

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COUNCIL
Minutes of meeting of December 8, 2009 at 5:30pm
At 2125 Lansdowne Road, Victoria

Present: Louise Cole; Judy Gaylord (chair); Ted Humphreys; Sonya Ignatieff; Christine Johnston; Bert MacBain (scribe); Jean McBean; Marya Nijland; Danie Rousseau; Lorna Shaw; Philip Symons; Clare Vipond; Don Vipond.
Guests: Jim Newton

1. LIGHTING OF THE CHALICE

Judy lit the chalice accompanied by a short reading.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was *moved by Ted and seconded by Marya that the minutes of the last meeting be approved as presented.*
Carried.

4. BUSINESS ARISING

4.1 Our Place tour

The tour of Our Place on November 17 was successful; 35+ church members attended.

4.2 Establishing SRC mailing list

Bert has not yet sent an email to the e-weekly list regarding the compilation of a list to make church members aware of petitions, etc. which the SRC deems of interest to other church members.

4.3 Recognition of older church members' SR records

Marya and Danie have not yet been able to work on this initiative.

4.4 SRC banner location

The banner is currently at Philip and Marya's home. Lisa offered space in the Committee Resource Room next to the kitchen in the farmhouse for storage of the banner. Marya will move it to this location for accessibility and label it clearly.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

5.1 CUC SR Newsletter

Judy emailed us the December CUC SR newsletter on December 7. Again, it is mainly on climate change issues.

5.2 Outgoing/incoming letters on housing and homelessness

- Philip received a form letter response from Gordon Campbell to his letter on housing.
- Philip will check with Suellen on whether a letter to Bev Oda and the three local MPs, re the Kairos cuts, should be sent from the church or from the SRC. The letter could be sent by email and then by post. (**Note: Suellen asked that the letter go from the SRC**)
- It was *moved by Christine and seconded by Danie that we send a letter to the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism (CPCCA) and to all party leaders, urging them to protect freedom of speech and protect all students and all peoples.* Carried. Philip will circulate the letter for approval.
- It was *moved by Ted and seconded by Bert that Judy sign a letter drafted by the FIA to the CRD Housing Trust Fund re support for a significant increase (\$25-50) to the homeless levy on our*

municipal taxes.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

Christine reported:

- SRC accounts are being used as an in-out fund for items which are not SRC expenses per se but related to SRC concerns/activities.
- There is currently \$2,597 in the Andy Wynn fund.
- We have collected \$6,180 for the food banks this year; this amount includes money raised at the two choir concerts.
- Our three areas of use of our budget allotment are: (1) donations to maintain connections with other organizations; (2) donations to those in specific need; and (3) monies spent for SRC programs
- We have returned \$375 to the church to assist with the current deficit.
- We will discuss the proposed criteria at the next meeting.

7. BOARD REPORT

Philip sent a written report, with the following highlights:

- The SRC and Outreach Councils are merged on a trial basis until May, 2010. (This means we are now a Committee under this Council.)
- The Lay Chaplaincy Committee has moved to this Council.
- Committee guidelines are to be updated and sent to the office for placement in a binder to be accessible to all.
- The Lion bell will be rung 35 times on December 13 in support of an action on climate change

8. CANADIAN UNITARIANS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Philip sent a written report:

- The latest issue of Justnews has just gone to the printers.
- Members of the board are needed for some of the regions; someone is needed from Vancouver.
- Philip urged all members of the SRC to join CUSJ, if not already members.

9. ISSUES OF THE MONTH

Marya reported:

- December – collection of socks, scarves, mittens, sweaters, started on Nov. 29. Philip has taken a photo of the display.
- January – BC government's spending on Olympic Games vs cutbacks to education, health, culture, etc. and the urgent needs of our homeless – interactive survey of congregation to determine where they would prefer the money is spent, to send to Gordon Campbell. Marya, Jean, Danie, Philip and Don will meet on Dec. 30 to prepare display
- The SRC Moment on Jan. 3 and the newsletter article for January (deadline Dec. 15) will be handled by Danie.
- February – general cutbacks by CIDA, e.g. clinic on Burmese/Thai border. Jean will bring details
- March – HOW project

10. FAITH IN ACTION –

Philip sent a written report:

- The lack of government money for housing is very discouraging; a few shelters will open.
- See 5.2 above re letter to CRD
- Postcards from Pivot Legal Society to Diane Finley were provided, asking her to create a national housing strategy.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Environment - Louise Cole reported that:

- Louise, Laura Andersen, Ryan Guenther and Cecil Bannister have distributed flyers regarding the bell ringing on Dec. 13 to neighbours; they received a positive response. Louise will place notices in e-weekly and the order of service to explain to the congregation and invite their participation.

International Affairs and Governance –

Philip sent a written report:

- Work to introduce gradient voting is continuing with Sonya representing us.
- Philip works with Fair Vote Canada for electoral reform.
- No letter sent to Campbell re Olympic signs as legislation is intended to protect the brand name of the Olympics not remove signs from private property
- An interactive educational website is slowly being developed by Ben Dolf of Capital.
- There is a private member's bill, which may go somewhere, to create a Dept. of Peace; it is through first reading, is supported by the NDP and Liberal Party, has 20 seconders.

Poverty –

Don reported that there is a surge in requests to the Lifeline project, and the Ethel May Fund has also been busy this fall.

Social Justice – No report.

12. NEW BUSINESS

12.1 Council restructuring

The SRC and Outreach Councils have merged, with Philip as the Chair. We are now the Social Responsibility Committee under this merged Council.

12.2 Prospect Lake and District Residents Association

Madelaine Clarke sent us a note suggesting that we join this Association as a member. Philip will investigate how we can be involved. This is not seen as an SRC initiative, but rather would fall under the Outreach part of the Council.

12.3 Fundraiser for Power of Hope

In response to a request by Gita John, it was *moved by Louise and seconded by Clare that we sponsor a fundraiser for Power of Hope*. Carried. Gita will arrange this with the office and will expect only limited help from us.

12.4 HOW 2010

Don needs a partner to work on this. He suggests we rotate the chore by finding one new person each year, i.e. Don will find a partner for 2010 and that person will find a partner for 2011, etc. Don will request help in the January newsletter. Bert will do her usual handling of handing out the red dots to members and friends.

12.5 Sierra Leone School Project – HOW 2006

We gave our blessing to Fran Hancock's request that the church make a collection of articles of clothing children's books, etc. to go in a container to Freetown in February. Fran will put a notice in the January newsletter and will arrange for pick up.

13. Chair's remarks and acknowledgements

Although not singling out any one person for an annual award, Judy acknowledged and thanked everyone on the committee for the high level of commitment to our many causes. In turn, Marya thanked Judy for her wonderful leadership and presented a card from the committee to Judy, with a promise of a surprise gift to follow. We all acknowledged Judy's leadership and gave our best wishes to her and Bill as they set off on a much-deserved break.

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS

14.1 Unsung Heroes Dinner

Ted reported that the Unsung Hero for 2010 has been chosen from a field of eleven candidates. The dinner will be held in April and will attract many from outside the church. It is hoped that those not selected will still be honoured by having their stories acknowledged.

14.2 HOW 2009

Lisa announced that the 235th loan has just been made under this year's HOW project.

Jim Newton attended the meeting as a guest. He explained that he and his wife created and run a charity in South Africa and will be in Canada only part time for the next few years. He offered to create a database of our church membership, which would let us know the many activities with which our members are involved, i.e. who does what.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7pm and it was time to party with our guests.

Next meeting: January 12, 2010 at 7pm in the Boardroom.