

PSAC North Regional Council meeting minutes
February 6, 2018, 5:30pm MST



In attendance:

Regional Council members

Jack Bourassa, Regional Executive Vice President, PSAC North
Todd Parsons, President, Union of Northern Workers
Bill Fennell, President, Nunavut Employees' Union
Samantha Moynes, President, Northwest Territories Area Council
Lisa Kirk, President, Nunavut Area Council
Gerard Tremblay, Chair, Yukon Access Committee
Bruce Gudeit, Chair, Northwest Territories Access Committee
Teresa Acheson, Chair, Whitehorse Women's Committee
Geraldine Penney, Chair Northwest Territories Women's Committee
Dianne Williams, Chair, Yukon Health and Safety Committee

Regrets:

Steve Geick, President, Yukon Employees' Union
Carrie Robinson, Chair, Yukon Aboriginal People's Committee
Chase Blodgett, Chair, Yukon Pride Committee
Elwood Chan, Alternate Regional Executive Vice President, PSAC North

Staff:

Holmann Richard, PSAC North Regional Coordinator
Theresa Baird, Assistant to the REVP North

1. **Call to order** at 5:40pm.
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Adoption of agenda**
Agenda approved with the addition of Living Wage and Slogan to #8
4. **Adoption of previous meeting minutes (January 16, 2018) - Deferred**
5. **Strategic Sessions Report** – Jack provided to the council for their information. The summary will be included in the newsletter.
 - **Note*** Page 10 – Topics the council agreed we should be working on at the sessions, thanks to those who were there and agreed to more frequent meetings to deal with these issues, the next step is for the groups to meet and discuss what are the priorities for each topic.
 - I. **Economic Insecurity** – Teresa
Team has not met since the face-to-face meeting, it is nice to see the summary and next steps here, I haven't taken time yet for this topic vs easier topics or things we could action right away.
 - II. **Building Capacity** – Jack
Sue Christianson has taken a role in the PSAC, so she will no longer be part of this group. I will include this topic and get an email group going on that.
 - III. **Healthy Workplaces** – Derek

PSAC North Regional Council meeting minutes
February 6, 2018, 5:30pm MST



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

We are relying on strong bargaining.

Gerard – what I’m thinking is there are no job opportunities for persons with disabilities, persons with deafness have difficulties with communications, so it may be harder for them to apply for jobs. Also please use the term deaf instead of hard of hearing.

- I have access to a computer at work but not for personal work so meeting for the topics will be difficult, mostly I’m dependent on text. Teresa suggested to get a laptop for Gerard through a program they have in Whitehorse for kids. Gerard agreed with that. Not having a computer makes it hard to have a conversation with Bruce and Hoa. Jack will also talk to Bruce.

V. **Childcare** – Samantha

There is a national campaign in May that we are waiting for, then we would start looking at options in the north.

VI. **Bargaining** – Todd

UNW has a strike vote plan in place and we are moving forward with it. We are ramping up our activities for mobilizing with members and the campaign includes website, social media, NNSL, radio, advertisements, rolling banners on community access channels; we’re asking members to come out and vote on the strike. This week we will announce strike results for NTPC on Friday. It would be helpful to us for you to facilitate meetings with members to inform them of what the employer is demanding, information can be found on the UNW website under bargaining – including speaking notes. The Legislative Assembly is in session on Thursday, any members who can attend with Todd are welcome. \$175million surplus was published from the GNWT. I will also send out speaking notes to Jack tomorrow to send out to the council, we are trying to avoid a strike.

- Jack directed Simon to gather information on demystifying the GNWT wages that people may not be aware of, when he has it together Jack will bring it to Todd to look at to ensure there is nothing missing.
- NEU can do to support the UNW? Bill only a call away, Todd – send a request to Todd through the UNW Facebook account, his EA will send a private invite to the closed group, take on some of the comments that are coming in. This group is for members only. That would be helpful to Todd.
- Teresa – we’ve had some comments with the City of Whitehorse, in bargaining now, there is a public input night Feb 12th, already the manager sent out an email regarding code of conduct of employees, hopefully we can organize a showing of employees at that event. Jack – it is generally expected that you don’t slam your employer in public, this includes social media, but official staff / political communications officers are covered for that. Todd – if you announce you are speaking officially for the union that will shelter you for that.
- Bruce – NTFL? How can we help? Todd – join in the campaign, use the speaking points we have especially if all your officers are in it as well.

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

VIII. **Reducing Services** – Geoff - **Deferred**

- Jack - Anyone who was not there at the event they can join the groups as well; I just ask that the lead person keeps that group organized.
- Jack will email each team with the information and topic groups will meet to discuss, via email or teleconference.

