

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
January 17 & 18, 2009, Winnipeg, MB

Saturday, January 17, 2009

Meeting called to order at 9:15 a.m.

Present : Terumi Kuwada (President & Chair), Grace Eiko Thomson (Past President), Masa Kagami (Vice President), Angela Foreman (Secretary), Alan Tanaka (Treasurer), Takashi Ohki, Steven Seller, Pamela Sugiman (Directors), Lucy Yamashita (Acting National Administrator & Meeting Recorder)

1. **Terumi welcomed** everyone and introduced the three people who are new to the board, Takashi Ohki, Steven Seller, and Alan Tanaka. All executive members then introduced themselves and shared some of their background.

2. NAJC Past Activities

Grace, as past president, highlighted some of the issues with which NAJC was involved :

- a) successfully lobbied government to remove the name of former politician Green from a building in Vancouver
- b) communicated with the director of the Canadian War Museum regarding some of the displays – some changes were agreed upon but there are still some outstanding issues and Grace would like to follow up on these this year
- c) other issues- national administrator left in July, accounting procedures, the dispute with Cityscape, and issues of commemoration.

Grace noted that one of the major drawbacks has been the lack of board co-ordination in dealing with many of the issues

Angela, as past treasurer gave the financial perspective:

- a) NEB needed to become more knowledgeable concerning the investments, advisors & strategy
- b) a financial committee has been instituted but there is no structure yet for this committee.
- c) the audit committee has a bit of process in place
- d) the new focus will be on the management of investments and the day to day management of finances

3. Meeting Timeline

- a) emphasis on financial status – $\frac{3}{4}$ - 1 hour – critical area
- b) endowment – 15 minute discussion
- c) discuss items but not make decisions
- d) end of the day – move into strategic planning and the responsibilities of board members
- e) Grace felt that commemoration was an issue to be discussed and perhaps a committee could be formed which would look at the role NAJC would play with these and perhaps advise and support some - it is not possible to do all of these

MOTION : Moved that this timeline be followed for the course of the meeting.
Takashi Ohki. Seconded : Pamela Sugiman Carried.

MOTION : Moved that the minutes of the September teleconference be accepted.
Grace Thomson Seconded : Masa Kagami Carried.
Business arising from the minutes. Terumi had distributed a motion to rescind the motion regarding the termination of accounting services and had asked for discussion on this. It was agreed that the accounting services would be terminated on May 31 with notice given in writing to Osato & Co. in late February or early March. Grace suggested that the more notice that is given, the better and that notice could be given immediately following the meeting as there would have to be some overlap with the new process and procedures

4. **President's Report** – as printed

5. **Past President's Report** – a) NAJC should be aware of a major project by the city of Vancouver to commemorate the area of Oppenheimer Park and Japan Town and make sure appropriate commemoration is made of the entrance to Japan Town. Grace has written to the Consul General in Vancouver about this because he was looking for ways to commemorate the early pioneers of the Japanese Canadian community. b) The Fishermen's Association has consented to relocate the small building, the former Steveston Japanese Canadian Fishermen's Hospital

6. **Vice President's Report** – a) Masa suggested that the NAJC send a letter of support for bill HR 42 in the USA. A letter could be sent to the House of Representatives.

MOTION : Moved that a letter be sent to the House of Representatives and Congress in the USA in support of the bill.
Grace Thomson Seconded : Masa Kagami Carried.

MOTION : Moved that the NAJC donate \$1000.00 U.S. for the campaign for justice and seeking redress for Japanese Latin Americans.
Masa Kagami Seconded : Takashi Ohki Not Carried.
No monetary donation would be sent as this would set a precedent. Instead, the suggestion was made to publicize this issue.

- b) Masa reported that Hitomi Suzuta, a member of the Human Rights Committee, on behalf of NAJC, attended the NARCC AGM and the conference of the Association for Canadian Studies and filed reports on these.
- c) The Vancouver JCCA Human Rights Committee is in the process of setting up a questionnaire to send out to find out what should be the focus for the conference - healing or honouring the seniors. Masa has asked them to revise the program.
- d) Frontline for Peace – NAJC is unable to financially support their project to give performances across Canada as financial support was already given for their performance at the 20th anniversary event this past September. The suggestion was made that a letter be sent to the Japanese Ambassador to Canada, with copies sent to the Consul Generals across Canada,

recommending these performances and asking that they look at sponsoring this group.

MOTION : Moved that the NAJC write a letter suggesting to the Ambassador, with copies sent to the Consul Generals, that the Japanese Foreign office in Canada finance Dr. Koyama's group to tour and perform in 2 or 3 places in Canada.

Masa Kagami Seconded : Grace Thomson 1 opposed Carried.

7. Acting Treasurer's Report - Angela Foreman

Focus of the NEB should be : a) investment management b) development of the Finance Committee – current committee members are Kevin Okabe, Howie Shikaze and Harry Sakaguchi, all from Calgary c) change-over of accountant d) recruitment of members for the Audit Committee. Angela welcomed Alan Tanaka as NAJC treasurer.

