



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, August 18, 2021 at 1:00 pm

Zoom Online Meeting

Board Members Present:

Marion Mussell, President
Wenona Hall, Vice President
Glenda Campbell, Secretary
Jennifer Janik, Treasurer
Tammy Bartz, Director
Peter John, Director
Judy Douglas, Director
Paula Olmstead, Director

Absent:

Helen Joe, Director

1. WELCOME AND OPENING

At 1:10 pm, the FVACFSS Board President, Marion Mussell, introduced herself and welcomed the attending Society members to the Annual General Meeting (AGM), as follows.

“On behalf of the Board, I would like to welcome you to the 2019-20 AGM. As you are aware, this AGM was delayed due to Covid-19 and related health restrictions. This is an online meeting due to the continued Provincial Health Orders regarding in-person meetings. We are happy to have you with us today and sincerely hope that BC Health Restrictions will be lifted this coming fall, enabling us to host our next AGM in person.

We anticipated that an online meeting would not enable a majority of our Society members to participate in a Director Election Process. Therefore, the Board decided to postpone our Director Elections until our next AGM to be hosted in December 2021. In December, we hope to follow our traditional process, which includes a community gathering that will enable the membership to meet the candidates in person and participate in a secret ballot election process.

You have all received a meeting package in the mail that included: the AGM Notice of Meeting, a new membership card and voting card, a copy of the draft minutes from the 2018-19 AGM, an Annual Report, the Audited Financial Statements and an agenda for today’s meeting. Before we get started, there are a couple of administrative items to cover. If you get disconnected, please try to log back in; and, if that does not work, call 604-793-3652 for assistance. To vote on motions, please use your voting paddle and hold them up so that we can count the votes.”

Ms. Mussell introduced Elder Rosemary Trehearne, from Skwah First Nation, to do an opening prayer.

Elder Rosemary Trehearne greeted the meeting participants and provided an opening prayer.

Ms. Mussell introduced Justin Williams, from Skwah First Nation, to do an opening song.

Drummer Justin Williams thanked the Board for giving him the honor to share a song and then performed an opening song.

2. CALL TO ORDER

The FVACFSS AGM meeting was called to order at 1:18 pm by Board President, Marion Mussell. Ms. Mussell acknowledged all of the people who made the meeting possible today.

Ms. Mussell introduced Jamie Sterritt to the meeting attendees. Jamie Sterritt is an Indigenous Governance consultant and facilitator who works with Indigenous communities and organizations throughout BC and Manitoba.

Ms. Mussell called for a motion to confirm Jamie Sterritt as the Chair.

MOTION: To confirm Jamie Sterritt as the Annual General Meeting Chair.
Moved by Paula Olmstead #90, seconded by Peter John #67

Carried by consensus

Jamie Sterritt thanked the meeting attendees for confirming him as Chair of the AGM. Mr. Sterritt thanked Elder Rosemary Trehearne for the opening prayer and Justin Williams for performing the opening song.

Mr. Sterritt said, "I am from Gitksan Nation, and my traditional name is Wii Nagim Tsiwnget, from the house of Kliiemplahxw of the Lax Gibuu (wolf clan). My mother is Barbara Sterritt, and my father is the late Neil Sterritt." Mr. Sterritt recognised the Board for their excellent work and the members for attending the meeting today.

The Chair announced that 18 registered members were in attendance at the meeting; and, according to the FVACFSS By-laws, the meeting had the necessary quorum to conduct business.

The Chair presented the AGM agenda to the meeting attendees and asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

MOTION: To approve the agenda for the August 18, 2021 AGM.
Moved by Rosemary Trehearne #130, seconded by Tammy Bartz #3

Carried by consensus

3. REVIEW MEETING MINUTES

The Chair asked the membership to review the Draft Annual General Meeting minutes dated October 23, 2019, as included in their AGM package.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the October 23, 2019 Annual General Meeting.
Moved by Glenda Campbell #8, seconded by Tina Ion #128

Carried by consensus

4. AGM REPORTS

The Chair introduced Board President, Marion Mussell, to present the President's Report.

President's Report

Ms. Mussell greeted the membership and stated, "I was born into Onyota'a:ka (Oneida) First Nation in South Western Ontario. The Oneida people, known as "The People of the Standing Stone", are one of the original five nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. I married into Stó:lō territory over 40 years ago. I married Bill Mussell and it has been a very happy alliance. The Stó:lō people have been very welcoming and generous during my years living here."

Ms. Mussell acknowledged the unique circumstances and challenges that COVID-19 has presented to the Agency and outlined a few of these changes. She explained that the Board and employees worked remotely, and the Agency increased health and safety protocols to protect staff and the families we serve, and we conducted virtual meetings rather than in-person meetings and gatherings. Ms. Mussell expressed gratitude the leadership team, the dedication of the staff and elders, and the Caregiver Support parents for accomplishing so much under such challenging times.

