

PSAC North Regional Council meeting minutes
May 14, 2019, 5:30pm MDT



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
Lisa Kirk, President, Nunavut Area Council
Carrie Lynn Robinson, Chair, Yukon Indigenous Peoples' Committee
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
Geraldine Penney, Chair, Northwest Territories Women's Committee
Derek Yap, Chair, Yukon Racially Visible Committee
Hoa Do, Chair, Northwest Territories Racially Visible Committee
Victor Guzman, Chair, Nunavut Racially Visible Committee
Dianne Williams, Chair, Yukon Health and Safety Committee
Derek Allerton, Chair, Nunavut Health and Safety Committee

Regrets:

Elwood Chan, Alternate REVP, PSAC North
Samantha Cosentino, President, Northwest Territories Area Council
Jackie Siegel, Chair, Northwest Territories Pride Committee
Teresa Acheson, Chair, Whitehorse Women's Committee
Susan Avery, Chair, Nunavut Women's Committee
Jay Butler, Chair, Northwest Territories Health and Safety Committee

Staff:

Theresa Baird, Assistant to the REVP North

1. **Call to order** at 5:40pm.
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Adoption of agenda** – approved as presented.
4. **Adoption of previous meeting minutes**
 - January 31, 2019 – approved as presented.
5. **Activity Reports and Finance Report**
Todd Parsons assumed Chair for the REVP North Report



Report of the REVP North

Moved by Jack Bourassa.
Seconded by Hoa Do.
Carried.

Jack Bourassa resumed Chair for the duration of the meeting

Report of the NWT Area Council President

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

Report of the NU Area Council President

Moved by Lisa Kirk.
Seconded by Bill Fennell.

- Update from Lisa
 - This report is from our last meeting in January that I was unable to attend, since then we have had regular meetings and attended the April 28th Day of Mourning. We have been making plans for the rest of the year at our meetings.

Carried.

Report of the Yukon Health & Safety Committee Chair

Moved by Dianne Williams.
Seconded by Steve Geick.
Carried.

Report of the Whitehorse Women's Committee Chair

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

Report of the NWT Women's Committee Chair

Moved by Geraldine Penney.
Seconded by Bruce Gudeit.
Carried.

Report of the NWT Access Committee Chair

Moved by Bruce Gudeit.
Seconded by Geoff Ryan.
Carried.

Report of the NU Access Committee Chair

Moved by Lili Weemen.
Seconded by Bruce Gudeit.

- Update from Lili
 - We are celebrating Global Accessibility Awareness Day on May 16th and we are having a table in the Frobisher Inn with materials for the public; question - should we have a few cards or petition papers for the living wage? Do you think it is appropriate?
 - Jack – I encourage any of the committees to present the petitions at their events, so please do.



Carried.

Report of the NU Racially Visible Committee Chair

Moved by Victor Guzman.

Seconded by Bruce Gudeit.

- Update from Victor
 - We are a new committee and looking forward to getting our feet wet.

Carried.

Report of the Standing Finance Committee Chair

Moved by Geraldine Penney.

Seconded by Bruce Gudeit.

- Note from Geraldine
 - Please see Note 1: for Actual Received funds from Ottawa, before this report we had not received the funds for \$74,812.50; but we have now received the cheque to be deposited in May and this will be reflected on the next variance report.

Carried.

Report of the UNW President

Moved by Todd Parsons.

Seconded by Geraldine Penney.

Carried.

6. Topics Update – Team Lead

I. Economic Insecurity – Teresa - Deferred

II. Building Capacity – Jack

- Feedback on the Orientation Kit
 - Victor – On page 1 the explanation is great, but I'd like to add the Union Savings Program, we should add this as one of the benefits of being a member.
 - Jack – We will also format a smaller pamphlet sized one to hand out.
 - Jack – please send anything else you notice like typos to us as well, but what we are looking at is content right now, like who new employees should contact, their components, when they have questions. If you have any other recommendations, please send to me and we will have another version at the September meeting.
 - Dianne – I think a hard copy is a good version to have in addition to the electronic version, I look forward to it at the September meeting.
 - Jack – Kudos to the Atlantic region for the template.
- New Website
 - Jack - The new website will be out soon and will include the union savings website for new members. So that information will be sent out to everyone shortly. I had Yusur add this to the union members benefits page, it is a number of unions who have pooled their resources to try to get us better deals as a group, this has come out within the past few months.

