



MAP Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 26, 2019 9:30AM - 12:00PM

Location: ISSofBC, 2610 Victoria Drive, Vancouver

The meeting was held on the unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples including the Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish and Musqueam nations

Attendees: Jenny Moss (MAP), Richard Belcham (inasmuch), Saleem Spindari (MOSAIC), Mariana Martinez Vieyra (VAST), Derek Chu (Kinbrace); James Grunau (Journey home); Vanessa Roth (Journey Home), Tammy Johnson (inasmuch), Claudia Buendia (MSDPR), Valentina Stanciu (MSDPR), Rainer Nicdao (MSDPR), Jacky Leung (SUCCESS), Leanne Hodaly (IRCC), Chris Friesen (ISSofBC), Fran Gallo (Kinbrace); Ryan Reid (Kinbrace), Bayron Figueroa (Purpose Society), Patricia Mahecha (Strathcona HS), Bridget Bell (IRB), Kylee Carreno (IRB), Johnny Lo (Strathcona HS), Katherine Griffin (MOSAIC), Sabrina Dumitra (AMSSA), Jessie Murphy (AMSSA), Vanessa Roth (Journey Home Community); Alexandra Dawley (MOSAIC), Cecilia Tagle (SWIS), Julia Wu (bc2II); Rob Conley (bc211), Tomas Reyes (Roots CHC), Jen Romero (Archway CS), Gerardo Munariz (MCC); Teresa Fuller (MCC/FUSMC), Fiona Stevenson (DIVERSEcity), Guadalupe Chehib (Collingwood NH), Jenny Lam (Options), Iris Solorzano (Options), Khim Tan (Options), Mindy Kozloff (New Hope CS), Sireen El-Nashar (Zaytuna), Bahar Taheri (BC Refugee Hub), Theresa Tang (MPFC), Tien Tram (ISSofBC), Heather Johnson (University Belfast), Wahzma Waal (Umbrella HCC), Sara Lopez (VAST), Meaad Alharbi (SOS),

By phone: Sabine Lehr (ICAGV), Devinder Chattha (PICS), Diana Barry (Vancity), Felix Kongyuy (Baobab Inclusive Empowerment Society)

Regrets: Gulalai Habib (Kiwassa NH), Barry Grove (MAP volunteer), Masha Rademaker ((NSMS), Dustin Lupick (HSABC), Anamaria Bustamente (Burnaby Family Life), Ann Ball (New Hope CS), Arran Smith & Cloe Clayton (Canadian Red Cross)

The meeting was called to order by MAP Co-Chair: **Richard Belcham (inasmuch)**

- Richard acknowledged the indigenous territory where we met, and thanks were expressed to Vancity for the funding that supports MAP.

Welcome and Introductions, including our participants on video-conference.

- **The agenda was approved with no changes**

- Review of **June 27, 2019 Minutes** – approved

Announcements:

Jenny

- Asked for feedback about the new weekly bulletin. It's a good change and members appreciate the information in a concise format. There was discussion of a bi-weekly version, but through the feedback form it was gathered that the weekly version is more popular. Agencies are requested to contact anyone posting if they need original posters, or Jenny can forward if asked.
Please remember:
 - deadline is midday on Tuesday for publication next day (always Wednesdays)
 - try and limit information to a page, and if possible in landscape format
- Member agencies are encouraged to join the MAP website's 'MEMBERS' page (<https://mapbc.org/login/>) so they can view MAP's internal documents as well as the recently approved and posted report to MJTT: 'Towards a Housing Solution for Refugee Claimants in BC'
- MAP is in great need of volunteers to help with taking Minutes and setting up the monthly MAP and working group meetings. This is a wonderful opportunity for a student wishing to learn more about the area of refugee claimant services, or for a retired person with good writing skills. The Job Description is attached – please assist MAP with getting the message out.

