



**VANCOUVER ISLAND REGION  
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ASSOCIATION**  
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**MINUTES 25 May 2020 ZOOM General Meeting**

Meeting started at 10.05 AM with an acknowledgement and welcome from president Genesis Hunt-Higginson.

OPENING ROUND FOR INTRODUCTIONS. Program updates and ZOOM assessments were given at the end of the meeting but have been included here to list participants.

Kristine Atkinson, Campbell River RJ, tried diligently but unable to attend due to technological problems.

Caryl Wylie, Arrowsmith CJ: program slow due to COVID 19 but now have paperwork approved by WCB for their opening plan as their office is in the RCMP detachment. ZOOM wonderful.

Siobhan Brown and Jane Waterman, qathet Community Justice: Cases on hold but now accepting referrals and case team will decide whether ZOOM appropriate for meetings. Program has formed working groups to continue to build program infrastructure, develop a schools program and develop curriculum for training internally. Have new logo and looking to build a website. ZOOM the way of the future for VIRRJA as it allows more people to attend meetings without costs and time for travelling.

Sue Saunders, Shelley Rose, Peta Van Dyke (and Liz Cox at 11.00 AM), Saanich Peninsula RJ: program is slow. One potential case so working on connections. ZOOM great, appreciate seeing people and allows joining on a busy day. SPRJ used VIRRJA's ZOOM for a program meeting. Sue likes the way VIRRJA is headed.

Gail Jewsbury, independent practitioner and VIRRJA treasurer: commented that the attendance at the ZOOM meeting mostly the same as previous in person meetings, programs need to sort out program spokesperson.

Bruce Curtis, Comox Valley Community Justice Centre: program slower in these times, have had technical difficulties using ZOOM for resolution conferences. 5 cases scheduled using ZOOM and 4 in person. Developed a return to work strategy for volunteers. Working on next Campanola lecture which will be held in September or October 2021.

Vanessa Ramsdale, South Island Wellness Society: program returning to work next week. Have been using Skype and ZOOM. Reconnecting with Sidney RCMP who have been frustrated by Crown returning files, going to strongly recommend Members refer those

rejected cases to RJ. ZOOM works really well. Suggests having alternating chairs for meetings.

Andrea Gertz, John Howard Society Victoria: going to start bringing clients to the office again next week using PPEs and plexiglass. Schools program on hold. Happy with ZOOM

Jan Smalley, Sunshine Coast RJ: has a volunteer technician helping with support of ZOOM. Really appreciated Darlene Gage's training on use of ZOOM. Program has 45 active volunteers, board includes 2 indigenous people. Looking to hire an administrative assistant in near future.

Richard Tarnoff, Community Circles Ladysmith: some enquiries but quite slow. ZOOM great.

Carmen Hildebrand, Ladysmith RJ: completed her capacity-building report for the program which she also shared with VIRRJA. Board looking at hiring permanent part-time coordinator. Going case by case to deal with COVID 19.

Carmen is also a facilitator for Warmland RJ: 2 cases using ZOOM and one forum in outdoor setting with 16 participants. ZOOM is very efficient.

Myles Morrison, West Coast RJ: Had one case where the offended died but continued with other participants as they needed to express their feelings. ZOOM works well.

Arlene Fehr, Gold River RJ: slow and one case on hold as mentor not working as cannot physically distance. Uses ZOOM a lot.

Genesis Higginson-Hunt, independent practitioner: ZOOM works well.

MINUTES of 20 January 2020 meeting. Motion to accept minutes as presented APPROVED

FINANCIAL REPORT Gail Jewsbury reported Account balance of \$7720 with approx. \$250 in outstanding reimbursements. Asks people to submit bills for reimbursement as soon as possible and include mailing address as all done by mail now.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT Gail Jewsbury reported membership of 14 programs and 2 independent practitioners. Waiting to hear from 6 other programs. Sunshine Coast RJ has mailed their membership dues.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT AND DISCUSSION Caryl Wylie presented the review committee report and went around circle for comments on each of Vision and Mission Statements and purposes.

Vision Statement:

**A future in which restorative justice is the response to conflict and where restorative practices are imbedded throughout the community.**

To look at: "first response" "preferred response" "the response where appropriate" versus "the response"

Mission Statement

**To bring together all restorative justice programs and practitioners on Vancouver Island Region to guide, share and inspire best practices and processes.**

To look at: 1. “on” versus “in” Vancouver Island Region 2. “Region” versus “Sunshine Coast, Gulf Islands and area” 3. Could definition of “Region” be included someplace else

Purposes:

1. **Be a conduit for information**
2. **Share best practices**
3. **Communicate with elected officials and partners**
4. **Upgrade and broaden skills and knowledge**
5. **Provide a forum for program networking & collaboration**
6. Collaborate with indigenous communities on traditional practices for restorative justice and indigenous justice.

To look at: 1. #5 addition and removing “Provide” from beginning 2. Add bullet #6 addition of statement Include ethnic diversity

General Comments: 1. Use words such as collaborative & inclusive & diversity more

2. Keep in mind this is what VIRRJA as an entity does, not what the programs should do. i.e. VIRRJA needs to work with Federation of Indigenous Justice Assoc; where programs need to work with community programs

2021 BC GOVERNMENT BUDGET CONSULTATIONS. Bruce Curtis has registered VIRRJA to make presentation to the standing committee. If invited to present the format is 5 minutes presentation and 10 minutes for questions from the committee. It has been the case that a person can only make a presentation for one organization but Bruce understands that may be different if presenting for a program and a regional organization. If he is not allowed to present Gail will do so on the following points:

- Enhance funding to RJ programs to fund support for the increased costs of their service delivery during this time when conflict so easily arises due to the stress of COVID
- Allocated funding specifically to AG to be able to proceed with expansion of Crown Referrals to RJ
- Establish funding for Min of Education to institute broad-based adoption of RJ within the school system
- Establish funding for Min of Health to institute broad based adoption of RJ within the Elder care system to deal with Elder Abuse in a non-criminal way which will permit the possibility of preserving the relationships among families and friends. COVID has significantly identified the need for significant relationships for elders as a supporter of good care and health and a means to build resilience. (It is appropriate for RJ to deal with these cases despite the possible power imbalance because it is often important to maintain the family relationship)

- Fund the development of specialized training for judiciary on the value of referrals to RJ even when the case has entered the court process

ADD 2 DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS Motion to add 2 directors-at-large to the board of directors APPROVED.

#### NOMINATIONS

President: Jane Waterman, Caryl Wylie, Myles Morrison, Sue Saunders, Richard Tarnoff declined. Vanessa Ramsdale accepted (eventually!) and will be nominated at AGM.

Treasurer: Gail Jewsbury will be nominated at AGM for another term

Directors-at-large as Vanessa moving from director at large to president we need 3 directors at large. Sue Saunders, Richard Tarnoff and Genesis Higginson-Hunt accepted and will be nominated at AGM.

Question of whether by-laws should be changed to elect directors rather than positions and board allocates positions. Review committee will look at this.

NEW BUSINESS No new business

CLOSING ROUND was held.

ADJOURNMENT meeting adjourned at 11.50 AM

Next Meeting AGM Saturday 17 October 2020 (no conference)