



National Association of Federal Retirees Association nationale des retraités fédéraux

FRASER VALLEY WEST

Annual General Meeting
Thursday March 24, 2021
via Zoom

MINUTES

Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 11:03 am by Branch President Ian Spence, with 29 members present, thereby exceeding the special quorum of 19.
- A minute of silence was observed for our departed members.

Ian welcomed our guests and new members, Christine Dockman, Judy McLellan and first time attendees, including Angela and Clive Cheung and Ken Norman.

- Board members present included: Ian Spence, Ilene Fika, Thelma Graham, Stuart Wilson, Steve Sawchuk, Katherine Kettler, Rocky Rockwell, Joy Hennen, Sharon Riches, and Bernd Hirsekorn.
- Ian conveyed regrets from: Thelma Graham who was unable to attend

1. The **agenda** for the meeting was approved. **MSC Ian Spence/Christine Dockman**

2. Approval of AGM **Minutes** held March 12, 2020 **MSC Ilene Fika/Stuart Wilson**

3. **Branch President's and Directors' Reports:** **Ian Spence**

- Ian presented an overview of 2020 Branch activities and highlights from Reports received from the Board of Directors.

2020 – A review of activities

- Feb 6th Hearing Life Presentation and onsite hearing screenings
- Feb 13th Johnson Insurance and Medoc travel insurance presentation
- Feb 27th – Ian Spence and Bernd Hirsekorn presented a well-received briefing to the BC Federal Council – department heads in Pacific Region, educating them about our organization and proposing a presentation to their employees during pre-retirement seminars.
- Mar 12th – We held our AGM at Newlands with safety precautions in place, just as everything was shutting down due to the pandemic.
- Then, we were left with no options except to cancel our remaining events: “Let’s Do Lunch” with Charles Louth, the monthly “Meet n’ Chat” coffee sessions, several workshops and the annual District Training in Chilliwack.
- April 23rd – held our first Board meeting via Zoom

- May – You and Your Survivor workshop and annual BBQ scheduled for July cancelled
- Jun – As a way to mark National Public Service Week and to say ‘thank you’ to public sector workers for keeping the lights on and managing an unprecedented roll-out of emergency benefits to millions of suddenly unemployed Canadians, the Branch took out ¼ page advertisements in three local weeklies; the Peace Arch New, the Surrey Now Leader and the Langley Advance Times
- Aug – the long-term picture was becoming even more clear. The National Board of Directors instructed branches to cancel all in-person events for the remainder of the year.
- Sept – First Zoom presentation on “Top Ten Tips for Downsizing”
 - Win Back project that required Steve Sawchuk to call members whose memberships were about to expire and determine reasons for potentially not renewing. He discovered that approximately 2/3 of the members on our list stated that they had never received notification but were happy to renew their membership. This also resulted in a change of procedure in how National Office deals with lapsing memberships.
 - We also learned that our national email system had lost contact with 200 of our members so Ian attempted to contact them individually and the result was restored contact with more than ¾ of them.
 - Advocacy work continued with contacts through Leslie Gaudette; yielding invitations to attend virtual townhalls with Liberal MPs Ken Hardie and Randeep Sarai, and on one occasion, the Minister of Seniors, the Hon. Deb Schulte.
- Oct – a snap provincial election required that we reach out to the numerous provincial candidates in our 12 ridings that fall within our Branch borders. The Federal Retirees in association with the Council of Seniors’ Organizations of BC, organized a virtual town hall on seniors’ issues, again thanks to Leslie Gaudette.
 - Relocation Services Group Zoom presentation
- The National Reach 338 project aims to establish contacts with all 338 Members of Parliament and we have been actively pursuing that goal. Some MPs are proving to be more elusive than others.
- We continue to maintain contact with our members through monthly updates and Sage magazine reports.
- Dec – Zoom meeting on Coping with Covid presented from a ‘Bounce Back Coach’ from the Canadian Mental Health Association.
- Ian then highlighted the brief reports from Directors Rocky(Glen) Rockwell – Health & Benefits Officer, Steve Sawchuk – Membership Administration, Joy Hennen – Marketing & Recruitment, Stuart Wilson – Communications and Katherine Kettler – Branch events. We remain hopeful that the Christmas general meeting and luncheon will proceed as planned in December.
 - Ian thanked all the Directors for their dedication through an especially difficult year. He sent out special thanks and wishes to Tim Knight who was forced to step down from Secretary due to health concerns.
- Ian then called on **Leslie Gaudette** (APO) BC/Yukon to address the membership about Advocacy issues for the province of BC.

