

**Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
Annual General Meeting Business Meeting
14 June 2009**

**Courtyard by Marriott Hotel
475 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario
*Draft minutes***

Members present:

Dan Allman, Melissa Atkinson (Blood Ties Four Directions Centre), Chris Aucoin (AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia), John Baker (AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador), Mélina Bernier (COCQ-Sida), Kathy Boudreau (Mainline), Ken Buchanan (BC Persons with AIDS Society), William Christiansen, Stéphanie Clavaz-Loranger, Jessie Dawson (Blood Ties Four Directions Centre), Alex Ferhouh (ACCM), Stéphanie Lalande (BRAS Outaouais), Guy Pierre Lévesque (Méta d'Âme), Michael Liddell (ACNS), Warren Michelow, Kathleen Myers Griffin (Centre d'action Sida Montréal), Diane Nielsen (Safeworks Calgary), San Patten (San Patten and Associates), Christine Porter (AIDS Coalition of Cape Breton), Peter Richtig (AIDS Committee of Durham Region), Kaitlyn Sweeney, Hiwot Teffera (People to People Aid Organization).

Board present:

William Booth, Jim Burns, Robert Carr, Le-Ann Dolan, David Eby, Rosemary Fayant, Liesl Gertholtz, David Olson, Darlène Palmer, Ryan Peck, Daphne Spencer

Staff present:

Patricia Allard, Sandra Chu, David Cozac, Richard Elliott, Eowynne Feeney, Terry Gould, Gilles Marchildon, Doriana Schiavi, Alison Symington, Vajdon Sohaili, Leah Utyasheva

1. Welcome, introductions and approval of agenda

David Eby chaired the session and welcomed members to the meeting. He presented the proposed agenda to members for approval.

**Moved/Seconded by Carey/Lévesque: That the agenda be approved as circulated.
CARRIED.**

2. Approval of Minutes of 16 June 2008 AGM

Stéphanie Lalande from Bureau Régional d'action sida (BRAs) requested that the 16 June 2008 draft minutes be amended to show that she was present as a member.

Moved/Seconded by Falconer/Buchanan: That the minutes of the 16 June 2008

Annual General Meeting be approved as amended. CARRIED.

3. President's report

David gave the Board President's report. He noted that the Legal Network co-presented (with Human Rights Watch) its International Award for Action on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights to the Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers (APNSW) at the XVII International AIDS Conference in Mexico City in August 2008. He noted that there were some new staff members at the Legal Network, and highlighted the organization's financial stability. David Eby announced that former Board President Thomas Kerr resigned in early 2009, thanking him for his time as President and Board member of the Legal Network. He noted that in the past year the Legal Network Board and staff drafted a new strategic plan to lay out the directions in which the Legal Network will head as an organization from 2010 to 2015.

4. Review and discussion of 2008–2009 activities

Richard presented an overview of the Legal Network's activities during the past year. He reviewed the goals of Legal Network and its main topic areas. In drug policy, Richard highlighted the Legal Network's work against federal mandatory minimum sentencing legislation, its support for Insite, Vancouver's safe injection site, and its international work including involvement in the 2009 United Nations review of drug control and the development of the Thai educational resource, *Compulsory Drug Treatment in Thailand: Observations on the Narcotic Addict Rehabilitation Act B.E. 2545 (2002)*.

In prisons work, the Legal Network continued to distribute its *Hard Time* report, and developed a new report, *Clean Switch: the Case for Prison Needle and Syringe Programs in Canada*, that lays out the case for needle exchange programs in Canadian prisons. Richard also briefly discussed the prisoners' affidavit project and the Legal Network's promotion of harm reduction programs and access to treatment in prisons in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Richard reviewed the Legal Network's work on the women's rights draft legislation resource and announced that this publication would be available shortly.

Richard stated that in the matter of HIV and the criminal law, the Legal Network remains conscious of how its nuanced position is portrayed in the media.

Richard went over the Legal Network's involvement in the Canadian Access to Medicines Regime campaign.

Richard concluded by briefly mentioning the Legal Network's support for sex workers' rights, involvement in HIV testing legislation issues, publication of the *HIV/AIDS Policy & Law Review*, responses to hundreds of information and media requests, and the AIDSLEX project.

