

PSAC North Regional Council meeting minutes  
January 31, 2019, 5:30pm MST



**In attendance:**

**Regional Council members**

Jack Bourassa, Regional Executive Vice President, PSAC North  
Steve Geick, President, Yukon Employees Union  
Todd Parsons, President, Union of Northern Workers  
Bill Fennell, President, Nunavut Employees Union  
Geoff Ryan, Nunavut Territorial Director  
Linda Moen, President, Yukon Area Council  
Samantha Cosentino, President, Northwest Territories Area Council  
Holly Ferris, Chair, Northwest Territories Indigenous Peoples' Committee  
Leesee Papatsie, Chair, Nunavut Indigenous Peoples' Committee  
Gerard Tremblay, Chair, Yukon Access Committee  
Bruce Gudeit, Chair, Northwest Territories Access Committee  
Lili Weemen, Chair, Nunavut Access Committee  
Roberta Wurtak, Chair, Yukon Pride Committee  
Teresa Acheson, Chair, Whitehorse Women's Committee  
Geraldine Penney, Chair, Northwest Territories Women's Committee  
Dianne Williams, Chair, Yukon Health and Safety Committee  
Jay Butler, Chair, Northwest Territories Health and Safety Committee  
Derek Allerton, Chair, Nunavut Health and Safety Committee

**Regrets:**

Elwood Chan, Alternate REVP, PSAC North  
Lisa Kirk, President, Nunavut Area Council  
Carrie Lynn Robinson, Chair, Yukon Indigenous Peoples' Committee  
Hoa Do, Chair, Northwest Territories Racially Visible Committee  
Victor Guzman, Chair, Nunavut Racially Visible Committee

**Staff:**

Yusur Al-Bahrani, Political Communications Officer  
Theresa Baird, Assistant to the REVP North

1. **Call to order** at 5:37pm.
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Adoption of agenda** – approved as presented with the following revisions:
  - Samantha Cosentino will present the Education Plan and Budget for 2019-2021 for approval in Open Discussion.
  - Gerard Tremblay will share news on the ASL Interpreting Program in Open Discussion.
4. **Adoption of previous meeting minutes**
  - September 22, 2018 – approved as presented.

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5. **Activity Reports and Finance Report**

*\*Geraldine assumed Chair for the REVP North Report\**

***Report of the REVP North***

Moved by Jack Bourassa.

Seconded by Holly Ferris.

Carried.

*\*Jack Bourassa resumed Chair for the duration of the meeting\**

***Report of the YEU President***

Moved by Steve Geick.

Seconded by Geraldine Penney.

- Update from Steve
  - I would like to thank everyone involved with the Many Rivers strike, which is now over, their first day back to work is today.

Carried.

***Report of the NWT Area Council President***

Moved by Samantha Cosentino.

Seconded by Jay Butler.

Carried.

***Report of the NU Area Council President***

Chair not in attendance – Report is deferred to the next meeting.

***Report of the Yukon Health & Safety Committee Chair***

Moved by Dianne Williams.

Seconded by Samantha Cosentino.

- Update from Dianne
  - We are still looking for a treasurer for our committee. The last meeting was cancelled due to lack of quorum, but we do have interest from new members. The scent-free workshop is in the works and I want to coordinate this with the Access Committee. The National Health and Safety Conference is set for November, I will be on the steering committee so if anyone has any issues relating to Health and Safety please let me know by February 11.

Carried.

***Report of the Whitehorse Women's Committee Chair***

Moved by Teresa Acheson.

Seconded by Roberta Wurtak.

Carried.

***Report of the NWT Women's Committee Chair***

Moved by Geraldine Penney.

Seconded by Bruce Gudeit.

Carried.

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*Report of the NWT Access Committee Chair*

Moved by Bruce Gudeit.  
Seconded by Samantha Cosentino.  
Carried.

*Report of the NU Access Committee Chair*

Moved by Lili Weemen.  
Seconded by Bill Fennell.  
Carried.

*Report of the YT Pride Committee Chair*

Moved by Roberta Wurtak.  
Seconded by Bruce Gudeit.  
Carried.

*Report of the Standing Finance Committee Chair*

Moved by Geraldine Penney.  
Seconded by Holly Ferris.  
Carried.

**6. Topics Update – Team Lead**

**I. Economic Insecurity – Teresa**

- The online survey is out there for council and members and anyone else in the workplace to help us narrow our focus to what they want the Regional Council to focus on; can we ask the PSAC office to resend the link again?
  - Yusur – The survey is on the PSAC North website under the updates on the homepage, it is also on our Facebook and Twitter. We have additionally sent it out to members in an email and in the newsletter. We have received some responses from members.
  - Jack – We will discuss and re-evaluate our topics at the September meeting, we can keep the survey live until the end of August.
  - Teresa – I will be in touch with Yusur about the responses and timelines so that we can have a summary of the survey to present at the September meeting.