3.1 Advocacy Review of the past year

Leslie Gaudette

Congratulations: BC04 has had a great year for advocacy!

Provincial Overview

“What do I do as APO?”

Leslie builds capacity for an Advocacy team across the province through:

- emails
- Zoom calls
- In-person meetings for our three regions plus the District as a whole
- One-on-one coaching and orientation to new members
- Follow-up as issues arise
- input into BC Provincial election materials

As the BC/YK rep on the National Advocacy Committee she work closely with others across all six districts to make recommendations to the National Board Of Directors on policy issues.

• **Advocacy update:**

Despite Covid, Reach 338 continues with more target MPs being identified for each province. So far BC/YK has done really well. Branches have met with at least 14 MPs including two not on the original list. We now have another list for 2021 and BC04 has already met with some of the newly targeted MPs as well as others.

From time to time Leslie is able to join a Branch to meet with MPs. Since the 2019 federal election she has now met with MPs from all four parties. It is important to ensure our messages are heard by all parties including those where our positions may seem far apart – positions can and do evolve over time

Provincial Election: Again we did a lot – prepared election material geared to BC, focusing on transforming health care in the province to put more focus on community based care to take the pressure off of long term care. And BC04 was there to send out letters to key candidates and thank those who were successful. It is important to continue to partner with other groups in our community such as Langley Seniors in Action and Semiamhoo Planning Table as well as with the Council of Senior Citizens Organizations of BC.

• **Current campaigns:**

Long Term Care campaign – the Federal Retirees special campaign for long term care and home care is ongoing with emphasis on national standards. The situation with our public service pension plan owning Revera is being monitored closely by the National Advocacy Committee and the National Board of Directors.

New campaigns in February 2021

National Office very quickly put together two campaigns which were launched through emails from our National President, Jean-Guy Soulière.

- **Federal Budget input on our priorities** – see material on national website – this may be used when meeting with MPs. <https://www.federalretirees.ca/en/news-views/news-listing/february/lets-talk-budget-2021-have-your-say>

Here are the key requests:

- Recommendation 1: **Reform older adult care** by implementing a national seniors strategy, which includes national standards tied to funding for long-term care and home and community care, and investments to expand home and community care and addresses the social determinants of health.
- Recommendation 2: Improve financial supports and investments in tools and programs to assist **informal caregivers**.
- Recommendation 3: Move forward with implementing a **national pharmacare program** so that all Canadians have access to the medications they need.
- Recommendation 4: Ensure long-term **retirement income security** for low-income seniors who qualify for Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement.
- Recommendation 5: **Address gaps** in direct funding programs for those whose income has been affected by COVID-19.
- Recommendation 6: **Protect pensions** over the long-term by creating a strong policy environment that encourages innovation and makes defined benefit plans more readily available to Canadians.

Support for Bill C213 on pharmacare – Federal Retirees supported this Bill as it was well aligned with our position on Pharmacare, involving a letter writing campaign to MPs. Despite efforts by Federal Retirees and many other retiree, labour and health organizations, the Bill was defeated with NDP and GRN voting for and nearly all LIB, CON and Bloc voting against. This may well reflect very strong lobbying by pharmaceutical and insurance industries. But this is an important issue for our members as up to 5,000 letters were sent in 24 hours. For more information see:

<https://www.federalretirees.ca/en/news-views/news-listing/february/lets-talk-about-pharmacare>

Federal Election: Will it be Spring? Will it be Fall? Current thinking is that we will most likely have an election this year, and with the Federal Budget now set for April 19, it could be Spring. So be prepared!

4. Branch Financial Reports: (see *BC04 2020 Financial Report Appendices*) Ian Spence

Along with the finance team, a member of our Branch, **Verna Sandison** independently reviewed the 2020 year-end Branch financial reports. We thank her for this extra effort on our behalf.

4.1 Approval of Financial Statements for 2020:

Ian Spence

- Ian explained **Appendices A and A.1** of the 2020 Branch Report, and gave an overview of the financial statements ending 31 Dec 2020 including Revenues, Expenses, Earnings/Loss and Balances showing net assets.

Ian stated that our reviewed Branch financial statements for the year ending 31/12/2020 showed:

- The Branch received \$15,806.16 from various sources in revenue.
- Total expenses minus \$1100. In Meal/Ticket Sales came to a total of \$9,662.43
- The result was Earnings of \$6,143.73

Ian moved that the members assembled at this Annual Meeting receive and approve the Reviewed Financial Statements for the year 2020 showing Earnings of \$6,143.73.