8. Endowment Fund Committee Report and Recommendations

MOTION : Moved that the Endowment Fund Committee report be accepted as presented.

Takashi Ohki Seconded : Pamela Sugiman Carried.

9. Discussion Items

a) Executive Director Position

- work on description of position
- look for areas of financial help, grants etc.
- if the position is necessary now, then the money must be found
- Alan will discuss this with the Finance Committee to see where funds may be found
- Steven will look at the position and what would be required in an ED

b) National Administrator – Terumi indicated that this is on hold for now

c) Cityscape – getting dates now for the hearing of discovery

Membership concerns regarding the visibility of NAJC and the mandate of human rights issues and commemorations eg. commemoration and acknowledgement of NJCCA 60th anniversary - proposal by Kamloops

d) Roger Obata Award at Osgood Hall - contribute to top up funds for the award on a one time basis

MOTION : Moved that the NAJC contribute \$811.00 to the Roger Obata Award fund.

Grace Thomson Seconded : Steven Seller Carried.

e) Virtual Website – brought to the attention of NAJC

- the group has asked permission from the NAJC to re-post from the NAJC website
- perhaps can support this group by advertising them on the NAJC website and let them know that maybe they can advertise on the museum's site

Data from Takashi – may be useful for strategic planning – interesting that many do not self identify as Japanese Canadians but only as Canadians

Adjourn for the evening.

Sunday, January 18, 2009

Meeting called to order at 9:10 a.m.

10. Strategic Planning

- a) discussion regarding **membership and visibility** – cultural centres are integral parts of communities and should be encouraged to join the NAJC – they often only see social justice and human rights issues and therefore do not join
- b) review **mission statement** (section 8 in policy binder) – some of the statement has been done such as work on human rights but the other part regarding community development has not and therefore the priority must be to focus on the community development portion of the mission statement – what do communities want and need? – ‘canned’ products/ kits, scripts, eg. package from Calgary – start some community development by setting up guidelines, youth project, find out demographics and information on communities and then see what the needs may be – NAJC needs to know the communities
- c) **constitutional issues**
- d) The **NAJC structure** still seems to work . NAJC should look at making short term (3 years) and long term plans.
 - short term plans should include history and history preservation (because communities will have changed in the next ten years), human rights and networking
 - human rights may assist communities with large ijusha populations
 - the Human Rights Committee has talk about revising the handbook. Many ijusha are temporary residents and some are on working holidays. Perhaps in the short term, the human rights booklet may be finished and also be written in Japanese, especially for the ijusha.
- e) **email** remains the best way for **communication** among the NEB.
- f) **financial planning** – consider endowment grants once a year instead of twice and monitor resources.

11. Specific Plans

1) Mission Statement

- **A) priority** in the first part is the **Community Development** focus
- carry this out by reinstating the liaison roles for the NEB
 - Grace – Greater Vancouver
 - Alan – Calgary
 - Takashi – Edmonton & Lethbridge
 - Masa – Kamloops & Vernon
 - Terumi – Winnipeg
 - Pamela – Toronto & Hamilton
 - Steven – Thunder Bay
 - Angela – Ottawa
- immediate plan for the CD Committee collect email contact information – liaison – part of data gathering

- prepare a package – information and survey
- get out contact list
- continuation of previous program – find town hall results, then collect new data through a survey, and process the information
- send questionnaire and follow up – Pamela and Takashi

- **B) second part** is still a clear mandate of the NAJC through the **Human Rights Committee**
- revise the Human Rights Handbook so that it is short and succinct and distribute to all regions – support for ijusha groups
- at the 20th anniversary event, Chief Joseph asked the NAJC to join in the reconciliation process
- the NEB needs to be apprised of all work being done by the Human Rights Committee and needs to support its work
- the committee will meet and have a workshop to enable members to develop a common base and solidify the committee as well as to focus on what each member can contribute

2) Finances

- Finance Committee – Kevin Okabe, Harry Sakaguchi and Henry Shikaze.
- Short term – need to put an audit committee into place – Terumi will contact the membership to get three for this committee

3) Heritage Committee

- discussion about the value of designating a committee to address issues related to the history of Japanese Canadians
- important to ensure future generations have awareness and understanding of the history as well as easy access to it
- some archival materials may be in Japanese and it is important to translate these documents to English
- Grace would like to follow up on the War Museum and commemorations
- Takashi is interested in the history Japanese Canadian committees and their current status
- Pamela is interested in historical preservation and heritage
- Takashi and Pamela volunteered to work with Grace, who has agreed to chair a heritage committee and to develop a mandate and guidelines for the work of this committee

MOTION : Moved that the meeting be adjourned.

Steven Seller

Seconded : Masa Kagami

Adjourned.