

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COMMITTEE
Minutes of meeting of January 12, 2010 at 7pm
in the Boardroom, 5575 West Saanich Road, Victoria

Present: Ted Humphreys; Sonya Ignatieff; Christine Johnston; Bert MacBain (scribe); Marya Nijland; Danie Rousseau; Philip Symons (chair); Clare Vipond; Don Vipond.
Regrets: Louise Cole, Judy Gaylord, Jean McBean
Guest: Sylvia Krogh from Edmonton

1. LIGHTING OF THE CHALICE

Christine lit the chalice accompanied by a reading of the Rabbe Burns poem, "Such a parcel of rogues in a nation".

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Clare and seconded by Danie *that the agenda be approved as amended*. Carried.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was moved by Bert and seconded by Don *that the minutes of the last meeting be approved as circulated*. Carried.

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Hugo requested that his name be removed from the SRC email list until after the ACM in May.

TASK: All SRC members are asked to please remove Hugo from their lists.

4.1 SRC Mailing List

Bert reported that she has placed a notice in the e-weekly, requesting that anyone wishing to be notified of events, petitions, etc. reply to her to be placed on an email list for information purposes. She will also place the SRC minutes on the church website, starting with December's minutes.

4.2 Recognition of older church members' SR records

Marya and Danie have not yet been able to work on this initiative but will do so asap.

4.3 SRC banner location

The banner is now in the Committee Resource Room next to the kitchen in the farmhouse for storage, and is clearly labeled.

4.4 HOW 2010

Don has written an article for the newsletter with the following pertinent information:

- Members and friends may present proposals
- Proposals may be local, regional, provincial, national or offshore
- One-page summary of proposals to be received by Feb. 5 to be vetted at SRC meeting of Feb. 9
- Poster and information sheet to be provided by Feb. 23
- Voting to take place on Feb. 28 and Mar. 7
- Results announced on Mar. 14
- Presenters of winning proposal must help with fundraising

HOW 2009

Don and Nancy Dobbs prepared an article for the newsletter regarding one of the HOW 2009 projects, which recently came to a sad conclusion. Our help to a local family, of \$500 per month for rent, appears to have been based on misleading information regarding health matters and the amount of other assistance received by the family. We have therefore discontinued assistance to this family and will hold the remaining funds in the HOW

account, possibly to be put towards a project in 2010. We all expressed our regret at this turn of events but acknowledged that such outcomes occasionally happen.

4.5 **Data base on social justice workers**

We received a written report from Jim Newton which included proposed guidelines for accessing the social justice database. There were questions about the work involved to keep the database up-to-date, who would do the work, could it be simplified, etc. It was decided that we should give more thought to this idea and postpone acting until Jim has returned from South Africa.

4.6 **Fundraiser for Power of Hope**

Due to scheduling difficulties, it was decided that Marya will meet with Gita John to discuss how to raise money for Power of Hope without doing a fundraiser in our sanctuary. Marya suggested individual scholarships for teens to attend the camp or possibly Gita could propose Power of Hope as a HOW project.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Philip passed around various pieces of correspondence, including thank-yous from EcoJustice, VIPIRG and the Dogwood Initiative.

6. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Highlights:

- Christine presented a rough draft of a list of how much we send to which organizations; she is still attempting to get figures from the church Treasurer.
- We should wait until Judy's return before setting our SRC priorities.
- We have been advised by the church President to set our priorities and distribute our money earlier in the year or risk being asked to return some of our budget money to help with an expected deficit.

7. **BOARD REPORT**

Philip sent a written report, with the following highlights:

- Due to the length of time it took for the board to discuss the church budget, the board did not get to the item on changing the Gradient Voting survey vote from "Block" to "Oppose," but we hope to get to this item when the board meeting is reconvened next Wednesday.
- The Treasurer has prepared a summary of the approximate amount each council is over/under budget. Total is approximately 5,000 deficit for all committees combined.

8. **CANADIAN UNITARIANS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Philip is in charge of finding a venue and keynote speaker for the CUSJ AGM in May here in Victoria.

