

**BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations
Annual General Meeting
May 23, 2009**

Keynote Address - Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond Representative for Children and Youth. Mary Ellen spoke about the need for all foster parents to be members of the Federation in order to achieve a true collective voice, and can benefit from peer support, although she was unclear around what the barriers to achieving that may be.

The CYR is currently looking at the demographics of caregivers as to ethnicity and economic status. She is also looking at 25 serious or life threatening injuries or deaths among CICs.

There has been a 30% increase in youth agreements. The CYR would like to see stability for kids in care. In some parts of BC there is a higher probability of Foster children being charged with an offence. This may be due in part to conflict in their home environment. Foster Parents need to continue to be positive role models. Foster parents are encouraged to continue bringing forward issues.

1. Meeting called to order at 11:00 AM
2. Welcoming Remarks were delivered with Melanie F.
3. Introductions
 - a. Melanie introduced the BCFFPA Board of Directors to the assembly.
 - b. Heather Bayes introduced the staff
 - c. Sheila Davis introduced Betty Davis, and Paul and Melanie Filiatrault as Life and Honorary members.
 - d. Melanie then introduced the Parliamentarian Barrie Lynch.
4. Housekeeping
 - a. Notice of Meeting – met
 - b. Quorum of 43 voting members was met
 - c. Agenda was passed by the assembly
 - d. Rules of Order adopted by the assembly
5. President's Report

Welcome to the 2009 AGM. The Board and staff at your Federation have been working diligently to make this event as successful as previous ones.

I would like to take this opportunity to send Minister Tom Christensen our best wishes as he moves back to being a regular citizen. His dedication and true caring for children and youth in BC has made a difference in their lives. Thank you for your support of the BCFFPA and children and youth in this province.

This past year has been very busy. One focus has been development of the document outlining the rights of foster parents such that these are in harmony with the new rights for youth and children. Despite many struggles over the past few years, we are very happy to report that these new rights should soon be included in the Caregivers Support Service Standards document when the final edits are completed

Another good news item to report is that through the diligent efforts of the BCFFPA and the value the Ministry places on its foster home resources, the BCFFPA Insurance Rider coverage has been **increased from \$300,000 to \$500,000** per occurrence effective May 1, 2009.

Other projects the BCFFPA continues to work on are:

- A BCFFPA Representative sits on the International Foster Care 2011 committee. Victoria BC is the venue for this conference which will take place in the summer of 2011. Delegates from the committee will be attending IFCO in Dublin Ireland in July of this year. This should prove to be a real boost for our Retention of Foster Parents as we welcome Foster Parents from all over the world to beautiful Victoria BC.
- The Rights of Foster Parents will be coming forward in a Private Members Bill
- The Provincial Recruitment and Retention Committee continues to meet to work at ways to better recruit new homes and to retain current resources. Several issues including Protocols are being worked on at the Retention Committee, and there will be a forum to showcase the work of the Recruitment Committee held May 22nd at the AGM and Conference. The work of this committee is funded through a grant from MCFD.
- The BCFFPA has applied for a grant from the Law Foundation to develop written materials and provide workshops outlining the legal liability Foster Parents undertake in caring for Ministry children. In addition we will be developing a booklet of information and providing training and workshop materials to the agencies out of this grant should we be successful. Look for more information as it becomes available.
- As part of our contracted services with MCFD, the Federation continues to provide insurance training to foster parents and Ministry staff throughout the province. There are several training events planned for the next few months. Some areas we will be going to include, the East and West Kootenay, Central interior, and the North Island.
- A new service planned to begin in the next several months is the Serenity Program. The objective of the program will be to provide a safe and positive environment for individuals and their families with special needs. The program will be run by a group of professionals who specialize in a diverse range of behaviors. The services offered will include Learn and Play Support, Behavioral Consulting, Busy Bees Play Group (2-4), Mini Boppers Social Club (5-12), Youth Connection Club (13-18), Summer Day Camps, Family Support Services and Workshops, FASD, FAS, FAE Training & Workshops and Art Therapy

Finally, I would like to say to those of you who have become a significant part of the youth or children in your homes, a big "THANK YOU" for the positive influence you have had on the lives of our future generations. When the paths of other persons cross ours, we have to be there no matter what has happened. Remember that the charity and care that you have given them will speak volumes about the vitality of this gift that you freely gave to others.

