



National Association  
of Federal Retirees      Association nationale  
des retraités fédéraux  
**WINNIPEG & DISTRICT**

National Association of Federal Retirees  
Winnipeg & District Branch  
National Website: [www.federalretirees.ca](http://www.federalretirees.ca)  
Branch Website:  
[www.federalretirees.ca/en/Branches/Manitoba/Winnipeg-and-District](http://www.federalretirees.ca/en/Branches/Manitoba/Winnipeg-and-District)  
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GENERAL MEETING:  
November 24, 2021  
Via Zoom

### MINUTES

Present: Ceci O’Flaherty, Lionel Guerard, Gwen Schentag, Donna Dobson, Cynthia Foreman, Naomi Ashton, Denise Galbraith

Regrets: Paula Nygaard

Attendees: 32

Meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

1. Approval of Agenda:

- *Motion to approve agenda by Lionel Guerard and seconded by Gwen Schentag. Carried*

2. Introduction of “first-time attendees”:

- First time attendees were welcomed.
- A moment of silence was held for all loved ones no longer with us.

3. Review of Minutes from the April 14, 2021 Annual General Meeting:

- *Motion to approve minutes as presented was made by Cynthia Foreman and seconded by Pat Jarrett. Carried*

#### 4. President's Report – Ceci O'Flaherty

I am really missing the face to face interaction with our members but technology is a wonderful thing and allows us to connect from anywhere. I am currently in Saskatoon enjoying the Olympic Curling trials.

I have a couple things I would like to highlight this afternoon:

- I am pleased that this year we were able to participate in the Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Army, Navy, Air Force Veterans Branch 283 and lay a wreath on behalf of the Winnipeg and District Branch. This year Lionel Guerard, VP laid the wreath on our behalf.
- Our membership is currently 5,761 members. This is down significantly from our pre-pandemic membership in January 2020 of 6,237. With the Mega Recruitment Drive announced in the SAGE magazine, now is a great time to canvass your friends, family and former co-workers that are eligible to join the Association. Our branch continues to also offer a \$25 gift card of your choice for any member you bring in. We also offer a \$15 gift card if you change your membership from a single to a double. We are considered one of the leading organizations to promote and safeguard our pensions and other benefits with the federal government. We also advocate for issues including a National Senior Strategy, Pharmacare and other initiatives that are important to all seniors.

Upcoming in 2022

- Quick highlight to mention that with the federal cabinet being recently announced and the throne speech which happened yesterday, we are working hard on developing a strategy to contact all MPs to ensure they are aware of our priorities and concerns. Cynthia Foreman, who is the lead for our Branch Advocacy initiatives as well as the Advocacy Programs Officer for Manitoba will talk more about Advocacy later in the agenda.
- Golf – Our annual Golf tournament has been booked for August 16, 2022. We are very hopeful that we will be able to have one this year.
- Booster shots are now available for most eligible residents of Manitoba. I was surprised I could go online and book for the date six months after my second shot even though it was far in the future. If you haven't already booked your booster shot—I encourage you to do so if you're able.
- We are hoping to hold Speaker Events again in 2022 and are exploring the possibility of having a session (either in person or online) with someone from Johnson Insurance (now Intact Insurance) to update us on our Medoc Travel Insurance coverage; our Medoc benefits, how the amalgamation with Intact has impacted; residents' insurance for condos, etc. We are looking at this for May, watch for more information in the new year.

Question: Are you partnering with CARP for pre-retirement seminars? Currently we are not working on this at the local level although National Office is working with CARP on the broader issue and delivering virtual pre-retirement seminars. We do have a group looking into partnering

with Edmonton branch on a seminar they conducted. This is just in the planning stages, we'll let you know when we have something concrete.

5. Old Business:

- Recap of April 2021 Annual General Meeting

We set a broad spectrum of reserves at the meeting, these are all in line with National Office guidelines. The Defense of Benefits fund has been reduced to \$30,000. We have set aside monies for equipment as well as advocacy— participation in town halls, planning for additional events during a federal election as well as participation in provincial elections. We have also set aside \$15,000 for communications and recruitment. It will be the focus of the board of directors and all our membership to recruit more members. It is important to everyone to have an active membership to defend our benefits.

We are having a celebration for Manitoba 150 no matter how old Manitoba is when we are finally able to safely get together to celebrate.

- Recap of vacant volunteer positions:

We have several vacant positions on the board and need people to step forward:

Director, Speakers' Events – canvas members for areas of interest for speakers' events; work in conjunction with small committee to deliver the event.

Director, Equipment – looks after and sets up equipment, a/v, banners, recruitment packages

Director, Social Media – work with Ottawa to update branch website, work with True North Sports and Entertainment to keep the discounted events current, update our Social Media. Currently, we only use FaceBook but are willing to investigate using other social media platforms.

