support position for Antigonish. Support for all immigrant families (Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan)

In Feb. YREACH hired Mary who was trained in Halifax and is now working in the schools.

AWRC looking to hire two people to support housing and employment, and for a language position, through LSI funding. Najlaa is on a 6-month leave from the Newcomers position.

Actions:

- Maria will reach out to Mary around health portfolio.
- Mark and Jack will reach out to CEO of YMCA for Nova Scotia

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**Agenda Item: Eid gifts**

Action

- Sheila moved, Mike 2<sup>nd</sup> that families that have not reached their 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary Mohamads, be sent Eid gifts

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**Agenda Item: SAH Workshops and Meetings**

Discussion:

Harry and Sheila attended the SAH Training and Engagement meetings with IRCC, March 21, and reported it was useful, especially as an opportunity to meet other SAH members

Maria, Mark and Bronwen participated in the pilot course for the SAH Mental Health Beta Training. Marie previously attended an accredited course for service providers on supporting immigrant and refugee mental health (offered by The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health). Maria referred to research indicating that refugees often experience an emotional crash after their 1<sup>st</sup> year.

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**Agenda Item: Mental health resources in Arabic**

Maria has these and will put them on OneDrive

Our next meeting will be May 11, 2023