



General Meeting 15 January 2018
Tom Brown Arena Community Centre, Ottawa



The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. with 78 members present.

1. Approval of Agenda

Wendy Adams

MOTION: To approve the draft Agenda for the January 15, 2018 Friendship Force Ottawa (FFO) General Meeting (GM). Moved by Norman McLeod, seconded by Barbara Stiles, carried.

2. Welcome/Introductions/ Guests/ Announcements

Wendy Adams

Wendy welcomed everyone to the Annual Potluck January General Meeting and expressed thanks to Merv and Jessica for their superb organization of the annual potluck and to all members for their contributions.

3. VP Membership – Report

Lynda Heffernan

Lynda reported that on December 20, 2017 the paid-up membership stood at 121. At that time, 11 members had decided not to renew. Invoices were sent out by square to all those who had not paid. On January 5, 2018, phone calls were made to those who had not responded to the invoice, and as of that date, the paid-up membership stands at 134. The payments were made as follows: 75 by cheque, 1 by cash, 14 by square, and 44 by electronic transfer. For the remaining members, 20 have decided not to renew, 5 have said yes, they will renew but payment has not yet been received and 6 remain unknown. There was no service at 1; messages were left for 4 and more information is required for 1.

4. Approval of September 18, 2017 GM Draft Minutes

Charlotte Foster

MOTION: To approve the draft Minutes, as presented, for September 18, 2017 FFO GM. Moved by Ruth Kirk, seconded by Donna Dawson, carried.

5. VP Journeys

Kathy Hatherill for Eugenie Prevost

a) 2017 Journey Presentations

Guadeloupe (Inbound)

Andrew Stirling and Eileen Howell

With the aid of visual pictures, Andrew reported on the two-week exchange hosted by FFO and FARCC where 31 ambassadors were hosted by 57 Ottawa club members. He expressed thanks to all who volunteered with hosting. There were many visits as usual in and around Ottawa as well as a BBQ in Carp, a Caribbean Cooking Day, and cottage hospitality. Initially, the Guadeloupe ambassadors were cautious about the cottage aspect, but afterwards they loved it. The ages of the ambassadors ranged from teenagers to 78. It was truly a memorable journey for all.

Hamilton/Burlington (Inbound)

Claire Fortin and Barbara Stiles

Barbara reported on this mini journey, which took place in late October. The visits in and around Ottawa included the RCMP Stables, Beechwood Cemetery, a catered lunch, a trip to Gatineau Park, a Haunted Walk, and a car tour of Ottawa. The very busy three-day mini journey concluded with a farewell dinner together at Pub Italia in Little Italy followed by attendance at a Leonard Cohen tribute show at the Gladstone Theatre. It was a mini exchange with maximum effort by all involved.

North Colorado/Georgetown, Texas (Outbound)

John Cooke and Danielle Allard

John advised that for this double journey there were 12 FFO ambassadors joined by one member from FF St. Mary's/Stratford. With the aid of pictures, he described some of the memories, which included a visit to an art casting factory, and a visit to Fort Collins where the park had 178 statues. Unfortunately, the weather during the journey was damp and cool but the warm reception by the North Colorado club and the varied activities more than compensated for the weather. These activities included a tour of an alpaca farm, a civil war re-enactment and a John Denver Tribute show. The second week of the journey was to Georgetown, Texas where 11 FFO ambassadors participated. Georgetown is situated in the center of Texas, near Austin and most of the hosts live in Sun City which is a retirement community. There were a variety of activities, which included a tour of City Square, a chuckwagon dinner and western show, a visit to Waco, Texas, the Texas Ranger museum and the Lyndon B. Johnson Ranch (like stepping back in time) and a cavalry presentation. All in all, a most enjoyable journey.

b) 2018 Journeys Update

Kathy Hatherill

Kathy, Past VP Journeys, presented the update. As outlined in the report (**Appendix A**) Kathy reported that there is a total of six outbound journeys in 2018 starting in March with one to Cape Town, South Africa, in June – Pecs, Hungary, a double journey in September to Adelaide, and Sydney, Australia, a mini-journey also in September to Quebec City, and one to Washington, DC in October. There are waiting lists for all except for the 13-20 September journey to Adelaide where there is one space still available. Kathy drew member's attention to the two inbound journeys, the first being in May from Oita, Japan and the second one proposed for October from Brasilia, Brazil; however, there is still no Host Coordinator for that journey. She invited members to give serious consideration to this opportunity and mentioned the practice of a coupling of a newer member with an experienced member, which lightens the task.