Ms. Mussell provided an overview of the Board's strategic goals for the Agency that includes:

- Strengthening delegated programs to ensure culturally relevant practice that is compliant with standards.
- Enhancing family strengthening programs that are culturally relevant and promoting family and community involvement.
- Building and strengthening relationships with communities.
- Ensuring a culturally vibrant workplace.
- Establishing sound human resources processes and procedures.
- Creating a workplace where employees are engaged, make a difference and are accountable.
- Ensuring sound financial management and reporting.

Ms. Mussell commented on a few of the Agency's significant accomplishments during the year that included the following:

- We hired the Executive Director of Staff and Community Relations, thereby completing the third component of our three member Executive Leadership Team (ELT). The three members of the ELT report to the Board and participate on many of our Board Committees.

- The restructuring of the Agency and the creation of the Stó:lō Services Team was one of the larger accomplishments. Our objective was to improve accountability and communications with communities, enhance community input, build better partnerships with Stó:lō communities and deliver improved family preservation and prevention programs.
- Another goal was to increase voluntary services and decrease protections response. We have increased the use of prevention services and family strengthening meetings, increased support to families, increased the use of out of care options, ensured permanency plans for children and youth in care are at the forefront of our planning, and decreased the use of supervised access.
- A Centralized Screening Team and a Youth Service Team was created.
- New prevention funding from the federal government was made available to Stó:lō communities.

Ms. Mussell commented that, due to these accomplishments, the number of children being removed from Stó:lō communities has dropped significantly. In 2019, 27 children were removed, while in 2020, seven children were removed; and, so far in 2021, just three children have been removed. Meanwhile, our out-of-care numbers have increased by 40 per cent.

Ms. Mussell reported that another highlight of 2019-20 was expanding the number of Elders involved with the Agency and their roles. We now have 12 Elders on our Elders Advisory who are embedded into every aspect of the Agency. They provide ongoing guidance and advice to staff, guidance on cultural protocols, and participate in collaborative practice meetings with families. In addition to the Elder's Advisory, we also have 19 Elders that participate when called upon.

To further this move toward cultural improvements, we have an active Communications Committee; the Act Committee, which focuses on the Agency's preparedness for Bill C-92; and a Cultural Advisory Committee whose goal is to assess the cultural training needs of staff and caregiver support parents and to provide advice on cultural protocols and the proper incorporation of culture into practice.

We have also developed several Board policies to guide the Board Directors as it relates to the Agency's Client Complaints Resolution Process.

In conclusion, Ms. Mussell expressed gratitude to the staff, our community partners, the support parents, the support of Stó:lō Tribal Council and Stó:lō Nation Chiefs' Council, and our strong relationship with Métis Nation BC.

Operations Report

Kyla Darby, Executive Director of Programs, presented the Operations report and shared a PowerPoint presentation on screen.

Ms. Darby talked about the Elder's Advisory Council, stating that the Council's members represent various Stó:lō communities, as well as away from home populations. The Terms of Reference for this Committee were finalized in 2020.

Ms. Darby talked about the Visions and Voices Advisory Group and explained that the youth meet once a month to share a meal and plan the yearly two-day forum. The last Visions and Voices forum was held in November 2019 at Camp Charis in Chilliwack. At the forum, there was a presentation by speaker and musician Mike Scott, art workshops, a climbing wall, Medicine and Slahal workshops and tournaments, and a circle conversation with Jennifer Charlesworth, who is a Representative for Children and Youth.

Ms. Darby stated that we currently service 18 Stó:lō communities, away from home populations from approximately 139 communities across Canada and the United States, as well as Métis children, youth and families. The Agency has 230 employees working out of several office locations in urban settings and First Nation community settings. Agency staff consists of social workers and prevention staff, human resource staff, administration staff, finance staff, communications and events staff, as well as cultural advisors and community engagement workers.

Ms. Darby stated that the Service Delivery Redesign initiative was completed in 2019/20. The goal of the revitalization was to ensure consistent practice throughout the entire Geographical Service Area. The initiative resulted in the development of 40 new positions within the Agency. In October 2021, Management will be meeting to evaluate the model to ensure it continues to support the needs of our children, youth and families.

Ms. Darby stated that Bill C-92, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* was introduced in January 2020 by the federal government with an intention to reduce the number of Indigenous children and youth in care. The Act affirms the right of Indigenous peoples to exercise jurisdiction over child and family services, establishes national child welfare principles including cultural continuity, and sets national standards for service delivery. The main change for child welfare was the emphasis on preventative care and ensuring that family is involved at every step.

Ms. Darby reviewed the 2019/20 complaints resolution process and provided the following statistics:

- 107 complaints were received from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.
- 70% were deemed eligible for the complaints process.
- 93% of the complaints were addressed at the local office level.
- 7% were addressed by an external body in an Administrative Review.
- 11% of the complaints were from our youth.