**II. Building Capacity – Jack**

- At our last Regional Council meeting I requested that the chairs take a look at the New Member Orientation Kit and I would ask you this time to take it and make it an agenda item at your next committee meeting, then bring any suggestions back to our next meeting in May.
  - We will resend the orientation kit to Regional Council to present at their committee meetings and bring feedback to the May Regional Council meeting.
- I sent out a link about how to make meetings more fun/interesting, this is for all chairs of committees and can be useful for chairs of locals as well, to get people more interested in coming to meetings. This is also something I will address in the September meeting as this will be part of the agenda for that meeting.

**III. Healthy Workplaces – Derek – Deferred**

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IV. **Job Security and Stability** – Bruce

- Bruce – We haven't really talked about it since we met in Whitehorse and after our discussion it had taken its course we agreed that we had seen things through. I believe in working toward a living wage not a minimum wage, and as a group I don't want to present anything we don't all have input on.
- Gerard – We were discussing about finances for people that live in the north and I think we need to raise the minimum wage in the north, I'd like to continue talking about minimum wage.
- Jack – At our PSAC North convention a motion was passed to work towards raising the Minimum Wage across the north, but with the approval of the Regional Council we began a Living Wage Campaign that is ongoing including postcards sent to our Regional Offices and Components, and letters that have been sent to the Premiers, and a petition currently with 900 signatures in Nunavut, 36 signatures in the NWT (we will need to get more signatures in order to bring to the house), and 60 signatures in the Yukon (we will need to get more to ask an MLA to present to the House).
  - Teresa – I saw the postcards in the PSAC Regional Office but how do we get signatures for the petition?
  - Jack – You can do sign the petition online it is on our PSAC North website, Facebook and a link is in the newsletter; or contact Yusur for the link. This petition can be signed by anyone, not just members, neighbors etc.
- Dianne – I was a rep on the Yukon Employment Standards Board, which is composed of 50% employer and 50% labour, the conversation on living wage and minimum wage has a few variables, and to go from where we are now to \$15/hour in 3 months is not reasonable, so we opted for a different approach, it is now in discussion in Cabinet and I am optimistic they will accept our recommendations. We did get our views heard from those who are living below the poverty line, that is the update for what is happening here.
  - Geoff – I looked on the internet and the report on the Yukon Minimum Wage is posted in full here: <https://yukon.ca/en/yukon-minimum-wage-review-report>

V. **Childcare** – Samantha

- Sue Avery and I attended the National Childcare Day event in Ottawa where we met with Senator Brian Francis and MP Carolyn Bennett, both were very open to lobbying for this and bringing it forward. Our committee needs to take north-appropriate pictures for the campaign and our plan is to find pictures of what our members in each territory look like and send those out to our MP's. We would like to bring these pictures forward for the next meeting if possible.

VI. **Bargaining** – Todd

- Todd – I ask anyone in Yellowknife tomorrow to come out to the noon-hour rally and show support, location is 49<sup>th</sup> street in front of the new tower, information is also posted online on UNW website. In the next 10 days there may be a massive strike across the NWT, pending the outcome of bargaining next Friday. We are fighting for 3 collective agreements, GNWT, NTPC, HRHSSA.
  - Bill – I would like to offer support.
  - Todd – Thanks I know the north is strong.

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- Steve – We’re taking a strike vote for the Yukon Hospital and bargaining with Air North and the Yukon Government.
  - Todd – let us know what we can do for you, we’ll be in touch.
  - Jack – I’ll be leaving tomorrow to join Many Rivers in Whitehorse for a healing party to hold those members up and acknowledge the work they have done.
- Bill – We have several housing bargaining units going to conciliation across Nunavut. Resolute Bay came to the table with nothing but concessions that would take us back to worse than before we had a contract. The Government of Nunavut was unnerving, I even praised the employer’s team, we are already where we normally are after 10 rounds of negotiations, we haven’t touched finances yet though; we are looking at having another round of negotiations in Rankin Inlet for in February.
- Geoff – Before Christmas PSAC declared an impasse in negotiations with the Treasury Board and applied to the Federal Service Labour Relations Board to establish a commission, they refused to set this up and so we are going back to bargaining in February. Scott Bryson has resigned from Treasury Board and now we have Jane Philpot, it will be interesting to see what happens in February.
  - Jack – Approximately 500 members in the north are federal members.
  - Geoff – INAC, RCMP, Environment Canada, CanNor, Service Canada; these are the bigger ones across the north who provide federal program delivery, admin support staff, scientific support etc.

**VII. Food Insecurity – Carrie - Deferred**

**VIII. Reducing Services – Geoff**

- Geoff – In September at Regional Council training in Whitehorse, our team sat down and made a plan for Education on Public Services vs Private Services. We’re looking for Regional Council approval. A lot of people have the idea that public services are more expensive and less efficient than private services, rather than what we know is true which is high quality public services that come from public services.
  - Jack – This is directly related to issues of P3’s and contracting out services from public service employees to private organizations, which is an issue in the north. We want to keep good paying union jobs in the north in the public service.
- Geoff – I will make a motion requesting the Regional Council to approve the plan with the attached budget for \$10,000.00.
  - Samantha – Is what you have budgeted enough? Are travel expenses factored in?
    - Geoff – We are limited by the budget that PSAC North has for this, so we may not be able to have these workshops in every community, but we can in the major centers and held on a weekend then LOS would be minimal.
  - Teresa – Budget of \$10,000.00 should be separate.
    - Geoff – Yes it should be separated in another line.
    - Teresa – With this plan do we need to have the resource requirements clarified before it goes through as it is?
    - Jack – I can sit down with Linda and Geoff to flesh this out and bring it back in May, if you want.
    - Linda – When Geoff and I originally had done this we had a much higher budget amount, and we had to lower it, this is a really important issue

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especially lately with all the potential strikes. We need to have action on this, we can flesh out the details with the designated reps later.