6. Treasurer

Alain Dawson

a) Financial Statement to December 31, 2017

Alain detailed that the income is lower because of decreased membership. In response to a question raised about the Contingency fund of \$5,000, Alain clarified that it remains constant at \$5,000. The Report appears as **Appendix B**.

b) Interact E-transfer Pilot

Alain Dawson

The pilot revealed that 44 members paid via E-transfer, which represents zero cost to FFO and is the user efficient and cost-effective way to pay membership dues. It is the preferred method of receiving payment for FFO and journeys; the exception being journey registration. Credit card payment incurs an extra of \$1.46 per transaction for FFO and where payment is by cheque, FFO incurs a charge over the free cheque limit of 25. The pilot review was presented for members' information as another possible means of paying for dues and journeys; however, it was emphasized that payment by cheque and credit card will also remain as a choice. It was suggested by John DuVernet that members should check with their banks about a possible charge for e-transfers as some do charge for this service. John also stated that another organization that he belongs to charges members for the cost of the mode of payment used and suggested that FFO consider this approach.

c) 2016-17 Financial Reviewer's Report

Raymond Coté

Raymond Coté presented his 2016-17 Financial Reviewer's Report (**Appendix C**) which had been distributed to the membership.

MOTION: To accept Raymond Coté's 2016-17 Financial Reviewer's Report. Moved by Ralph Baker, seconded by Dorothy Brunet, carried.

d) Appointment of the 2017-18 Financial Reviewer

Wendy Adams

MOTION: To nominate Raymond Coté as the Financial Reviewer for FFO for the year ending October 31, 2018. Moved by Merv Sullivan, seconded by Anna Rochon, carried.

7. Past President

Wendy Adams

a) Friendship Force Ottawa By-Laws

As Donna Nicholson was regrettably absent due to illness, Wendy addressed this item. She advised that the plan was to have a vote to approve the By-Laws; however, that will not happen as the FFO By-Laws are very clear that any amendment to the By-Laws must be distributed fourteen days before a vote. The Board did distribute the revisions and a rationale for those revisions to all, 14 days prior to this meeting; however, further suggestions for amendments within that 14-day period have been received. These suggestions must now be considered by the Board and the By-Laws amended if necessary. This in turn will necessitate resending the By-Laws to the membership with a timeline that allows for feedback and possibly further revisions. The Board's new goal is to have the vote at the next GM in April.

8. President

Wendy Adams

a) Hosting Work Group Update

The Co-leads for the Hosting Work Group, Ruth Kirk and Janet Wilkinson, presented the group's interim report at the January 6, 2018 Board meeting. The objective of the Group was to meet over the fall months and to examine ways to provide a better balance between a) providing a

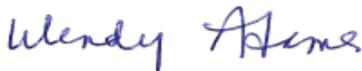
fulfilling broad and local cultural experience for ambassadors and hosts and b) to maintain reasonable costs and effort for FFO hosts. Members of the group were Rose Mary Beseau, John DuVernet, Gertraude Martin, Linda Steingarten, Janet Wilkinson, and Ruth Kirk. The members of the Group were asked to stand up and be recognized and Wendy thanked them for their dedication and commitment to the task, which is an outstanding work for the benefit of the club. The next step is for the Group to finalize their report and a meeting will be organized with Ruth, Janet, Eugenie, and Wendy to determine the short and long-term steps, including distribution of the report to the membership.

b) Guadeloupe Contribution

Wendy referenced the email request that was received from Andrew Stirling and Eileen Howell and that was sent to the membership recently concerning FFO consideration of a donation of \$500.00 or more to the disaster relief fund for Terre de bas Guadeloupe. She pointed out that this is not usual for FFO; however, the Guadeloupe journeys produced a surplus of approximately \$530.00 at the end of the two journeys combined and after that the Hurricane occurred. This contribution to the fund for disaster relief comes from the unexpected income of the two Guadeloupe journeys and was not from a regular line item in the budget. Alain reported this journey surplus in the financial report distributed to all this week. She drew members attention to a donation box at the front of the hall, where members could also donate to this disaster should they wish.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING is scheduled for Monday, April 16, 2018.



**Wendy Adams
FFO President**



**Charlotte Foster
FFO Secretary**

Supporting Documents:

FFO Journey Update for 2018
Financial Statement to 31 December 2017
2016-2017 Financial Reviewer's Report

2017-18 Financial Report

1 Nov - 31 Dec 2017

1. Bank Balance

The income and expenses that occurred during the period of 1 Nov to 31 Dec 2017, resulted in the following changes to the bank balance:

1 Nov 2017 opening balance	\$ 9,890
Income amount	+ \$ 5,892
Expense amount	- \$ 632
31 Dec 2017 closing balance	\$ 15,150
Contingency fund	- \$ 5,000
Website renewal fund*	- \$ 400
Net available for operations	\$ 9,750

* Carried over until the work is done

The sources of the income are the 134 membership fees paid (\$5,360) which is lower number than the expected 145 for the period and the unexpected \$532 from the two inbound Guadeloupe journeys.