She explained that the complaints resolution process is an important step to ensuring that we are meeting the needs of children and families.

Ms. Darby concluded the Operations report by describing the different categories of cases and provided an overview of file statistics for each First Nation community the Agency serves:

Kwantlen – 10 files in total	Tzeachten – 16 files in total
Leq'a:mel – 19 files in total	Yakweakwioose – 0 files in total
Matsqui – 13 files in total	Skwah – 24 files in total
Sumas – 12 files in total	Cheam – 31 files in total
Shxw'ha:y Village – 28 files in total	Popkum – 0 files in total

Aitchelitz – 1 file in total
Soowhalie – 13 files in total
Squiala – 16 files in total
Skowkale – 8 files in total

Chawathil – 35 files in total
Shxw'ow'hamel – 0 files in total
Skawahlook – 2 files in total
Yale – 1 file in total

Auditor's Report

The Chair introduced Peter Dombowsky, from the audit firm MNP, who presented the audit report that was included in the AGM package.

Mr. Dombowsky presented the auditor's letter and provided a verbal summary of the content included in the audit report and audit engagement letter. Mr. Dombowsky stated that it is the opinion of MNP that the year-end financial statements fairly represent the financials of FVACFSS for the fiscal year 2019-20. "This is what we call a clean audit report or unqualified audit report."

Mr. Dombowsky presented the FVACFSS Statement of Financial Position that represents the assets and liabilities for FVACFSS with a year over year comparison between 2019 and 2020. Mr. Dombowsky said that assets increased year over year due to the acquisition of new vehicles and computer equipment, and because of \$1.56 million in leasehold improvements for the offices.

Mr. Dombowsky presented the FVACFSS statement of Operations, including revenues and expenses. The three main categories of revenue are MCFD funding, ISC funding, and the Child Tax Benefit. One item Mr. Dombowsky discussed was the increase in MCFD and ISC funding from the previous year; and, as expected with an increase in revenue, there is also an increase in expenses.

Mr. Dombowsky provided a summary overview of each of the 15 notes to the financials included on page 22.

Mr. Dombowsky stated that, as part of the audit process, MNP issues a Management Letter that identifies areas where MNP believes there can be improvement to financial procedures for FVACFSS. This year the audit identified the following items that require attention:

1. Change how interest expense and the principle portion are recorded for vehicle loan payments.
2. Ensure that MCFD confirmation of reserve balance amounts are provided on a timely basis.
3. Record depreciation and amortization expenses on a monthly basis rather than only at year end.
4. Record proceeds on capital assets (i.e. disposal of vehicles) to the gain / loss account rather than external revenue.
5. GST rebate recovery should be recorded on each transaction rather than as a lump sum amount from the rebate claim.

Mr. Dombowsky concluded by stating that the audit was completed on July 20, 2020 and signed off in August 2020. After completing his presentation, Mr. Dombowsky asked the meeting participants if they had any questions about the FVACFSS financials.

There were no questions from the attending membership.

Appointment of Auditor

The meeting Chair requested a motion to appoint MNP as the External Auditor until the next AGM.

MOTION: To appoint MNP as the Auditor for FVACFSS until the next AGM.

Moved by Rosemary Trehearne #130, seconded by Tina Ion #128

Carried by consensus

5. CLOSING REMARKS

The Chair stated that the business of the AGM was now concluded and called on Board President Marion Mussell for closing remarks.

Ms. Mussell stated that our business had been concluded and acknowledged the efforts of the Agency Management and staff. Ms. Mussell addressed the difficulties of COVID-19 and working virtually and said that, despite those challenges, we continue to practice protocols and have blanketed and presented gifts to Chair Jamie Sterritt, Elder Rosemary Trehearne, and Drummer Justin Williams.

Ms. Mussell acknowledged all of the meeting participants for attending the AGM and reminded them that the 2020-21 AGM will occur in December with AGM packages scheduled to be mailed out in November. She stated that four Board Director positions would be up for election and asked participants to recommend nominees. Ms. Mussell expressed hope that the December AGM will be hosted in person, but it will depend on the COVID-19 public health orders.

Ms. Mussell thanked Jamie Sterritt for chairing the meeting and the ELT and Agency staff who do the work serving our communities.

Chair Jamie Sterritt acknowledged the Board for their hard work and dedication and asked for a motion to close the meeting.

MOTION: To adjourn the Annual General Meeting.

Moved by Rosemary Trehearne #130, seconded by Debbie Young #131

Carried by consensus

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 pm.

Jamie invited Elder Rosemary Trehearne to close the meeting with a prayer.

Rosemary expressed her thanks for the Board's tremendous work and provided a closing prayer.

Justin Williams shared some final words of gratitude for his participation in the meeting and provided a closing song.