PSAC North Regional Council meeting minutes
May 14, 2019, 5:30pm MDT



III. **Healthy Workplaces** – Derek

- Workplace Survey
 - Derek - Dianne had put together a survey on workplaces but I haven't received it, so I must follow up on that with Dianne, and in my own workplace I am pleased to say that the employer is taking stock of that.
 - Dianne – The survey was intended for a few smaller organizations, not to be a mass mailout, and so we hope to have the survey information by the September meeting.

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

- Update on Discussions
 - Bruce - We decided that this has gone as far as we can take it, we saw it more as keeping members informed and explaining the strength in unity.
 - Gerard – I don't have much to add, not much has happened, for me lots of stressors has been happening; like only now do we finally have an interpreter. I had some suggestions for people with disabilities who have jobs and as they get older and retire that position usually doesn't go to someone who has a disability; I would like to see that position be filled by a person with a disability, I don't know that it's appropriate.
 - Bruce – I don't think there should be a quota for positions held by people with disabilities, I think that we should all be treated equally.

V. **Childcare** – Samantha

- Update on Campaign
 - Lisa - Since the last meeting we haven't really discussed a lot.
 - Geraldine – At the Yellowknife tradeshow we campaigned for the Childcare Campaign and got over 250 signatures.

VI. **Bargaining** – Todd

- Bargaining Updates
 - Todd - I'm happy to report that we resolved issues with NTPC and GNWT, we see a lot of new language and good economic increases and they are better than what was offered, it was a fair settlement, and we could have only done that with the campaigning and support from you.
 - Bill – We just concluded our third round of negotiations with the government and this round was not as good as the last two, we are going into bargaining again on the first week of June in Rankin Inlet and I predict by the second day we'll be in impasse and looking for a mediator.
 - Steve – Well Bill we'll be joining you shortly and probably by the second day we'll be at impasse, the big thing on the table is the severance package, this will affect over 3,000 members and it will be a strike issue.
 - Bruce – What is happening with Many Rivers?
 - Steve – A legal AGM was held, and a new board was elected, but they still haven't confirmed anything yet with the government for funding, we are hopeful they will renew the funding and get everyone back to work.
 - Geraldine – The City of Yellowknife started bargaining today.

PSAC North Regional Council meeting minutes
May 14, 2019, 5:30pm MDT



- Geoff – Federal Government negotiations, we met April 30th and May 1st and 2nd we have declared impasse and have asked the board to convene a public interest commission which is a form of conciliation; the recommendations are not binding. Once they have their hearing they issue a report within 30 days, we can't strike during an election year, so we'll have to wait until November; the offer is the same as before with just an addition of the domestic violence leave.

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

VIII. **Reducing Services** – Geoff

- Education on Public Services vs Private Services
 - Geoff - At the last Regional Council meeting we passed a motion to approve \$10,000 for this campaign and nothing has happened since then.
 - Jack – I'll add that the idea was to get on it and flesh it out with the assigned Regional Representative and I need to have a Regional Coordinator in place to have that meeting. The new Regional Coordinator will be back in the office tomorrow and I will sit down with him then. Once the Regional Representative has been assigned your team should sit down and discuss the plan in order to move forward. We also still do not have a Regional Representative in the Iqaluit office, but soon we should; there were some backfilling issues with staff which have now mostly been resolved, so the new Regional Representative should hopefully be in place soon.

7. **New Business**

a. Federal Election Survey Feedback

- Jack - Recently we received a note from the PSAC on developing strategies for elections, there are some limitations as to what we can do – especially regarding finances. We can still advocate for people to get out and vote, but we cannot advocate for only one specific party – especially if funds are being spent. Yusur has put together a survey that would address questions that concern workers in the North. We can have questions that members can bring to town halls to ask people who are campaigning. This can be passed on to others in the north. Our communications team in Ottawa did a test and statistics show that Facebook is our best opportunity with maximum impact to reach people; we can start boosting this because it's not political in-itself.
 - Derek Allerton – I took the survey already, I thought it looked familiar.
 - Todd – The Federal Elections Act is very limited and tied to PSAC Proper, so any campaigning has to come from them.
 - Victor – Under electoral reform can we change it to 'proportional representation'? It currently reads 'proportional presentation' which I think is a typo.
 - Geoff - The other electoral reform options were the ranked ballot, which the liberals were in favor of because, so the ranked ballot would end up with a liberal government 99% of the time, and first past the post.
 - Jack – The whole idea now is to get questions for the candidates. We want to promote the idea of voting, we must get people out. We also need to look forward to what the PSAC is coming out with. We must not campaign for one party, not all our members are NDP,