6. **City of Whitehorse Brochures** – Teresa - the ‘we share the air’ brochures emailed out, which was mentioned at the last meeting that I would share, it is a great campaign it has worked well in our public facilities, logo taken from Dalhousie University, you can copy the messaging just don’t use the City of Whitehorse logo, this could be used along with the brochure from last meeting. Hyperlink on email will take you to editable images.

7. **Vision Committee** – Teresa - our committee met and this is the draft coming from the sessions, what we wanted council to look at is the definitions to understand the differences between the different types of statements. To give a good framework to fit all the priorities and words we thought represented us. Second page is the proposed statements. Tried to break it out into, looking for feedback on that, if there is specific feedback they can send it to Theresa or our committee for the suggestions.
 - Todd – I like the work that has been done, I am supportive of the approach.
 - Bruce – I still like the idea of a couple of sentences instead of a half page thing.
 - Geraldine – suggested to add Canada’s 3 northern Territories.
 - Dianne, Sam and Lisa think it looks great.
 - Jack - we have to bring this forward with quorum in order to adopt it, in the mean time you can send any comments to us and we can forward to Teresa so that the committee can revise it and move forward.

8. **Living Wage and Slogan** - Jack – A resolution was made during our June regional convention to campaign for a minimum wage increase of \$15/hr across the north. At the time they put this resolution together they may not have had the information we have today including that BC, Alberta, and Ontario are already moving toward that \$15/hr, so now we in the north are behind them. The suggestion now is to move from a minimum wage campaign to a living wage campaign, a \$20+ campaign. However, this was not what I was mandated to do at convention so I am looking for approval and direction to take this new direction. We have managed to put together MLA’s in each territory and between that and the postcard and social media campaigns, are ready to go, this is time sensitive since the legislatures will be meeting and discussing these issues.
 - Gerard – In my opinion the living wage you are seeking here is harder for people to acquire, they might not hire people like students. Every month could be the additional cost of living on top of the minimum wage, we could start with \$15 and go from there.
 - Jack – it is not expected that the government will legislate any living wage as the minimum wage, the thinking is that is better to aim high. Gerard – that makes sense.
 - Todd – half of Canadians are now receiving \$15/hr and since we are relative to southern jurisdictions, we have to be at least on par with the south, if we start pressuring now with the Living Wage maybe we will be lucky enough, we have to push them to greater than 15\$ this is a proposal that will work for everybody.
 - Teresa – it makes sense and most northerners understand there is a higher cost of living in the north, so how does that come into play, in speaking with the public they are saying can we manage it? But if you are making \$15 down south and you want to attract workers and maintain them you need higher wages in the north.
 - Bruce – I’d like to see \$22/hr living wage. You would be putting on them notice that that is what we will be working towards, we may need to concede the title ‘living wage’ and go to \$17 instead, but at least that’s higher than 15, and what we have now.

PSAC North Regional Council meeting minutes
February 6, 2018, 5:30pm MST



- Jack – speaking with Justin Lemphers, he gave me documents from the chamber of commerce in Seattle, from before and after their minimum wage was raised to \$15/hr, and all the negative predictions did not come true. The idea is to de-mystify the negative myths that are out there, this was given to Simon to work on, and get Canadians and politicians on side with us that we just don't want to settle for the minimum. What is in the best interests for the people of the north.
 - Jack – with blessing of the council I will speak with the component presidents, and then we have a campaign with postcards, petitions, media, articles are all ready to go. Everything is in place and just needs to go out after final language is approved with the presidents. End result hopefully by the end of 2019.
 - **Slogan** was fight for \$15 North. Jack suggests new slogan like 'support living wage', 'fight for living wage', '#', if you have any thoughts email Jack or Simon any ideas.
 - Todd – I like 'fight for living wage north'
 - Geraldine I like 'Support' not fight. Lisa agrees with Support living wage north.
 - Teresa – Living wage for the north – shorter, catchier.
 - Bruce – we're worth a living wage.
 - Teresa – Northern Wage for Living.
 - Gerard – Northern Living Wage.
 - Bill – communications people from the 3 components and Simon will come up with something perfect, they are the creative ones.
9. **Upcoming Meeting Dates – Theresa will send out meeting invites to Regional Council**
- March 7, 2018 @ 5:30pm MST
 - April 18, 2018 @ 5:30pm MDT
 - ~~May 22, 2018 @ 5:30pm MDT~~ May 29, 2018 @ 5:30pm MDT
 - September 18, 2018 @ 5:30pm MDT
10. **Adjournment – 6:35pm**