

FAMILY MEDIATION CANADA
2014 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2014

12:30 P.M. (Newfoundland Time)

Sheraton Hotel Newfoundland (Garrison & Signal Room)
115 Cavendish Square
St. John's, Newfoundland A1C 3K2

Present: 5 Members Present

FMC Board of Directors Present (10/14):

Tom Dart – President	(ON)	(Executive Committee)
Lia Versaevel – President Elect	(BC)	(Executive Committee)
Mary Damianakis – Past President	(QC)	(Executive Committee)
Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide – Treasurer	(ON)	(Executive Committee)
Betty Ife – Member at Large	(BC)	(Executive Committee)
Gerry Schoel– Member at Large	(QC)	(Executive Committee)

Brenda Arseneault	(AB)
Judy McCann-Beranger	(NL)
Eric Skoglund	(NL)
Elizabeth Sterritt	(ON)

Ernie Tannis	(ON)	(Honorary Counsel)
Carrie Cekerevac	(ON)	(Staff)

Regrets:

Kayla MacIntyre	(AB)
Karen Stewart	(AB)
Keith Wallis	(NS)
Donalda Halabuza	(SK)

- 1. The meeting was called to order at 12:35 P.M. Newfoundland Time.**
- 2. Acceptance of Agenda – Gerry Schoel moved the agenda be accepted as written and Brenda Arseneault seconded. The agenda was accepted as presented.**

3. Adoption of 2013 Annual General Meeting Minutes – Betty Ife moved the adoption of the minutes and Linda Bonnell seconded. The minutes were adopted as presented.

4. Election of Directors - Nominations Committee – Gerry Schoel on behalf of Mary Damianakis

The 2014-2015 FMC Board Nomination Slate was read and presented as follows:

Name	Province	Status	Position	Term	Term ending
Kayla MacIntyre	AB	Appointed AFMS	Director	1 st term 2 nd term	2014 2016
Karen Stewart	AB	Elected	Director	1 st term 2 nd term	2013 2015
Brenda Arseneault	AB	Elected	Director	1 st term 2 nd term	2014 2016
Betty Ife	BC	Elected	Director	2 nd term	2015
Lia Versaevel	BC	Elected	Director President- Elect	2 nd term 1 st year	2020 2015
Eric Skoglund	NL	Elected	Director	1 st term 2 nd term	2013 2015
Judy Beranger	NL	Elected	Director	1 st term 2 nd term	2015 2017
Keith Wallis	NS	Elected	Director	1 st term 2 nd term	2013 2015
Ernie Tannis	ON		Honorary Counsel		
Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide	ON	Elected	Director Treasurer	1 st term	2013 2015
Elizabeth Sterritt	ON	Appointed Elder Mediation Committee	Director		
Tom Dart	ON	Elected	President		2015
Frank Bulger	PE	Appointed Mediation PEI	Director	1 st term 2 nd term	2016 2018
Mary Damianakis	QC	Elected	Past- President Director	2 nd year 2 nd term	2015 2017
Gerry Schoel	QC	Appointed	Director	1 st term 2 nd term	2013 2015

Donalda Halabuza	SK	Elected	Director	1 st term 2 nd term	2013 2015
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Gerry Schoel moved that the election of directors be accepted as read Lia Versaevel seconded. All in favour, No-one opposed, So Passed.

5. Reports

a) President's Report – Tom Dart

It has been a busy year for FMC. It is hard to believe how fast the time goes as I conclude my first year as President of this wonderful organization. It has been a pleasure working with so many committed and hardworking board members. I wish to just touch upon some areas where we were particularly active knowing that Board Chairs will cover their own areas in more detail.

Leading up to our AGM on November 16, 2013, FMC participated with the DR5 in holding a two day advanced mediation continuing education program. Nina Meierding provided an excellent program. I am happy to report that, at the end of the day, none of the organizations lost any money on this program and in fact, we actually had a small surplus of almost \$600. (For your information, the “DR5” is a very loose affiliation of five organizations – Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC), ADR Institute of Ontario, Ontario Association for Family Mediation, Ontario Collaborative Law Federation and FMC. The purpose behind the group is to hold events like this and maintain communication about important events occurring within each association so as to avoid as many scheduling conflicts as possible around good continuing education and other programs. It meets only on an informal basis.)