If you are interested in any of the positions, please call (204) 989-2061 or send an email to [NAFRwpg@mymts.net](mailto:NAFRwpg@mymts.net).

6. Reports:

Finance:

Reports were distributed to all before the meeting. Gwen Schentag presented her first financial reports. Other than paying for basics (cell phone, internet, stationery) we have not really spent money over the past year. Bottom line, Winnipeg & District Branch is very well set for money. We are hoping to be much more active over the next year with more events, more recruitment, more initiatives.

Question: Are other branches asking for help? Other Manitoba branches also have a surplus of monies at this time. One branch thought they may have to fold but, thankfully, have found volunteers and have a renewed energy.

District Director – Connie Kehler

Elected as one of two directors (along with Rick Brick, Edmonton) for Prairies in December 2020. Her role includes disseminating information from the national board to the presidents and bringing issues from the presidents' back to the national board. Currently

attending monthly national board meetings as well as monthly meetings with presidents, advocacy program officers and branch services officers.

Some of the things we are currently working on:

Phoenix damages: We are very active on this. Retiree issues are not yet being looked at. Received information in early Fall that information would not be available until December but we are unsure when payments will be made.

PSHCP renewal: Have met with PSHCP 17 times since April and are making progress. We are working hard to make sure we have the best benefits. Health/Dental Care changes made early in the pandemic are still in place.

Membership: We had 174,000 members pre-pandemic, 170,000 in October 2020 and are now at 165,000. A lot of those are involuntary losses. Finally in October 2021 we are seeing membership gains more than losses. People are travelling again which is upping our membership. We started a Win Back program which entailed calling people who let their membership lapse. This has created some increases.

Just attended "Safe Return to Travel" an online course with Johnson Insurance and Collette Travel. A recording of this will be available on the website as early as next week. Encourage you to attend as it includes some very good information.

Mega Recruitment Drive: Is running until December 31. For every person you bring in you receive a ballot for some great prizes. You can also gift a membership.

Branch Services Officer – Paula Nygaard

Paula was unable to attend the meeting due to personal reasons.

Advocacy Program Officer – Cynthia Foreman

Since my report to you in April at our AGM, we've had an election, a new government and are now looking at the next steps. You will recall that the Advocacy Program Officer (APO) supports the four Manitoba Branches in their advocacy efforts. However, I am also the Advocacy Officer for the Winnipeg and District Branch as well as a member of the National Advocacy Committee.

Reach 338 – just a reminder that this is a project aimed at creating a connection with all 338 Members of Parliament (MP). Association Advocacy priorities are National Seniors Strategy including plans to address Long Term Care, a national Pharmacare Plan, Veterans and Retirement Income Security.

After the election was called, I worked with the Branch presidents to send an email to as many candidates and all incumbents. The email was to remind those MPs that we previously met with our four priorities. We also wanted candidates to be aware of the Association and our activities. This was a very effective approach as we did get replies from many of the candidates and at least one MP called our President directly to acknowledge the importance of our priority issues.

Now that cabinet posts have been named, and shadow Cabinet assignments made, we are just waiting for the Parliamentary Secretary assignments to be made prior to sending out congratulatory emails to all those elected while specifically congratulating those who have been appointed to senior positions.

In Manitoba that is:

Dan Vandal, MP for St. Boniface has been appointed Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairie Economic Development Canada and Minister responsible for Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency;

Candice Bergen, MP Portage-Lisgar has been appointed Conservative Deputy Leader; James Bezan, MP Selkirk, Interlake, Eastman has been appointed Conservative Deputy Opposition Whip, Strategic Advisor and Co-Chair of Question Period Planning; Rachel Dancho, MP Kildonan-St. Paul has been appointed shadow Minister for Public Safety; and

Larry Maguire, MP Brandon-Souris has been appointed Deputy Shadow Minister for Natural Resources.

Our President, Jean Guy Souliere, has already met with the new Seniors Minister Mona Fortier. There are plans in the works to meet with other senior Cabinet Ministers especially those that relate to the Association and its goals such as Finance, Treasury Board and all shadow cabinet MPs as soon as possible. We will keep you updated on these activities.

The Advocacy Committee will be reviewing the priority areas in order to provide recommendations on the work to update the Association's National Strategic Plan. We have heard from many members that we should be considering the impact of climate change on older adults and that we may want to include this in future plans.

7. In closing:

- *You and Your Survivor* booklet has recently been updated. It is now available online on the website or you can request one of our limited hard copies at [NAFRwpg@mymts.net](mailto:NAFRwpg@mymts.net)
- Pension Indexing of 2.4% was announced. Enjoy your raise!

*Motion to Adjourn the Meeting at 2:00 by Baldur Johnson, seconded by Gwen Schentag. Carried*

Next Meeting

Tuesday, April 12, 2022

SIGNATURES:

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Donna Dobson, Secretary

Date

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Ceci O'Flaherty, President

Date