



**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 2017**

1. **LOCATION:** Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph Street, Vancouver, BC

2. **CHAIRPERSON:** 1st Vice President Terry Engler

3. **ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

MSC that the minutes of the March 21, 2017 meeting be adopted.

4. **CREDENTIALS:**

The following credentials were received since the last VDLC meeting:

(* = recredentialled, A = alternate)

CUPE Local 15

Sally Bankiner *

Ravina Lal *

Henry Lee

Ralph Mason *

Santino Scardillo

Perpetua Siglos

Joy Tullos *

Warren Williams *

HEU PHSA Amalgamated

Bal Sandhu

5. **GUEST SPEAKER:**

Trish Garner, Poverty Reduction Coalition Community Organizer

The Poverty Reduction Coalition's election campaign is, *Make Poverty Public*. BC has the second highest poverty rate in Canada; 13% of British Columbians are living in poverty. The current poverty line is \$19,000 for a single person and \$39,000 for a family of 4; 1 in 5 children in BC are living in poverty. BC is the last province to have a poverty reduction plan. Welfare has been frozen for 10 years at \$610.00 per month; out of that is supposed to come rent, food, bills, etc. Disability rates are \$1033.00. In BC we have a high number of working poor; workers that work multiple jobs to try to make ends meet. Incomes have gone up about 10%, but expenses have nearly doubled that rate of increase. The Coalition's vision for BC is supported by approximately 400 organizations, including the VDLC and many of its affiliates.

Their strategy has 7 Pillars those pillars include:

- Income – significant increases to welfare and minimum wage
- Affordable housing
- Affordable child care – the \$10 a Day Child Care Plan
- Healthcare – closing the gaps in dental, vision care, pharma care
- Education – closing the gaps in K to 12 and post-secondary and providing training and education to increase employability.

- Recognition that there is higher rates of poverty in vulnerable communities

As part of their election campaign, they will be looking at each party and grading them on their policies.

BC Poverty Coalitions wants to tell the stories of the diverse people living in poverty. Make Poverty Public and their See Me campaigns re-humanizes the men, women, and children living in poverty.

Go to their website – www.makepovertypublic.ca

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Joey Hartman reported on VDLC activities since the March 21, 2017 meeting.

Political Action

Akeena Legall from CUPE Local 1004 was selected to be assigned to a key NDP campaign. After discussions with the NDP, it was determined that the constituency of Vancouver Langara with candidate James Chang was the best choice. Akeena started on Friday, April 7.

MVA Provincial Accountability Assembly

The Metro Vancouver Alliance provincial assembly at the Italian Cultural Centre on April 4 was very successful with over 800 people representing about 60 diverse organizations in attendance. Both John Horgan (NDP) and Andrew Weaver (Green Party) sat on stage listening to testimonials on the four issues of income justice, housing, health care, and transit. They then responded to the question “will you commit to working with the MVA on this issue if elected?” Their answers ranged from an unequivocal “yes” to variations of “maybe”. Christy Clark’s office did not decide until that morning that the event could not fit into her schedule, despite repeated invitations since July 2016. A chair with her name on it sat on stage alongside the other leaders. Thanks to all who attended and helped out.

April 28, 2017 Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job

Joey Hartman and Nina Hansen from the BC Federation of Labour met with the WCB to discuss this year as the 100th Anniversary of the first WCB in British Columbia. The VDLC will participate in the WCB’s Day of Mourning event at Hastings Park at 10:30 am on April 28. Affiliates are encouraged to attend. The CLC theme is “Remember Westray. Enforce the Law.”

VDLC Education Program

Recent offerings were WCB Intro and Privacy Rights, as well as the Women’s Committee two-night course, Public Speaking for Women.

May Day

The annual march and rally will take place on Monday, May 1 gathering at 14th and Commercial between 5:00 and 5:30 pm, then marching to Grandview Park for a rally around 6:00 pm. Banners and flags are encouraged to add union visibility to the march, which will be led by Carnival Band.