9. **ISSUES OF THE MONTH**

Marya reported:

- January – BC government's spending on Olympic Games vs cutbacks to education, health, culture, etc. Forty-four people have filled out the survey to indicate where they would prefer to see the money spent. Don will collate. Schedule for collecting more surveys: Jan. 17 –Danie; Jan. 24 and 31 –Marya.
- February – general cutbacks by CIDA, e.g. clinic on Burmese/Thai border. Jean has written an article for the February newsletter and will do the SRC minute at the service
- March – HOW project
- April – Environment
- May – Mental health

10. **FAITH IN ACTION –**

No report – the first meeting of the new year will be on January 14.

There is a Roundtable for Denominational Leaders on affordable housing on Feb. 4, 10am – noon, at St. John the Divine. RSVP by January 29 to BCComDev@cmhc.ca

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Environment –

Louise sent a written report.

Highlights:

- More than 30 people viewed the film “Farmed Salmon Exposed” at Spaghetti Night; there will be a community showing with a guest speaker in February or March.
- The film “A Chemical Reaction” will be shown on Jan. 21 at 7pm at Uvic’s David Lam Auditorium. See further info in e-weekly.
- There will be an environmental fair by The Garden Box, a grassroots women’s initiative, on March 20, noon – 3pm, at Brentwood Community Hall; see the newsletter, e-weekly and a poster in early March.
- People are invited to join the committee or share their environmental concerns with the committee.

Democracy, Governance and International Affairs -

Sonya reported:

- There was an extraordinary meeting to draft a short letter to the T-C re prorogation; it will go to all UU churches in Canada with an invitation to them to use our letter as a base for their own letters to their hometown newspapers.
- Over 160,000 people have signed the petition against prorogation on Facebook.
- There will be a rally on Jan. 23 against prorogation, starting at 1pm in Centennial Square
- A skit on gradient voting will be presented at the end of the Congregational meeting on Jan. 24.
- The committee is involved with the group which is working on the Covenant of Good Relations.

Poverty –

Don reported:

- The Lifeline List and Ethel May Fund are cooperating on cases and use the same assessors; the assessors and trustees of both funds will meet for lunch this month.
- A new process will be set up to help Victoria Women’s Transition House clients with replacement of lost IDs.
- Sonya is stepping down from the coordination of the Sandi Merriman dinner; Barbara Chernick will take over.

Social Justice – No report.

12. NEW BUSINESS

12.1 **Comments on joining Outreach and SRC Councils**

It is too early to tell what affect, if any, this merger will have on members of the SRC Committee. The main impact will be on Philip as Council chair.

12.2 **Criteria for donations to charitable organizations**

This was postponed until Judy’s return so we can have her wise input.

12.3 **Frank Horvat Green Concert**

A request has been received to sponsorship of a concert in our sanctuary to raise awareness on environmental issues. There would be no cost to attendees for the concert; we would suggest a donation basket be displayed to cover expenses. Betty Sherwood is checking on recommendation from UU churches in Ontario where such concerts have been held.

12.4 **SRC Brochure**

Our thanks go to Mel Johnston for his formatting of our new SRC brochure. Philip will pass on minor corrections to Mel.

12.5 **Closure of Prison Farms**

There is much concern about this issue coming out of the church in Kingston, from Elaine Harvey and Kathy Sage. They have not been able to generate much action on this issue and it may already be too late. We must send a letter immediately; we need someone to draft it.

12.6 **Pacifica Housing**

We have received a Wish List from Pacifica Housing, most items which could be collected from our members, requiring some organization. Or, perhaps this could be a HOW project if someone out there would present it. We will let the idea percolate for a month.

13. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Sylvia brought bumper stickers (“Support our Troops – Bring them home”) for us and will also sell them at church while she is here from Edmonton
- We will join the Prospect Lake Association under the Outreach part of our Council.
- There will a presentation of an eye-witness account of the Gaza Freedom March, which took place Dec. 27 – Jan. 4.

Three dates: Jan. 17, 2 – 4pm - BCGEU Hall, 2994 Douglas Street

Jan. 20, 11am – 12:20pm - Camosun Lansdowne Campus, Paul Bldg, Rm. 107

Jan. 22, 6pm UVic - off the SUB Upper Lounge on the main floor, Rm. B110b

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:02pm

Next meeting: February 9, 2010 at 7pm in the Boardroom. Clare will be the Chalice Lighter.