I wish you all a tremendous spring & summer. Remember the Federation is your voice and your organization. We are here to support all caregivers including Foster Parents, CLBC caregivers, Youth Adjudicated Homes, Grandparents, Kith and Kin, and Child in the Home of a Relative care providers. When we as caregivers gather once a year we benefit from each other's support and collective wisdom.

6. Kathy Berggren-Clive – MCFD Advocacy Team
 - a. BC commitment to children and youth is strength based, rights based, holistic and needs based and is child focused and family and community centred
 - b. The Advocacy Team deals with learning and development, the UN convention on the rights of the child, effective advocacy and child and youth participation. Advocacy ensures that the rights, interests, voice and well-being of children and youth are respected and protected in relation to the provision of government services.
 - c. Internal advocacy is a valid role for all Ministry staff and part of good practice while external advocacy should be welcomed for the contributions that can be made and assuring the best outcomes for a child or youth.
 - d. Advocacy ensures the well-being of children and youth receiving services. It promotes and facilitates the participation of children, youth and families. It leads to better decisions and therefore better outcomes. It protects the rights of children and youth, and equalizes the power imbalances in relationships.
 - e. Foster Parents can and already champion children's and youth's strengths and abilities, while educating others about parenting issues and the needs of children and youth.

7. Auditor's Report

- a. Members felt the cost for mailing the newsletter could be reduced by e-mailing. It was clarified that all members can access the newsletter on line, and that if someone wanted their copy e-mailed, they would contact the Federation office to arrange that.
- b. Fundraising was down this year due to the economic downturn.

01/AGM/09: MSC: (Betty Davis) **Move to accept the auditor's report. Carried**

02/AGM/09: MSC: (Bonnie Thompson) **Move to appoint Brian Tipper Inc as auditor for the 2009 fiscal year. Carried**

8. Special Resolutions

#1 Special Resolution

Brought Forward by : Bonnie Thompson

Whereas this is currently no provision in the BCFFPA Constitution and Bylaws which relates to criteria for holding office at the Provincial level **and;**

Whereas there is a need to make the election process open to all members in good standing who have shown a commitment to the organization **and;**

Whereas there is a need for some knowledge of the workings of the BCFFPA Board of Directors in order to be an effective member of the Executive Committee prior to running **therefore;**

Be it Resolved:

To add to Article V Board of Directors Section 3 a) iii of the BCFFPA Constitution and Bylaws

- i. Any candidate for a position on the Executive Committee other than President, must have held a BCFFPA membership in good standing for at least three years immediately previous to running, and must have served for at least one year in the previous three years on a local, area, regional, or macro regional council, or on the BCFFPA Board of Directors.
- ii. Any candidate for the position of President must have served on the BCFFPA Board of Directors for at least two years previously

This will allow for some knowledge of how the Federation operates prior to holding an Executive position but will still allow for persons other than current board members to run for provincial office. It will also allow members who may have held positions on the Board in the past to run for President while still allowing for prior knowledge around the workings of the Board.

#2 Special Resolution

Brought Forward by: Kevin Murray

In the Policy and Procedures (dated 2007) on page eight strike items numbered 13 and 14.

Replace with “any paid member in good standing be allowed to be nominated, elected, hold, and perform the duties of the Executive positions on the governing board of the BCFFPA”

Further, I request that this special resolution be added to the Constitution and Bylaws of the BCFFPA.

- a. Kula Zervos' special resolution was deemed not to be a resolution and therefore was not part of the voting process.
- b. The Auditor noted that the other two special resolutions are in conflict
- c. Bonnie Thompson, and Paul Filiatrault spoke in favour of Resolution #1 – felt it is important to have some Federation experience prior to coming to the board.
- d. Jan Chapman, Kula Zervos, Claudette Roy, and Frank Hetherington spoke in favour of the resolution – opens up the opportunity for others to run. Heather Bayes spoke against the resolution.

