

Date - November 24, 2023  
Location - Antigonish, NS

## **Federation of Foster Families of Nova Scotia**

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### **Minutes**

*Call to Order* 6:07pm

*Attendance*

*Western - Rob Richardson, Lloyd Sweeny*  
*Northern - MaryAnn Burke, Carolann Zegray(Virtual)*  
*Central - Anne Jennex-Roberts*  
*Eastern - Evelyn MacInnis, Sheila Hill*  
*African NS - Iona Smith*  
*Mikmaq - Darlene Arseneau-Kennedy*  
*Executive Director - Gary Landry*

*Regrets - Cindy Poulette, Patricia Cain*

*Land Acknowledgement, Mission Statement, Team Agreement read.*

*Approval of Agenda* *Agenda approved with the following amendment*  
*\*Phone plan adjustment*  
***Motioned SH(Eastern) 2nd IS(African NS)***  
***Motion Carried***

*Approval of Minutes* ***Motioned AJR(Central) 2nd MB(Northern)***  
***Motion Carried***

*Financials*

*Expenses Deferred from August 31, 2023*  
*FFFNS reimbursed for Programmer Salary*  
*Cheques issued for Rent for Office Wise Rd*  
*Funds transferred from "Because You Care"*  
***Motion to Approve Financials***  
***Motioned DAK(Mikmaq) 2ns SH(Eastern)***  
***Motion Passed***

*Financials September 30,2023*

**Motioned for Approval AJR(Central) EM(Eastern)  
Motion Passed**

*ED Report*

*Report attached.*

**Motion to Approve ED Report**

**Motioned DAK(Mikmaq) 2nd IS(African NS)**

**Motioned Passed**

*Chairperson Report*

*-Hearing issues from Foster Caregivers there have been a lot of issues with department staff making inappropriate comments to foster caregivers, regarding amounts of reimbursement, Questions from foster caregivers still around who pays for what. Chair will forward these questions and concerns to the Coordinator of Redesign.*

*Old Business*

*-Secretary Position - Carolann agreed to stay on as Secretary.*

*-Ambassador Program - Federation sent correspondence to DCS expressing interest in taking the lead in rolling out the Ambassador Program, in addition to disbursing funding thru the Federation. No response from DCS has been received to date.*

*-Coordinator of Training Position - DCS has approved the salary for the position. It has been posted externally until December 1, 2023. Many applications have been received.*

*-Fostering School Success - Ellen Carter and Margaret MacMillian met with the Board Chair and FFFNS ED to share information about the grant available.*

*-Leadership Reimbursement - Leadership Reimbursement (Years of Service Stipend) was distributed in correlation with Foster Care Appreciation Week.*

*-Regional Survey - update in New Business*

## *Old Business Con't*

*-“Because You Care” funding - Nothing has been officially released however the ED and Chair believe t his funding will continue.*

*-Service Agreement - Contacted Tracy Embrett regarding the wishes of the FFFNS Board of Directors having community members on the board. Questions regarding Voting, Expenses, Ability to have the Board choose members.*

*-Update: Trevor Boudreau, new Community Services Minister, to schedule a meeting with the Chair and FFFNS ED. Some items to be discussed include, gaps in block funding with children aging out of care, foster caregivers being able to adopt placements, and university for foster children.*

## *New Business*

*-Revision of Personal Policy, Ed requested that the HR have this as a priority in the new year.*

*-Regional Associations Survey - Completed by Program Support Worker. Report attached. There was a good response to the survey, the association presidents outlined some of the challenges they face being budget restraints (no funding to hold meetings), meeting space. Outlined recommendations that would help encourage attendance.*

***Motion was brought forward to allocate 100 per meeting per association for a period of six months (funding will be reassessed after six months) to help cover costs of refreshments, rental space etc to assist in encouraging foster caregivers to attend.***

***Motioned CZ(Northern) 2nd EM(Eastern)  
Motion Carried***

*-Gallagher Insurance - ED and Chair have spoke with a representative from the insurance company. They are currently waiting for an update as to why the insurance has doubled. Will also contact a Broker to shop for best pricing options. Update at next meeting.*

*-Project Coordinator Position - Ed requesting approval that the position be extended until February 2024. Board agreed.*

## *New Business Con't*

*-Focus Meetings - Back up and running successfully in all regions. Notice will be sent to foster caregivers in each area.*

*-Financial Meeting November 2023 - Written approval to move 10,000 from the "Because You Care" interest to the Bursary Fund. ED will have a conversation with the Comptroller about the benefits of moving the interest earned to a GIC.*

*-Hotel Pricing Information - ED researched hotels in the HRM that offer medical rates for foster caregivers who may have to stay with foster children in hospital. Lord Nelson was the best rate with proof of medical need.*

*-Vacation Time - Much confusion around calendar year and fiscal year for vacation times for foster caregivers. Communication will be sent to the Coordinator of Redesign for conformation to be sent to foster caregivers in "Did You Know" emails. Chair has sent the first set of questions that were asked by foster caregivers to the Coordinator of Redesign.*

*-Website Update - ED requested that the Comptroller review and update the website. Task is complete.*

*-Executive Limitations - Still not completed, must be priority in the new year, Chair will reach out to Governance Trainer to set a date.*

*-Foster Caregiver Concern - Central Region Foster Caregiver wants to form a group to look into group homes in the province and how they are held accountable. Is going to speak with Ombudsman. Update required.*

*-Key Assets Homes - Developed by DCS as professional homes designed to provide care for children in NS without Foster Caregiver placements.*

## *Adjournment*

*Caralynn Fitzgerald-Lezray*