Richard introduced:

- **NEW MJTT Project Proposal: 'Refugee Claimant Housing Referral and Management System'**
 - **Derek (Co-chair MAP Housing Working Group)** outlined the Project Proposal received recently from MJTT and based on recommendations included in the Report submitted 31/03/19 titled 'Towards a Housing Solution for Refugee Claimants'
MAP has been asked to create a process to choose a lead agency to develop an **Information & Referral system with advanced data gathering**. The process is to be both **transparent** and **collaborative**.
 - **Richard** covered the timeline. By early October MAP must have identified a lead agency and communicated that to MJTT who will then post a NOI for one month. If there is no challenge then MAP will submit, with the chosen lead agency, a project proposal with timeline, budget etc. in early November and the project will start in early December and last 2 years and 4 months.
 - **Mariana** described the importance of working through the process together as MAP members to be as transparent as possible, and to encourage a collaborative approach. Action will be facilitated through the nature of MAP's core values (collaboration, transparency and respect for expertise).

- **Derek** described the process MAP will follow to achieve the first steps:
- a) the MAP Executive and HWG co-chairs met. The co-chairs created a set of recommended criteria by which to measure the suitability of applicants to be lead agency.

- 1. An organization with a wider mandate to include a geographical spread across BC**
- 2. The organization must have experience in housing, referrals and services to RC's**
- 3. Having a track record with government funding**
- 4. Focus on sustainability - taking a longer view to the future than just immediate needs**
- 5. Being collaborative as an agency with a history of working well with others**
- 6. Having capacity to manage a significant amount of funds**
- 7. Willingness to work under the direction of the MAP co-chairs and an advisory council to manage the project**
- 8. The organization must be capable of managing a complex project**

b) today, MAP agencies with voting rights (Partners) will be asked to vote on the **approval of these criteria**.

c) MAP is also being asked to **approve the Process** which is as follows:

1. Interested agencies request an **Expression of Interest form** from Jenny to complete
2. The form must be returned to Jenny by midnight on Thursday October 3rd
3. On October 4th the MAP Executive and HWG co-chairs will meet to select the lead agency according to the criteria. The agency and then MJTT will be notified with the addition of an explanation of how the decision was reached collaboratively.
4. MAP will also create an Advisory Council or 'Project Management Team' made up of experts meeting regularly who are responsible for seeing that the work gets done and to drive the project forward, in partnership with the contracted agency.
5. Engagement of wider MAP partners and membership:
 - MAP will engage its partners on the Advisory Team.
 - A monthly report will be provided to the MAP meeting with time for discussion
 - There will be special meetings devoted to this project throughout the time period

Some questions/comments were:

- The MAP Executive and HWG co-chairs first expressed if they had any conflict of interest with the process. It was found that none of the agencies represented were planning on applying to this proposal opportunity, so no conflict of interest existed.
- Saleem thanked everyone who had been involved in the earlier work to get to this point, and to MJTT for the opportunity to create a new referral system.
- What are the selection criteria for the Advisory Council?
Richard: Once MAP membership has agreed to the function of the Advisory Council we will look for experts who might match the needs of the Advisory Council, and describe how it might be formed. We will then ask for MAP approval.
- Would this be a standing item on the monthly agenda? – YES

- Why don't the co-chairs want to be lead agency when you have much experience?
Richard: Housing providers have very specific skills – this project is much wider.
James: only 2 of the 4 core recommendations have been responded to with this Project. Journey Home is waiting to see what other parts of the report may be addressed through the available funding.
Derek: Kinbrace likewise.
- There was some discussion of Criteria 1: agency must have a provincial-wide reach. It was agreed this is important and suggested that some members of the Advisory Council should be sort outside of Greater Vancouver; e.g. Fraser Valley and beyond.
- What will be the division of responsibility between the MAP co-chairs, the Advisory Council and the lead agency?
Richard stated that not all the details have been fleshed out yet but that MJTT wants the project to be MAP-supervised so MAP, through its Executive/Co-chairs and directly, will have a major role. The design will encourage the various branches to work in tandem.

➤ **MAP members at Partner level then voted:**

- a) That the process for selecting a lead agency for the MJTT project, and the creation of an Advisory Council working with MAP Executive and lead agency on the project is approved.

VOTING: 19 (of a potential 25) partner agencies were in attendance (in person or by phone)

18 voted to support the motion.

