

BCRTA ZONE MEETINGS

Delegates to the 2008 BCRTA AGM discussed the idea of dividing the province into seven zones, each zone to hold a meeting of the region's branch presidents and a BCRTA director. The AGM agreed that the BCRTA should fund one such meeting in each zone during the 2008-2009 BCRTA year, as an experiment to test the idea's usefulness.

Regional groupings of delegates considered the pros and cons of the idea, and these were some of the common themes that emerged:

Positives:

- Such meetings would improve communication among branch presidents, and between presidents and the provincial directors.
- Face-to-face meetings like this are better than phone calls, emails and snail mail.
- Branches could more easily submit ideas and recommendations to the BCRTA.
- Presidents could share and solve problems together.
- Experienced presidents could mentor new ones.
- Regional issues around seniors' income, health and housing might be identified and addressed.
- Province-wide projects such as the lobbying of MLAs on seniors' issues could be tried.

Reservations:

- RTA branches are mainly social organizations with little need for interbranch communication.
- Presidents are already busy and don't need another meeting to prepare for, attend and do followup for.
- One person per branch (rather than proportional representation) could lead to skewed decisions.
- \$8,000+ [the projected cost of one round of meetings] is a lot of money.
- Zone meetings should be held in Vancouver in association with the AGM. (Note that the motion passed by the AGM would not allow for this as an option in 2008-2009—see "a" below.)

Caveats:

- This definitely should be just a one-time trial to assess usefulness.
- Proceedings of zone meetings should be shared with members.
- Lengthy advance notice of meetings is needed to ensure full attendance.
- The meetings should be in late spring for weather reasons.
- Car-pooling should be considered where possible to keep costs down.

At the AGM itself, the following motion was debated and passed handily:

THAT during the course of the 2008/09 fiscal year, and on a trial basis, the BCRTA fund in each of seven zones a meeting of Branch Presidents or their designates, to discuss BCRTA and branch business and concerns and;

a) That each meeting be held at a designated place in each zone;

b) That a BCRTA Director be assigned to each zone, to work with one of the Branch Presidents to coordinate planning for the meeting, and to attend each meeting as the representative of the Board of Directors;

c) That meeting, travel, accommodations and meal expenses be reimbursed by the BCRTA; and

d) That a Zone Meeting budget item of \$10,000 be added to the BCRTA 2008/09 budget.

