**Human Rights Committee of Council**

**Nov 12th, 2015 Meeting**

Call to order 2:35

**In attendance:**  **Regrets:**

Wayne Kelley Neville David Nathalie Paulin

Rhonda Doyle LeBlanc Chris Lansdell

Joey Dunphy Allyson Garrison

Jeannie Baldwin, REVP Atlantic

Monique Laplante, PSAC Staff advisor

Brother Wayne opened the meeting and welcomed all members and welcome Sister Jeannie.

1. **3 Year Committee Mandate:**

The committee reviewed the final version of their 3 Year committee Mandate, Brother Chris pointed out that a little addition was required on page 2, under Communication/Networking under the discrimination grounds – after gender expression, addition required **“and/or identity” .**

With this addition, the committee has now adopted their 3 Year plan.

**Committee’s recommendation:**

**That Council adopts the Human Rights committee 3 Year Mandate as presented with the small addition made.**

1. **Reports from the National Human Rights meeting:**

Four members from the Human Rights committee attended this meeting.

Brother Joey reported on the work of the Aboriginal working group. Issues discussed were:

* The Val D’Or Quebec, Police abuse on Aboriginal Women,
* Price of food in remote location
* Cuts to Social Assistance for First Nations Communities

The priorities for the next year will be:

* Call upon the new elected Government for the Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women inquiry
* Safe drinking water
* Price of food in remote location
* First Nation Education
* Improve skills for First Nation People
* He reported that the committee also wanted PSAC to continue to put pressure on the Government to implement the 94 recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and they bring back the Kelowna Accord.

He reported that the PSAC “safe drinking water campaign” under the “Boil no More” theme will continue.

Brother Neville reported that he attended the Human Rights meeting as well as the Racially Visible working group in preparation for the Racially Visible regional conferences coming up in 2016.

He also spoke on the Survey for Racially Visible members currently out and provided some primarily results. The survey went out on Oct 29th and as of Nov 10th, 409 surveys were received including 55 from the Atlantic region.

The deadline to complete the survey is November 24th and members were encouraged to spread the word to Racially Visible members.

Concerns were brought up on the fact that the RV web survey could allow for more than one entry per person and wasn’t secured to allow entry for only PSAC Racially Visible members.

The Survey has been circulated by PSAC regional office to all locals.

Further, information was shared on the new Human Rights Activist 3 day course which should be delivered in the Atlantic in the next cycle. The PSAC national is also working on developing a Racially Visible members in the workplace booklet.

Sister Rhonda reported that their group looked at the upcoming National Equity Conference to be held March 24 to 28, 2017 at the Sheraton Centre downtown Toronto. It will be under the same format as the last one. They looked at their priorities:

* Child care
* Missing and Murdered Aboriginal women
* Domestic violence against women in the workplace
* Women in leadership

Work will be required with the new Government in place on these priorities.

Sister Rhonda, also discussed two important dates. The National Day of Action and Remembrance on Violence against Women, which is on December 6th and International Women’s Day, which is March 8th.

Jeannie pointed out that Nancy MacLean has been delivering Violence in the workplace training for members with Health and Safety knowledge and experience

Brother Wayne reported that members need to be encourage to take the soon to be available (probably December 2015) On line Education in the New Suite of Steward course such as Defending Gay Lesbian and Bisexual members against Homophobia in the Workplace or Defending Trans Members’ Rights in the Workplace. The material should be update on a regular basis.

Trans members to be a part of an Education meeting in Ottawa in spring of 2016. We should be forwarding names from Transgender member(s) from the Atlantic region and make them aware that National GLBT committee will be seeking their input into the new Trans Bill of rights.

A letter is being prepared to be sent to the new Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Jody Wilson-Raybould, to seek support for Transgender individuals from discrimination and violence

Between now and the next council, a conference call should take with members of the Regional Council HR Committee to further develop plans around the 2016 Pride activities.

He informed members of the resources available; the CLC booklets on Workers in transition and the booklet for Allies as well as Canadian Heritage and Parks Canada “Out and About” as well as the PSAC booklet *PSAC Works for GLBT Rights.*

1. **Racially Visible Members Survey:**

Already covered above.