Queen Alexandra School – The Wishing Tree

A meeting was held on April 10 with the school principal, Megan Davies. The VDLC cancelled our annual QAS fundraiser in 2016 due to low ticket sales. Most unions, organizations, and individuals opted to convert their ticket purchase costs into a direct donation so the VDLC was still able to present a cheque for \$ 9,800 to the school. The funds support the Wishing Tree, a “free store”, within the school that provides food and other essentials to students and their families.

For 2017, the VDLC will not organize a fundraiser but will send out an appeal for donations.

7. **CORRESPONDENCE:** Correspondence list circulated at meeting
MSC to accept the correspondence as circulated.

8. **EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- a) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Spending Authorizations

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL authorize the following expenditures:

- CCPA BC Solutions Fund – Donation of \$200.00
- Miner’s Memorial Bouquet for Ginger Goodwin Cairn – At a cost of \$100.00
- Metro Vancouver Alliance – Provincial Assembly contribution – Donation of \$100.00
- Justice for Mohamed Harkat Committee (Security Certificates and Bill C51) – Donation of \$100.00
- BC NDP Central Campaign – Donation of \$500.00

- b) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Syria and Afghanistan

BECAUSE Syria has been embroiled in a devastating civil war since 2011, which has killed an estimated 400,000 people and displaced many thousands more; and

BECAUSE allegations of chemical weapons use have been levelled against the government of President Bashar al-Assad and the Syrian Arab Armed Forces; and

BECAUSE these allegations have been denied by the Syrian government, and its Russian allies, who place the blame on rebel forces; and

BECAUSE United States President Donald Trump unilaterally ordered the launch of fifty-nine missiles into Syrian territory in response to these allegations, and days later the USA used its largest non-nuclear weapon, an 11-ton Massive Ordnance Air Blast (MOAB, bomb), against an ISIS held area in Afghanistan; and

BECAUSE this action has led to a dangerous deterioration of diplomatic relations in the Middle East, which could easily and rapidly develop into a full-scale international conflagration; and

BECAUSE Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has pledged “full support” to the United States’ bombing of Syria and has consistently remained lock-step with U.S. foreign policy in regards to the Syrian war;

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL reaffirm its policy, adopted in September of 2016, in support of welcoming Syrian refugees to Canada; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL call for a thorough and unbiased United Nations investigation into the use of chemical weapons against Syrian civilians; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL condemn both the use of chemical weapons in Syria, and the consequential U.S. bombings of Syria and Afghanistan, in violation of international law including the United Nations Charter; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL call upon the Liberal government and Prime Minister Trudeau reverse its decision to support illegal aggressive actions of the U.S., remove Canada from participation in the U.S.-led coalition in Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, and call for a political solution to the conflicts in the Middle East.

9. REPORT OF UNIONS: (in order reported)

- a) FPSE Local 5 – Kwantlen – Reported by Rob Scharff
The Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC is continuing to lobby the government for improved funding of the Post-Secondary Education Sector. They have created a report card on student fees, student debt, funding, and basic education programs. Everyone is invited to visit the website www.openthedoors.ca and see how the government did. Everyone was also invited to the province-wide call about post-secondary education, go to openthedoors.ca to find out how to participate.
- b) Unifor Local 114 – Reported by Maurice Mills
Maurice attended the Metro Vancouver Alliance Provincial Election Assembly at the Italian Cultural Centre on April 4. John Horgan did a good job of voicing his position and responded positively to the commitments asked of him; Andrew Weaver seemed evasive on a number of issues; and Christy Clarke chose not to participate. Brother Mills feels that Local 114's membership in this organization is vital to network beyond labour unions to include faith and community groups on common issues.

The following reports were made but not submitted for the minutes

- a) CUPE Local 391 – Reported by Gary Jarvis

MSC to adopt the reports of unions.

10. REPORT OF COMMITTEES:

- a) Women's – Reported by Fruma Sloan
Public Speaking for Women went very well. It was well attended and the feedback was very positive. Next committee meeting, May 15 at the VDLC office at 6 pm. They will be electing a new chair.

MSC to adopt the reports of committees.