1 abstention

- b) That the criteria recommended are approved and adopted to determine which applicant agency should be selected as lead agency.

VOTING: 17 voted to support the motion

2 abstentions

The 2 motions were approved, and MAP will keep membership informed and consulted step by step.

BREAK

- **BC Refugee Hub Update – Bahar Tamjeedi**
 - Sept 12 – had a training webinar with various agencies to explain Stream A & B services as related to claimants, and to clarify how referrals can be made from one to another. A video and slides were posted on BC Refugee Hub:
[\(https://bcrefugeehub.ca/refugeeclaimantserviceswebinar/\)](https://bcrefugeehub.ca/refugeeclaimantserviceswebinar/)
 - Will post 3rd quarter statistics shortly. Bulletin is sent out every 2 months.
 - Developing a toolkit with Rosa from **Battered Women's Support Society** and there will be a webinar to explain in November regarding abused refugee women.
 - Please send your updates to Bahar for the BC Refugee Hub website
- **New service announcement: Strathcona Community Dental Clinic**

Presenters: Patricia Mahecha, Executive Director: Strathcona Health Society
Johnny Lo – Outreach Coordinator: Strathcona Health Society

A PDF version of the informational slides presented at the meeting is attached.

Languages provided at the clinic: English, French, Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish, and very soon Farsi. If another language is needed please bring an interpreter.

Johnny Lo added that the clinic provides outreach to agencies to talk about dental health & hygiene which is very popular. If needed he can arrange for a dentist to do visual screenings at an agency location free of charge.

There were no questions

- **New media program announcement: ‘All Welcome Here’**

Presenters: Michael White, Board/Rainbow Refugee Society

Bahar Taheri/BC Refugee Hub

Richard welcomed the reps from ‘All Welcome Here’ and mentioned that MAP is also represented by himself as a group member.

A PDF version of the informational slides presented at the meeting is attached.

The group received funding from **Vancity, Vancouver Foundation, United Way, and City of Vancouver**. The funds are administered by AMSSA for the group.

Their timeline has been extended to end 2019

KEY message to MAP: ‘All Welcome Here’ uses **Slack** as a communications platform (<https://slack.com/intl/en-ca/>). Please contact Bahar to join the group on Slack.

There will be **media training** for 4 people which will be filmed and available online.

Messages to public:

- Refugees are just like our grandparents – they have experienced the same
- Treat people like people
- Refugees bring growth to Canada (cf take from the community purse)

Event coming soon: ‘Why Should I Care? Refugees and Canada in 2019’

Tuesday Oct 15, 5:30 pm at UBC Robson Square

UBC /AMSSA initiative – includes a refugee lawyer and refugee speakers.

Questions:

- Is this project connected with **Organizing Against Race and Hatred** network?
The connection is through Thanh Lam at MPNH who have that contract.
- Can the toolkit be made available to schoolteachers and health providers?
Yes, though it would need to be re-purposed as its currently geared to the media.
- What is your geographic scope?
We were advised that the project needed to be BC-focussed and non-partisan.
They will not duplicate CCR’s work but rather share it wider, as well as the 601 movement in Toronto.
- Bahar and Saleem provided a webinar to CCR members on the ‘Welcome Here’ campaign. There are some videos posted.

Last request: If you get a media request call the ‘All Welcome Here’ committee to get support before you get in front of the camera.

Agency Updates

- **Bridget Bell (IRB)**

Statistics for the region:

- Referrals June: 286 in total, 175 hearings

Principal source countries: Iran, India, Colombia, Afghanistan

- Referrals July: 322 in total, 203 hearings

- Referrals August: 282 in total, 184 hearings

With the new budget IRB has added many new staff – doubled in Vancouver.

e.g. gone from 15 – 29 members

Have just finished training and will begin training new cohort immediately so that they will be able to process claims much faster.

Question: What is the current processing time?

Scheduling in 12/13 months in the Western Region.

- **Julia Wu (bc211)**

Introduced Rob Conley as new staff member associated with their referral service for claimants. Agencies are requested to send their updates to: updates@bc211.ca.