MSC Ian Spence/Bernd Hirsekorn. Vote carried

4.2 Approve adjustments and re-allocations among Branch Equity Reserves (Appendix B)

Ian Spence

- Ian restated the Statement Balance showing the Branch holding Net Assets of \$37,186.55
 - He then clarified what we are allowed to carry in unallocated reserves.
- Ian then explained **Appendix B** of the 2020 Branch Report - how the Allocated Reserves of \$19,000.00 were derived and proposed plans for expenditures in upcoming 3 years: namely, \$4K to activities under Recruitment and Communications, \$3.5K for Training & Development, \$7.5K to Advocacy activities, and \$3K for Equipment.

Ian moved that the members assembled at this Branch Annual Meeting, approve the Branch Reserved Equity Allocations as shown in Appendix B in the package of materials provided. MSC Ian Spence/Sandi Britton-Lougheed. Vote carried

4.3 Proposed 2021 Branch Operating Budget

Ian Spence

- Ian highlighted the proposed budget in **Appendix C** of the 2020 Branch Report, indicating that this year is comparable to last year's budget.

Ian moved to Approve Proposed Operating Budget for 2021 MSC Ian Spence/Stuart Wilson. Vote carried

5. Motion for (Board) Authority to Appoint a Financial Reviewer for 2021

Ian Spence

Ian Spence moved that this motion be accepted/Christine Dockman seconded it. Vote Carried

6. Motion to Appoint Bank and Cheque Signing Officers for 2021

Ian Spence

Ian Spence moved that the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary be appointed as Bank Signing Officers for our Branch/**Katherine Kettler seconded the motion and Vote Carried.**

7. Dismissal of the BC04 Board of Directors

Ian Spence

- At this point Ian Spence conveyed, on behalf of the Branch members his sincere appreciation to our outgoing Board of Directors for their valued contributions.
- He then turned the meeting over to Bernd Hirsekorn as the Nominations Committee Chair.

8. Nomination and election of officers

Bernd Hirsekorn

Bernd Hirsekorn, our past president, chaired the meeting for election of officers for the 2021-2022 Board of Directors. Officers/directors nominated by the nominations committee were introduced and asked if they accepted their nominations. Nominations from the floor were called for each position.

- ***Motion to elect slate of Executive positions:***

Bernd Hirsekorn

Ian Spence to the position of President; Katherine Kettler to the position of Vice-President; Stuart Wilson to the position of Treasurer; and Thelma Graham to the position of Secretary. MSC Bernd Hirsekorn/Sharon Riches. Vote carried

- **Motion to elect slate of Directors-At-Large:**

Bernd Hirsekorn

For the 8 positions of Director-at-Large, the following Branch members agreed to serve:

- (1) **Ilene Fika,**
- (2) **Rocky Rockwell,**
- (3) **Steve Sawchuk,**
- (4) **Joy Hennen,**
- (5) **Sharon Riches**
- (6) **Bernd Hirsekorn**
- (7) **Judy McLellan**
- (8) **Christine Dockman**

Nominations from the floor were called for additional nominees, but no other members wished to stand for election. **MSC Bernd Hirsekorn/Leslie Gaudette. Vote carried**

The elected officers were introduced and congratulated by Bernd Hirsekorn and Ian Spence.


The branch officers/directors for 2021-2022 for the Fraser Valley West Branch comprise: the **Signing Officers** being President Ian Spence, Vice-President Katherine Kettler, Treasurer Stuart Wilson and Secretary Thelma Graham; and the Directors-at-Large below who will be assigned to specific portfolios at the first Board meeting to be held **22 April 2021**.

PRESIDENT	Ian Spence
VICE PRESIDENT	Katherine Kettler
TREASURER	Stuart Wilson
SECRETARY	Thelma Graham
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE	Steve Sawchuk
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE	Rocky (Glen) Rockwell
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE	Sharon Riches
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE	Ilene Fika
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE	Joy Hennen
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE	Bernd Hirsekorn
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE	Judy McLellan
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE	Christine Dockman

- Ian Spence invited the members in attendance to open mics and interact.

9. Adjournment: The meeting was officially adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Signed on this day of 29 March, 2021 by:


 Ian Spence, President


 Ilene Fika, (acting) Secretary