OTHER REPORTS:

a) CLC – Reported by Ron Stipp

The CLC is working hard on the provincial election. Affiliates in BC have really stepped up; there are approximately 85 people working in target campaigns around the province.

Bill C4, the Bill eliminating Bill C377 and 525, has been amended by the Senate to remove the automatic card check certification. The amended Bill now goes back to the House of Commons for debate on the amendment. The government has already expressed its concern regarding the amendment and has committed to rejecting it.

MSC to receive the other reports.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Nil

12. NOMINATION TO VDLC EXECUTIVE:

There are 2 openings for Executive Member-at-Large. Nominations were presided over by CLC Representative Ron Stipp.

The following nomination was accepted:

Nominee Name	Union Local
Jackie Pierre	BCGEU Local 2002

Jackie Pierre was acclaimed as member-at-large of the VDLC Executive and sworn in.

13. NEW BUSINESS: Nil

14. TABLE TALK:

Delegates were asked to talk at their table about “What got you active in your union”.

15. NOTICE OF MOTION: Nil

16. GOOD AND WELFARE:

- 50/50 Proceeds to benefit a Syrian Refugee organization
- There are 2 Communist Party candidates running in the upcoming provincial election: HEU delegate Peter Marcus and People’s Voice editor, Kimball Cariou
- Unifor attended the Vaisakhi event at the Unifor Hall on April 8; the food was good and dancers entertaining. Local NDP MP Harry Bains and MLA Raj Chouhan spoke about the election and an interesting conversation was had with George Chow about affordable housing.
- Brother Steve Miln, MoveUP staff rep, passed away suddenly in his home on March 26. He started as a member of BC Ferry and Marine Workers’ before moving to MoveUP, where he worked for 14 years as a Health and Safety rep as a member of USW. A celebration of life will be held May 27 from 2 to 4 pm at the Operating Engineers’ Hall. He will be missed.
- *MSC to allow guest Connie Hubbs to address the council*
COPE (Coalition of Progressive Electors) event - *Ecological Crisis, BC Election: What is to be done?*, on April 25 at SFU Harbour Centre and on April 29 a march, *Climate Jobs and Justice*.

- Day of Mourning – this is day is not to just to commemorate workers killed on the job, but also those workers that were injured or made ill on the job. Last year, there were 160 claims accepted for deaths due to work at WorkSafeBC – that’s nearly 1 every 2 days. We need to recommit ourselves to ensure our workers are safe on the job.
- The cutting of workers’ disability pensions, the reduction of benefits, and the cutting away of rights as workers is being done by the BC Liberal government. Remember when you vote on May 9.
- *MSC to allow guest Tom Sandborn to address the council.*
His book, Hell’s History, is about the history of the Westray mine disaster and 2 mill fires in BC – a record of how working people have been fighting to bring accountability to the system. The radical idea that if employers make decisions that result in death for workers, those employers ought to go to jail. It took years of lobbying to get a compromised Bill on the books federally. It is against the law to be criminally negligent at a job site for which you are responsible; despite that nearly 1,000 Canadian workers every year die due to their workplace. This book is about the *Stop the Killing, Enforce the Law Campaign* sponsored by the United Steelworkers. Read the book, share the book. Talk to your locals about joining the push for the City of Vancouver to adopt the campaign. (Note: *The City of Vancouver adopted “Stop the Killing, Enforce the Law Campaign” on May 2, 2017*)

17. MEETING ADJOURNED: *MSC to adjourn at 9:00 pm.*

18. NEXT MEETING: [TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2017](#), 7:30 pm,
Maritime Labour Centre.

**Pizza Educational
Tuesday, May 16, 2017
6:00 pm**

Insights into Syria and Afghanistan, and Canada’s Role
with Derrick O’Keefe

A talk about the situation in the Middle East and an analysis of Canada’s involvement in escalating military actions instead of peace building.

Derrick O’Keefe is co-founder and Editor with Ricochet. He is the author of The Lesser Evil? and A Woman Among Warlords, co-authored with Afghanistan’s Malalai Joya.

[For lists of happenings please see our website events page – www.vdvc.ca/events/.](http://www.vdvc.ca/events/)