- Bill – Motion – I move to call the question.
  - Seconded by Leese
  - Members held an open vote and it was passed with full support.
- Geoff – Motion – I move to have the Regional Council approve the plan as presented, including a dedicated regional rep and \$10,000.00, that are not staff costs, be applied to the Education on Public Services vs Private Services project.
  - Seconded by Leese
  - Members held an open vote and it was passed with full support.

7. **Regional Office Update** – Jack

- Holmann was unable to join us in the meeting but wanted me to mention that Marija Babic is now an indeterminate rep in the Yellowknife office, replacing Mark Populous who has moved to Ontario. This leaves her position in Iqaluit office open. Also, we have move to a new office in Iqaluit, and we will have an opportunity to visit the new office in September.
  - Bill – The new office is 150 ft from the Frobisher Inn.

8. **Open Discussion**

- ***Education Plan and Budget for 2019-2021***

Moved by Samantha Cosentino

Seconded by Jay Butler

- Teresa – Was there any mention to partnership programming outside labour organizations?
  - Samantha – The Education Plan follows our mandate for PSAC sanctioned courses for our members based on the approved course list.
  - Jack – We certainly work with components and the CLC and organizations we are affiliated with.
- Teresa – Additional courses on page 4, where would the budgeted money come from?
  - Jack – This does not come from the Regional Council budget, it comes from the PSAC North Regional Office budget for Education and some of the additional courses are addressed by National budgets.

Carried.

- **ASL Interpreter Program** – Gerard – I have bad news, our ASL Interpreter is leaving so that means I won't have an interpreter anymore, it is a continuous battle for communication, we are starting over again with this ASL program.
  - Jack – The interpreter is paid by the Yukon Government. Is there a timeline for this?
    - Gerard – No, we have a meeting next Friday and they plan to hire a temporary contractor for 3 months, we don't know too much until then.
  - Dianne – Gerard we really appreciate you being involved in the Regional Council and I'm sure we can make sure to get you what you need to continue to be a part of it.
- **PSAC Childcare Allowance** - Jack – I would also like to announce that there will be an increase to the PSAC Childcare Allowance from \$13 to \$15 /hour, to allow members to attend union work.

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- Committee Brochures - Yusur – In the next few weeks I'll be in touch with the Chairs to refresh the committee brochures.

9. **Upcoming Meeting Dates** – The following dates were selected in following our bylaws which mandate that our meetings occur one month prior to NBoD meetings.

- May 14, 2019 Teleconference @ 4:30pm PDT, 5:30pm MDT, 7:30pm EDT
- September 17, 2019 – Face to Face Meeting in Iqaluit @ 9am EDT
  - Jack – Our meetings normally have been held in Yellowknife or Whitehorse so this time we will go to Iqaluit for a Face to Face meeting and Regional Council training and strategy sessions.
    - Dates will be from September 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, with meeting dates 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>.
    - Morning of the 17<sup>th</sup> will be the Regional Council meeting, the afternoon will be information that Regional Council members need, how to make meetings fun, bylaws, websites, etc. Wednesday will be a strategy session, I have asked for help from Ottawa for a facilitator, and on Thursday we will have a day on the land with an elder/elders, morning session they will share about life for Inuit before colonization and afternoon will be life after colonization; keeping up with TRC recommendations. I have asked Leese and Brenda Shaimaiyuk in the Iqaluit Regional Office to help find elders. If you would like we can also bring in the Chairs of the other Indigenous Peoples' Committees to have their input.
    - We will try for a transportation deal with Air North.
    - Rooms are already confirmed at the Frobisher Inn.
    - You have a lot of notice to be able to attend, we will need to know if you can attend and if you have any dietary concerns for a group lunch on the Thursday. We will need to know numbers of attendees in order to ensure we have the right amount of rooms booked so we can cancel any we don't need; I ask that you confirm attendance by our next meeting in May.
    - Theresa will send out a Registration Form for the event that you will need to fill out and send back to her as soon as possible, in it we will ask for dietary needs, chairs, and any accommodation needs you may have.
  - Leese – During that time there will be a really high/low tide, and this is a time when we go out clam digging, on the 16<sup>th</sup>/ 17<sup>th</sup>, so we would need to change the schedule around in order to make this cultural event, if you wanted to attend.
  - Bruce – I'd like to see people keeping their baggage weight low and filling the rest with food to recognize the food insecurity in Nunavut.
  - Dianne – Thank you Jack for your work, all the travel and the newsletter, I'm really proud to be a part of this.

10. **Adjournment** – Motion – Samantha, Seconded – Holly Ferris, 7:15pm