**PSAC Atlantic Council**

**Women’s Committee Meeting Minutes**

**June 8, 2018, @ 8:00 am (NL time), Marble Inn Resort**

**Present:** Shanny Doucet, Rhonda Doyle-LeBlanc (Co-Chair), Michelle Neill (Secretary), Heather Ford, Corina Harding (PSAC Rep – filling in for Mary MacNeil), Angela Decker (Co-Chair), and Jill Power (observer & Labrador RWC President). Colleen Coffey and Erin Sirett joined the meeting for the last ½ hour.

Angela opened the meeting by congratulating Shanny on receiving the 2018 Sister of the Year award from the New Brunswick Federation of Labour. Congratulations Shanny!

Angela is seeking a similar award for NL as well. Rhonda was the recipient of the same award last year. Heather & Michelle will also bring this idea to Debi & Marilyn for the PEIFL.

1. **International Women’s Day (IWD) Wrap-Up:**

* NL: Jill advised there’s a new coordinator for the Women’s Centre in Labrador. Corina advised that Goose Bay participated in a workplace event. Angela advised the Rocky Harbour RWC held an event on March 9th with Morna Ballantyne in attendance to speak about Childcare, and accepted items for a local shelter. They also extended an invite to Robyn Benson, but a Phoenix emergency that day took precedence. The theme of the event was “She Persisted”, which relates to a book authored by Chelsea Clinton. Corina and Colleen also attended. Service Canada hosted an event. St. John’s RWC hosted event at Bella Vista with Morna in attendance to speak about Childcare; this was one of the largest events in Canada (96 this year). They included a “Red Dress” awareness with a vacant chair at each table with a red dress on the chair. They fundraised $500 for a local shelter and the RWC used their share for other events. A Bread & Roses event (CLC, Fed of Labour, Status of Women Council) was held on the Sunday before and L Jones spoke at the event. Corner Brook’s event included a guest speaker from RCMP, who spoke about violence and harassment in the RCMP – they have won major cases since then.
* PEI: Heather & Michelle advised this year’s event was organized by the PEI Status of Women and included dancing, and an Aboriginal Circle Dance in the Charlottetown area. The UTE offices had displays in both Summerside & Charlottetown.
* NB: Shanny advised the Pension Centre usually holds a lunch and learn and artists within the office usually bring wares and do fundraising; however, a storm caused a closure of the office for the day. Then the local committee purchased carnations for the women in the office.
* NS: Rhonda advised that she was on the organizing committee for two different IWD events. There was a NSFL annual breakfast event, with Lynn Jones as speaker, at the NSGEU building in Dartmouth. There was also the IWD conference held in Halifax at Stadacona base. It was a great event considering the numbers being down due to stormy weather, and the base’s transportation falling through. Jennifer Howard was the keynote speaker and spoke about domestic violence and a number of workshops took place from child care to yoga. Rhonda’s local did a collection and donated money and gently used clothing to a local shelter.

1. **Atlantic Women’s Conference:**

We are now in the planning stages for 2019. We have had two previous events at St. FX in Antigonish, and there were concerns last time regarding food accommodations and they were not as good to help us out, so we may consider other venues. We would likely need to choose a unionized location – question: can we use a Unifor unionized venue? More planning to come this Fall.

Angela noted our bylaws (Section 13) currently refer to both a Maritime and NL regional conferences, but the last two cycles, we combined the two into one regional conference.

We also discussed theme ideas and came up with “She Persisted…”, and we could have a workshop where participants consider what the “…” could be. There are lots of great speakers we could use from this theme from domestic violence survivors to women in leadership roles. We could also have one of Chelsea Clinton’s books as a prize draw. Angela also noted a children’s book might be appropriate as a prize draw as well. Further ideas can be sent to Mary MacNeill.

1. **Education:**

* Education committee met yesterday for the 2019-2021 plan.
* “Unions Work for Women” advanced course (maximum 15-18 participants) should be brought back to be delivered in our region. It was last delivered in 2014 as a 3-day course (reduced from 5 days).
* Regional education funding is for basic training, and then advances training is funded by national.
* Atlantic School coming this Fall in October. We received 100 applications for 70 spots.
* Education committee is considering holding an ALL CHAIRS meetings in Halifax in the Spring of 2019.
* National Equity Conference > AEC discussed having a combined Equity Conference (Racially Visible, Persons with Disabilities, GLBTQ2+, and Aboriginal) and then a Women’s Conference separately. Please provide any feedback to Colleen by June 15th.

**RECOMMENDATION: THE WOMEN’S COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE FOR THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE, THROUGH COUNCIL, TO HOLD A “UNIONS WORK FOR WOMEN” COURSE IN OUR REGION.**

**Colleen and Erin joined our meeting at this point.**

1. **Current Campaigns:**

CHILDCARE & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

* Angela & Rhonda will be attending a pilot training session for Domestic Violence.
* Possible speakers: Magali Picard, Sharon DeSousa, Marianne Hladun
* Elected officials can come to local meetings at no charge.
* September 30th: “Every Child Matters!” event – wear Orange. (originated with Aboriginal group).
* June 26th: NB Federation of Labour & PSAC > Universal Childcare event for ½ day and other ½ day will be political affect.
* September 8th: PEI is hosting a Childcare event. We will send our proposal and budget to the REVP. Michelle will contact Corina & Colleen on this. Shanny to be added to the distribution list for education on PEI.
* Truth & Recognition (Residential Schools).
* We should work with the provincial status of women councils in the region.
* Domestic Violence > we are pushing for domestic violence paid leave.

1. **Terms of Reference/Mandate:**

We will be working on a women's committee terms of reference and will use the RWC handbook as a guide.

1. **Round Table**

Shanny:

* On Pay Equity National group and having regular conference calls.
* Also on NB Pay Equity working group, working with government, but this committee is currently on hold, pending the elections coming up.
* Recent café meeting on pay equity discussed challenges at this time.

Rhonda:

* Working with NS Federation of Labour on Domestic Violence paid leave and shared details on the Childcareforall.ca Campaign.
* Next RWC meeting in June, and Nancy MacLean will be our guest speaker on domestic violence.

Angela:

* Issues-based NL Federation of Labour convention was very successful. Lynn Moore (President of NDP) spoke at the women’s committee. Meeting again in September.
* At yesterday’s Rocky Harbour RWC AGM meeting, Angela was re-elected Chair.

Michelle:

* PEI RWC is planning a memorial event on December 6th in Summerside at the monument there. Pride Parade and Childcare event planning also underway.
* We, along with the Area Council and Human Rights reps served lunch at a local Soup Kitchen on March 3, 2018.
* Michelle will send notes to Angela and Rhonda.

Heather:

* Service Renewal at the PEI Tax Centre means Heather is working evenings for about 6 months, so she may miss some meetings. We may need to access Webex or conference call services to be inclusive of our members to participate in meetings.
* Those working at this office are about 80% women and many are given offers to work evenings (3:30 p.m. to midnight), as we are providing services to Canadians across the country until 8:00 p.m. Childcare issues are significant at this office for sure.

Jill:

Thanks for the great ideas to bring back to her RWC group.

Corina:

Thanks for everyone’s participation. Love the theme for the regional conference! Don’t forget to use the Childcare colouring sheets and crayons at educational and Labour Day events. Corina and Mary are working on the women’s conference details.

1. **Next Meeting**

To be determined.

1. **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.