1. **Upcoming Regional Racially Visible Conference**

The Atlantic Regional Racially Visible conference will be held in Halifax from September 23 to 25th, 2016.

The region has a budget of $90,000 dollars; it will be a 2 ½ days fully funded conference.

Ontario region will be the first to hold their conference in April or May and start the work on a policy paper then, other regions will add to the work in their own region.

2 workshops will be nationally develops and one workshop will be regionally develop once the final results of the survey are known.

A question was raised on the role of the Human Rights committee in the planning of our regional Racially Visible conference and Jeannie informed the group that Neville and Nancy Maclean would be the ones working on the planning of the conference.

1. **Cuts to Social Assistance for First Nation Community**

Brother Joey wanted to inform members that Tanna Pirie-Wilson, past NAPC female representative who is now the CEO for the Tobique First Nation Band Operations brought to his attention how changes to Social Assistance income for Aboriginal Community will affect Aboriginal people living on reserves.

Presently, Aboriginal people on Social Assistance are receiving their income through INAC which could be more than what people are receiving from Provincial assistance. The changes would result in their income being reduced to match provincial rate.

People living on reserve don’t have access to Provincial assistance.

**Recommendation: That Jeannie sends a letter on behalf of the Atlantic council to the new elected Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Carolyn Bennett, against these changes.**

Brother Joey will be copied on the letter and then be able to follow up at the NAPC level with this Atlantic initiative. Action could be possibly taken in media.

1. **International Human Rights Day – December 10, 2015**

Our committee hopes that many members will celebrate the International Human Rights Day.

The PSAC National 2015 Human Rights Statement will be out for Dec 10th.

Members reported on activities planned activities for December 10th in their region

Nova Scotia: The 7th Annual Celebration of Multiculturalism & Inclusion will be held at NSCC Kingstec Campus, Kentville NS on December 10th starting at 5:30 p.m.

New Brunswick: Members of the Greater Moncton Human Rights committee are working on spending time in helping with a soup kitchen as well as spending time helping at the Food Depot. The committee will invite members to take their volunteer leave to participate.

Other activities happening in our region:

* A Columbian speaker will be in the Atlantic at the end of November, (Halifax on Nov 27th, Sackville NB on Nov 25th),
* Rhonda reported that the Halifax Regional Women’s Committee will be volunteering with the Syrian Refugee project in Halifax,
* The CLC will be giving $200,000 to help with Syrian refugees and asked all unions to assist any way they can,
* The United Church in Chester NS will adopt 2 Syrian families;
* The St Thomas Catholic church is fundraising to help out 3 Syrian families.

Our committee held a discussion on the Islam phobia and how our council members could benefit from having a Muslim speaker at our next council meeting to help us better communicate as Allies.

**Recommendation: That arrangement be made to find a Muslim guest speaker for our next Council meeting.**

1. **Pride 2016:**

* Discussion was held on success of 2015 activities and participation.
* PSAC national is considering changing the Slap fans for smaller reusable flags
* Ideas for 2016 were discussed, cotton candy machines, air brush tattoos, PSAC tattoos, t-shirts or reusable vest that could be offered to participating members
* NS Fed of Labour Human Rights notifications will be out shortly for GLBT.

1. **Other:**
2. Thank you note from the Mi’kmaw Native Friendship Centre for the $500 received for the Sister’s in Spirit Vigil
3. Information shared on the theatre that has been named after Viola Desmond
4. The Human Rights course

**Recommendation: that the Atlantic region considers delivering the Human Rights course in the next cycle 2016-2018.**

1. **Round table:**

* Dec 6th vigil in Moncton, information will be shared when available
* Dec 6th March and Vigil will take place in Halifax
* NS Fed of Labour “Concept of Privilege panel”, Rhonda was invited to participate
* Environment Canada now has a National Respect Day on November 20th
* Last reminder for Racially Visible members to take on the survey
* PSAC commemorative dates have been posted on the PSAC Atlantic website.

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brother Wayne Kelley,

Committee Chair