Elections

- e. Louise Dol delivered the report of the nominating committee. Les Toth is the only person who ran for office. It still requires a yes or no vote to elect however

Lunch and voting – 12:30-1:30 pm

9. Martin Wright – Education and Health of Children and Youth in Care

A detailed report is available at www.bcfosterparents.ca

01/AGM/2009:MSC:(Dianne Gamblin) **Move that the BCFFPA on behalf of foster parents, adopt consistently high expectations that children and youth in care reach their full potential of educational attainment. carried**

02/AGM/2009:MSC:(Marcy Perron) **Move that the BCFFPA on behalf of foster parents regularly convey these high expectations to our foster children and youth and to the Ministry of Children and Family Development. carried**

03/AGM/2009:MSC: (Heather Bayes) **Move that training materials be produced by MCFD for foster parents that support us in our efforts to maximise the well-being of our foster children and youth. Carried**

10. Resolution Report

- a. Delivered by Heather Bayes – the report is included in the annual report at www.bcfosterparents.ca

11. New Business

- a. Motions from the floor

04/AGM/2009:MSC:(Betty Davis) **BCFFPA negotiate with MCFD the relief payment for restricted, regular and Level 1 foster homes to be included in the monthly payment the same as Level w and 3 foster homes. Carried**

05/AGM/2009:MSC:(Grant Smith) **The BCFFPA request clarification from the Ministry of CF regarding the intent and application of the Caregivers Support Services Standards to Foster Parents and specifically with respect to CIC placement and payment schedules and apparent inconsistencies between that document and previous MCFD Policy /Practice. Carried**

06/AGM/2009:MSC:(Frank Hetherington) **The Provincial board check into MCFD policies concerning sibling groups payments and inform all foster parents of the policy. Also in this regard we want BCFFPA to discuss with the ministry to make no placements without a clear, mutual understanding of payments. Carried**

07/AGM/2009:MSC:(Tammy Van Sickle) **In the interest of retention MCFD provide relief foster parents who are put into the hospital, or who have to travel to personal or natural family medical appointments outside of their community. Carried**

08/AGM/2009:MSC:(Tammy Van Sickle) **Camp for Kids date be extended to the end of June as some communities can't register for camp until June 1. carried**

09/AGM/2009:MSC:(Tammy Van Sickle) **In the name of societal inclusion can the board please approach MCFD with regards to help funding yearly family vacations outside of the province, and school travel trips. Carried**

10/AGM/2009:MSC:(Tammy Van Sickle) **AGM menu's for lunch and dinner be thoroughly researched before ordered and health choices more of an option such as fruit plates veggie trays. Carried**

11/AGM/2009:MSC:(Debbie Drewitz) **BCFFPA ask that foster parents be given \$500 from MCFD toward Grade 12 graduation for Foster Children. Carried**

12/AGM/2009:MSC:(Sandy Dowie) **Direct the board to ask MCFD to review the policies and methods used by After Hours when receiving calls. Due to consistency issues in the way that calls are dealt with, both by the central After Hours office and also by the local. Mostly concerned with AWOL and the response. carried**

13/AGM/2009:MSC:(Marcy Perron) **The BCFFPA Board to review and clarify the Caregiver Support Service Standard in regards to relief and respite with MCFD. Carried**

14/AGM/2009:MSC:(Claude Cuff) **According to last year's financial statement monies sitting in the various bursary accounts, compared what was awarded, it seems they are not being utilized effectively. Of the roughly \$2,200 available last year, only ½ was awarded, still leaving approximately \$70,000 doing nothing more than collecting interest. I move that the board review the amounts being awarded for possible increases, review the criteria for eligibility, and where possible, give consideration to increasing the number of recipients. Upon doing that ensure the membership has received those decisions in a timely manner for the 2010 deadlines. Carried.**

12. Voting Results

- a. Special Resolution #1 required 69.75 votes to pass, and passed with 70 votes which represents a 75% + majority of the 93 ballots cast
- b. Special resolution # 2 did not have the necessary votes to pass
- c. Les Toth was elected Treasurers with 82/87 votes cast in the affirmative

Kula Zervos asked why no CFFA rep was sent to the CFFA this year. This was due to financial constraints. It was clarified that two members of the board are going to IFCO through a funding grant from MCFD and through their own purchasing power.

Claude Cuff was asked to put all of the issues he believes are outstanding in writing so that the board can respond to them, as this has not yet been done.

Meeting adjourned at 3:08 pm