

ROUNDTABLE ROUNDUP – January 2012

We met at eight forty five with a reading half hour – never enough time to even make some semblance of order of the agenda and reports set in front of us. We adopted the agenda and the minutes of the November meeting, and handed out birthday cards. The first item on the Presidents report was his visit, with other table officers, to the deputy minister of Education in the week before Christmas, an account of which will be elsewhere. The deadline for the new Teacher Council has passed and many of us have refused to pay \$120 every year to hang on to ‘a piece of cardboard’.

The office administrator stated that she was back full time as of December 16th. A label printer will be connected to the current computers and suggestions for new machines requested. Do we keep an old one for board members’ use? Permission slips for those whose photographs we wish to print have been drawn up by our lawyers. We are over budget in total Revenue, and the income statements for the meeting show each committee’s expenditures and remaining balances.

Our treasurer passed around the bank statements and our ACER CART representative gave notice that changes are coming to ACER-CART and should be discussed. A summary of our position re ACER CART has to be ready for our April meeting. ACER CART is continuing to work towards a drug formulary and Home care plan as part of the Canadian Health Act. The COSCO (Council of Senior Citizens Organizations) representative spoke of the conference to be held in the fall in conjunction with our own AGM. Planning is underway and a proposal was made by COSCO and the Jewish Seniors’ Alliance that we amalgamate all organizations of seniors in BC to have one voice and work towards the May 2013 Election Day.

We briefly visited the priorities we had set last year and looked at the first results from the board self evaluation forms, which was followed by a request for board members to complete the remaining forms. We met in committee to discuss a pension issue.

Bob Taverner had undertaken to review the handbook procedures and we worked through a series of eight motions which changed numbering systems, added words and deleted phrases. All branch presidents will have the minutes where these are itemized if you are curious. It was suggested that a BCRTA member attend the BCTF Summer conference and the Leadership Institute meetings. Application forms for committee members and board members will appear in issues of Postscript.

We took a break and Lynda Stewart from Johnsons came to draw the name of a new member from a box containing 522 names. Jean Chalifoux was the lucky recipient of \$100.

Cliff Boldt is a member of the CCPA (Can. Centre for Policy Alternatives) and is working on their tax project. He requested and was given a \$3,000 grant towards the project. We use the CCPA for information, facts and statistics on a variety of topics and their budget for the project on poverty/unfair tax shifts/taxation has a budget of \$100,000.

We had a four page document from the interim registrar at the Ministry of Education regarding Bill 12. A package of material collated by the committee will be sent to the Minister of Education and some has

been posted on the website. We are urged to keep writing our letters of protest to the Minister. The advocacy committee asked for the opportunity to convene an emergency meeting at any time when something of importance arises and the board is not due to meet. This was carried. The President was requested to write the UBCM (Union of BC Municipalities) to see what action they are taking to get rid of MSP premiums. The budget for the Advocacy committee has been increased by \$3,000.

Plans for our Conference and AGM are in the works. We discussed meeting times, meet and greet, displays, tables, opening speaker, format for committee presentations etc.

The balance of our afternoon was devoted to committee reports.

Excellence in Education wanted us to endorse a Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning – which we did. This includes all day kindergarten and grandparents raising grandchildren. The Golden Star award deadline is April 15th and promotes intergenerational support. We may work with the legion as well. Adjudication is April 27th. First Call has had a meeting and the Child Poverty report card can be read on line.

Health and Housing is working with other Provincial groups and the BCRTA will have two representatives and support the proposed COSCO and Jewish Seniors Alliance group.

Heritage had made a grant to Parksville for a project, and revised its application form. There are 19 branch contacts for Heritage information.

Membership planned to have BCRTA representatives at upcoming Teacher Pension Seminars but the debate was lengthy, and the result indicated a 'second go round' next meeting. We are going to have some fancy folders for our AGM charged to the Reserve fund.

Pension and Benefits brought a motion from our last meeting which was defeated, and requested a letter be sent to the board of trustees to be communicated to the government re an increase to the CPP benefits. The new EHC cards have failed to arrive for many retirees and we requested the TPP board write at once to rectify this. An affinity plan is being discussed.

Social concerns has formed a joint committee with COSCO and Save our Seniors to investigate the DriveAble program and transportation systems within communities. This is an ageism issue, and people who lose their licences die three to five years earlier than those who are independent. It was suggested that we meet with ICBC and BCAA to discuss this issue.

The Volunteerism committee shared their press release which went out to the media. They hope to make a presentation on our conference day and will work on a volunteers' code of ethics.

Our Finance committee shared statements for the year to date, and our website is continually being changed and upgraded and a request for another \$2000 was granted.

We were done at 3.00 – so I could miss the rush hour getting home. Our next meeting is in Spring Break when many BCRTA members will attend the BCTF AGM.

Sheila Gair, editor.