- **Katherine (MOSAIC)**

English Conversation circles will re-start on Wednesday October 9th (it's a new day) from 6 – 8pm at MOSAIC HQ on Boundary Road.

Provide childminding, multilingual volunteers.

A few spots available for Spanish speakers in their Food Safe class in Vancouver on Oct 4/5th.

- **Tammy (inasmuch)**

Ride for Refuge happens in Cloverdale and Richmond on Saturday Oct 8th – ride or sponsor!

- **Mariana (VAST)**

A new program co-sponsored by VCH and VAST: Trauma-informed psycho-social support group for Spanish speakers.

Mondays from 10 am – 12 pm

- **Richard (inasmuch)**

Statistics: Jan – Aug 2018 eight refugee claimants in one house. Jan – Aug 2019 49 refugee claimants in two houses.

inasmuch is providing an educational program in the schools to explain who is a refugee claimant.

- **Alexandra (MOSAIC)**

- Working with Victoria Coalition of Survivors of Torture to film stories of LGBTQ+ refugee claimants who are survivors of torture, their experience with the refugee claim process and the agencies who helped them like VAST. Launching soon.

- **Warm Clothes Market Day:** afternoon October 10 and morning October 11th. Please refer your clients to receive FREE umbrellas, boots, toques, sweaters and raincoats.

- **Rainer (MSDPR)**

Starting in June 2019 the ministry launched 12 new positions called ‘**Community Integration Specialists**’ Claudia and Valentina (MAP members) have been representing Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley, but now this is a province-wide program to create better community partnerships and better provide MSDPR services. Drop in appointments at ISSofBC have increased.

- **Iris (Options)**

MAP Housing Working Group will present at the HSABC conference.

Hiring event at Surrey library (Sept 27) – there is training available for claimants to be ready to meet with Amazon hiring team.

- **Chris (ISSofBC)**

- Through a Law Foundation grant they have hired Tien Tram as a lawyer in their new **Legal Advisory Clinic**. He can see any status of person on any issue (except for claimants with legal aid or IRB questions). He can take referrals from agencies and can notarize documents.

Also, in late October, the Law Foundation will finance the first **Legal Aid clinic** provincially with a para-legal staff person. Still negotiating scope of work.

- **ISS-SOS Statistics:** June – August: 555 unique clients, 61% were families. 339% increase over last 5 years. (2019 to date: 2,900. In 2018: 2,100)

1 in 3 of their clients live in Vancouver

- New presentations: ‘**A Closer Look**’ 5:30 pm on Sept 26, October 24 & Nov 14 (see MAP bulletin for details) Register as per directions.

- **Sara (VAST)**

‘Getting Through It’ being offered at Options – Fridays at 11 am

- **Bahar (BC Refugee Hub)**

ISSofBC also funded to provide a referral system to legal services.

Putting together an inventory of different clinics (legal, health, dental) and Conversation Circles.

- **Fiona (DIVERSEcity)**

Have a small grant for claimants under 30 for employment services: skills training. Will also provide bus tickets and work attire.

- **Meaad (SOS)**

Conversation circles: Vancouver – Saturdays

Surrey – Mondays

New schedule of workshops coming soon.

- **Jacky (SUCCESS)**
 - English Conversation Groups available in Coquitlam, Surrey, Langley, and MapleRidge.
 - Job Fair – Oct 8th at Vancouver Public Library Central Branch.
 - Health specialists event – Oct 17 - also at VPL Central Branch
- **Fran (Ready Tour)**
 - RHP guides have been updated and available online for distribution.
- **Bayron (Purpose)**
 - Co-facilitating a group with VAST for newcomers (including claimants)
 - Foodbank available on Fridays in New Westminster and Surrey
 - Currently registering families.
- **Mariana (VAST)**
 - FOR Kiwassa**
 - Kiwassa NH has launched a new program for survivors of torture – who are seeking employment. Contact Gulalai for details.

Feedback forms and adjournment at 12:00pm.

Next Meeting: October 24, 2019 hosted by MOSAIC

MAP gratefully acknowledges the funding provided by Vancity without which our work would not be possible