The sources of the expenses are the cost to attend the Eastern Canadian conference (\$500), Board meeting donation in lieu of rental (\$100), AGM food (\$20), bank & square charges (\$23), and Year end events which ended up to be a negative expense (-\$11).

During the next period, the major expense will be the payment of the FFI membership fee of \$15 USD per member.

2. INTERAC E-Transfer Pilot

44 members paid their membership via INTERAC E-transfer which was free of bank charges. This has been declared a successful pilot on two counts:

- a. In providing an alternative user efficient and cost effective way to pay for membership, especially for members not able to attend the AGM; and
- b. In significantly reducing the usage of the other means of payments which are more costly from the Club point of view.

This has been declared the preferred method of receiving payment by the Board for FFO business including Journey payments. The only exception is the payment of Journey registration fee made via a post-dated cheque. The other available methods of payment and their associated cost to the Club are:

- a. credit card via Square (3.65% or \$1.46/\$40); and
- b. cheque (25 cheques/month are free, \$0.20/cheque thereafter).

FRIENDSHIP FORCE OTTAWA

FINANCIAL REVIEW FOR THE YEAR ENDING OCTOBER 31/2017

On November 28, 2017 I met with the Club Treasurer to observe the keeping of records required to report the financial position of the club to the Board and Membership. As in previous years, the emphasis was on control of the finances and the way information was presented to the Board and Membership.

OBSERVATIONS:

Over the last fiscal year the Club Treasurer has developed a complete set of linked spreadsheets to present information to the Board and the Membership at meetings. This customized approach works well and information presented to the membership has been well received. The Treasurer completed the consolidation of the general account and savings account. The amount held in reserve is held in the general account as a line item. Consolidation of the accounts ensures a higher balance in the general account to minimize transaction costs for that account. Treasurers of Journeys now open and hold their own account for the duration of a journey and close the accounts upon completion of the administration of their journeys.

Financial statements in the form of Income and Expenses comparing actuals to budgeted amounts for the present year and prior year was presented to members at regular meetings. The year-end presentation at the AGM was more elaborate and gave members a complete financial position of Club.

All cheques are held by the Treasurer and are reconciled to the bank account on line.

The Club has been operating with a deficit using up excess cash over the amount kept as a contingency. Because of surpluses experienced by journeys the club had positive results for the year.

For the new fiscal year the Club introduced another method of membership fee payment, e-transfers are received by the Treasurer and subsequently deposited to the general account electronically, the process was observed and meets control requirements. It is to be noted that e-transfers can be done at a lower cost than for transactions using Square.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Club Treasurer should:

Consider preparing spreadsheet templates for the transfer of account keeping to a new Treasurer when that occurs.

The Board should monitor the payment methods used by the Club with the view of optimizing payment methods versus convenience to members for making their membership fee payments.

To maintain a prudent contingency fund the Board should monitor the financial position of the Club and consider raising the membership fees to keep operations in a fiscal balance.

CONCLUSION:

In my review I concluded that the financial procedures, the maintenance of the general account and the publishing of statements are adequate for the Club. The financial reports fairly reflect the financial position of the Club.

Raymond Cote CPA CMA

FFO Journey Report for GM Meeting, January 15, 2018

Below find the Charts for the FF Ottawa 2018 Journeys.

Note: Volunteers have been requested for the position of Host Coordinator(s) for the Incoming Journey from Brasilia, Brazil in October, 2018.

The results of our 2019 Journey Requests are expected in late January from FFI.

DATE	OUTBOUND JOURNEY	AMBASSADOR COORDINATOR	STATUS
March 7 to 14	South Africa Cape Town	Donna and Alain Dawson	Waiting List
June 20-27	Pecs, Hungary	Anna and Paul Rochon	
September 13-20 September 20-27	Adelaide, AU Sydney, AU	Joanne Curran and Joan Kinnie	1 space available
September 10-14	Quebec City Mini Exchange	Jaap and Maria Schouten	Waiting List
October 23-30	Washington, DC	Dorothy Brunet and Kathy Hatherill	Waiting List

DATE	JOURNEY	HOST COORDINATOR	STATUS
May 9-16	Oita, Japan	Gail and Ulysse Nevraumont	Visit FF Niagara May 2-9
Proposed Oct. 9-16	Brasilia, Brazil	TBD	

Eugenie Prevost
VP Journeys