PSAC North Regional Council meeting minutes
May 14, 2019, 5:30pm MDT



so if we go out and wave the flag of the NDP for example, we'll have upset members, we can't advocate for a single party because we have members who vote differently.

b. Political Action Committee

- o Jack – I'm putting out a call for volunteers for this committee and we need at least one Regional Council member and one person from each territory, this committee would toss some ideas around and bring back to Regional Council for discussion. Please email me if you would volunteer to be on the committee.

c. PSAC North Convention June 5-7, 2020 in Whitehorse, YT

- o Jack - This September I will put out the official convention callout, primarily because there are some restrictions to do with fully funded conventions, coming in the form of the number of Regional Council members who can go to convention.
 - We are now limited to 20 people that can go so we need to find other ways to get some Regional Council members to convention. Your committee can only vote one person to go, so if they vote you to go, then that would free up a spot for other Regional Council members to go.
 - Your committee needs to get your 3 regular meetings and an AGM in this year with the latest one by Mid October 2019, so we can get things in place like resolutions, and at the AGM you should be electing members to go to convention; keeping in mind you must give notice of an AGM of 30 days.
 - Delegate submissions must be in 6 months prior to convention.
- o Discussion on Regional Convention
 - Todd – Where did this 20 people only come from?
 - Jack – This was brought forward by Ottawa and presented to the AEC.
 - Todd – I don't remember this, so what's being said is that locals that have Regional Council members, they take away from locals, I have a problem with that and I don't support that.
 - Jack – They don't take the seats away from locals, they have told us that this is the delegate funding formula.
 - Todd – This goes against our bylaws, this should be discussed at the NBoD; I appreciate that PSAC controls the cost, but I want to see a constitutional interpretation and being that I was on the Finance committee this was not part of the costings.
 - Bill – The last 4 National Conventions people have been trying to get the constitution committee to get fully funded conventions and now we're being told that its only sort of fully funded, I agree that this should go to the board, I'm dumbfounded that they would try to limit it to 20 when they know our Regional Council is a lot bigger, I don't know who should put it on the June NBoD agenda but it should be.
 - Jack – The AEC was also told that we would have to charge a \$150 registration fee for delegates to attend our regional conventions. I told them this would not work for our region and that we had never charged a registration fee before.
 - Todd – That is a big pill to swallow, I'm very mindful of our finances but now we're getting charged fees that we've never been charged before. I'm hearing this for the first time and I'm getting frustrated.

PSAC North Regional Council meeting minutes
May 14, 2019, 5:30pm MDT



- Jack – I have asked brother Aylward to bring this forward at the NBoD meeting. He did refer to the fact that there was some ruling by John Gordon as to the definition of fully funded and it included registration fees.
- Todd – I'll make sure that in June I'll bring the costings forward, I look forward to working with my brothers to deal with this.
- Jack – I agree with you we should formulate a plan.
- Steve – I agree with Todd, this will cause some mess in June so let's have a chat before we get there. Shirin sent something out about agenda items, so I will make sure its on the agenda.
- Geoff – I agree with you all that this is not my understanding of what was passed at convention, I would suggest that the four of you review the convention record when you meet to see the questions and debate, to determine what a fully funded convention was. I don't remember a limitation on the number of delegates, that was passed at convention.

8. Old Business - none

9. Regional Update – Daniel Kinsella - Deferred

10. Open Discussion

- a. New Website – Jack – We have a new PSAC North website coming soon that Yusur and the other Political Communications Officers have been working on. There have been requests for assistance from Chairs, like getting materials out or advertised on the website, and these things have been limited because of design of the old website that prevented the Officers from being able to make changes. When this change happens, we'll able to accommodate the committees better and get more on the new website. In September Yusur will have more information as to what can be done with the new website.

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

- September 17, 2019 – Face to Face Meeting in Iqaluit, NU @ 9am EDT
 - A reminder will be sent out to those Regional Council members who have not yet registered to do so before the end of May.
 - We do have something special lined up and I think you will really enjoy it and you should come away feeling refreshed.
 - Bruce – Just a reminder about bringing awareness to the cost of food and food insecurity in Nunavut when we go there.
 - Carrie - The ladies I have contact with in the north suggest that we fill our suitcases with food to bring north, and plan ahead of time for shared group meals, and we can donate food that doesn't get used up during the meeting.
 - Jack – What foodbanks get a lot of is what they don't really need, could Lisa let us know what items might be needed?
 - Lisa – I certainly can do that and let you know.

12. Adjournment – Motion – Bill Fennell, Seconded – Geraldine Penney, Adjourned at 7:00pm.