5. Presentation of audited financial statements

The auditor for 2008-2009, Brendon Pennylegion, presented the audited financial statements. He briefed everyone on the goal of the audit report, which is the assessment of accounting principles and overall financial statements. Brendon noted that the Legal Network was in accordance with general accounting principles, and that the organization has a strong commitment to financial controls and accountability.

Brendon reviewed all of the Legal Network's assets and liabilities, and responded to questions.

Moved/Seconded by Olson/Fayant: That the audited financial statements be approved.

Moved/Seconded by Booth/Palmer: That Brendon Pennylegion be appointed as the Legal Network's auditor for the fiscal year 2009-2010. CARRIED.

6. Presentation and discussion of 2009–2010 workplan and budget

Richard introduced Patricia Allard, the Legal Network's new Deputy Director. He then outlined the main priority areas of the Legal Network's 2009-2010 workplan.

The priority areas include:

1. The rights of people who use drugs;
2. The rights of people in prison;
3. Sex workers' rights;
4. Women's rights;
5. National policy guidelines for HIV testing;
6. CAMR advocacy;
7. Advocacy work against the trend toward extensive criminalization of HIV;
8. Finding a stable funding source for the *Review*;
9. Work on immigration by supporting research by Michael Battista;
10. HIV and disability rights;
11. LGBT rights;
12. Capacity-building (through the Symposium);
13. Treatment of information requests;
14. The lawyer referral service;
15. AIDSLEX;
16. Continuing communications efforts (website, action alerts) and media relations;
17. Fundraising – developing more private partnerships.

Richard reviewed the Legal Network's budget for 2008-2009 and presented the projected budget for 2009-2010. He expressed caution in relying on federal funding sources for the years to come, and noted that the Legal Network must diversify its funding, as a third of its budget currently comes from federal sources.

A member asked about whether the workplan, taking into consideration the depth and complexity of each priority, is in balance with Legal Network resources and personnel. Richard replied that if some work items need to be scaled back, the organization will remain guided by the strategic plan.

A member commented that they felt that working on international LGBT rights was the least developed item in the workplan. Richard replied that while the Legal Network does not have a large body of work built up in that area it can and will support the international LGBT movement as appropriate.

A member inquired about what the Legal Network is doing in regards to public health authorities or police releasing pictures in the media of people charged with crimes related to their HIV-positive status before they even have a hearing in court. Richard noted that the Legal Network has engaged the Public Health Agency of Canada to address this issue.

A member asked Dorian Schiavi to expand the international funds section of the budget. Dorian commented on the international funds section, which contains funds related to project work, some of which requires money being transferred from the Legal Network to other international organizations. She also noted that event expenses were quite a bit more this year because of the Symposium.

William Booth commended the Legal Network for already having confirmed almost 95% of its budget for 2009-2010.

7. Strategic Plan 2010–2015

Richard presented the draft strategic plan prepared by the Board of Directors and Legal Network staff.

Richard noted that one of the most persistent challenges to the Legal Network is that the demand for work always exceeds capacity. He explained the draft strategic plan's goal of identifying just a few core areas of work in which the Legal Network will be proactive: drug policy, prisons, women, and criminalization noting that the core issues should build on the Legal Network's current strengths.

A member asked how the Legal Network is recognizing Aboriginal people and what work the Legal Network will be doing in Aboriginal issues. Richard responded that the Legal Network has a partnership with the Canadian Aboriginal Network (CAAN) but that the two organizations haven't worked together as much as they could. He said that he would like to see this work enhanced, and will endeavour to get input from Aboriginal people in Legal Network policy work.

8. 2009–2010 Board of Directors elections: report of returning officer

The Returning Officer, Dionne Falconer, took a few minutes to review the voting process. She noted that 60 ballots had been received by the deadline and that taking into account

those ballots and the regional requirements of the by-laws the following members have been elected to a two-year term on the board of directors:

Jim Burns
David Eby
David Olson
Darlène Palmer
Daphne Spencer

And that the following members would continue to serve the remainder of their terms:

William Booth
Robert Carr
Le-Ann Dolan
Rosemary Fayant
Liesl Gertholtz
Ryan Peck
Christine Vézina

Moved/Seconded by Michelow/Palmer: That the ballots from the Board election be destroyed. CARRIED.

9. Other business

Darlène Palmer announced that she wanted to thank all of the members who re-elected her.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Moved by Palmer: That the meeting be adjourned. CARRIED.