Following this event, the Board held a retreat for a planning session for the full day.

At the retreat we discussed many topics, the primary one being the need for governance of our organization under the new not for profit federal legislation. Ernie Tannis and Gerry Schoel led the discussion. Gerry will report on the results of that meeting as, over the course of the year, he was instrumental in establishing our new by-laws and ensuring that we will be in full compliance with the new legislation.

At board meetings following the retreat, the Board decided to continue the discussion regarding the issues which could not be fully addressed for lack of time. At the start of each Board meeting, from January this year to July, we met for an hour ahead of the regular Board meetings and continued discussion on the agenda which was established at the Retreat. The following topics were discussed at each meeting:

- *Board committees* – how can they enhance the services FMC provides, are they properly constituted, do they have appropriate terms of reference?;
- *Specialization Committees* - Are they effective? What can we do to make them more effective?
- *State of FMC* – is it healthy? Does it meet the needs of the community it serves – members and the public?
- *Website review* – we committed to going over each page and seeing if it was still timely and relevant.

- *Fund raising* – how do we get money into FMC to pay for more programs and more public relations events in particular?

Over the months we had great discussions and came away from the meetings with strong resolve to get things moving in the right direction. All of the topics were addressed and each now has an action item which we plan to implement over the coming months.

The Board also decided to participate in the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts annual conference which was held in Toronto at the end of May 2014. Many thanks to Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide, Mary Damianakis and Carrie Cekerevac for all their hard work in setting up and being present at the booth for the entire conference. FMC provided a bronze sponsorship. The sponsorship included an FMC insert in all the delegate bags and mention in the program. The conference was attended by over 2000 people. Tamara reported that event was a great success for FMC. We had a strong presence and the event was well worth the money spent. We did a lot of networking with other exhibitors and made great connections. We had tons of interest, especially from the prairies and by Friday morning we had run out of certification brochures. We plan to continue involvement in these conferences.

FMC was also asked to participate in the Children Now Conference held in Montreal. We had several Board members in attendance including Mary, Gerry and me. The purpose of the conference was to focus on how mediation can be used to benefit children in family breakdown. Mary and I were asked to speak at the opening of the conference. Many mediators from around the country and around the world were in attendance. We had a delegation from Thailand. We also had a mediator from Australia which, as you know, is instrumental in developing a different approach to the resolution of family disputes designed to keep people out of court wherever possible. The organizers of the conference are planning to have a video of the conference published perhaps in a documentary format. We will keep you posted in that regard.

FMC also helped sponsor the Elder Mediation International Network 7th World Summit held in Halifax. This event was well attended and FMC was well represented. You will hear more about this event in the Elder Mediation Report.

Next year is the 30th anniversary of FMC. Betty Ife has agreed to chair a committee to plan our AGM around that event which will take place in British Columbia. Hope to see everyone there.

We also had some problems with our web site as some of you may be aware. This has now been corrected and will not happen again. The web site is under constant review by our Web site committee.

FMC is also involved with a new Ontario group, Family Dispute Resolution Institute of Ontario (FDRIO) wanting to establish an organization for all neutral dispute resolution experts with the goal of getting all professionals who practice in this area, including parenting coordinators and family arbitrators, under one umbrella. The group is holding meetings at this time. FMC is in a supportive mode at this time trying to determine if there is a positive role for it in this new

organization. The Board will continue to meet with this group and see what develops. At this point, there is a steering committee in place which plans to meet on September 16th. Accordingly, at this point, the organization is just in its infancy.

Finally, we have decided to search for a part time executive director. The function of the executive director would be to implement the strategic goals and objectives of Family Mediation Canada; with the President, enable the Board to fulfill its governance function; give direction and leadership toward the achievement of FMC's philosophy, mission and strategy. The responsibilities would include Board Administration and Support; Program and Service Delivery; Inter-agency liaison; Financial, Tax, and Risk Management; Correspondence; Community and Public Relations; Marketing; Certification and Fundraising.

We are always looking for members who want to join the Board or a Board committee, whichever you prefer. If you are interested please submit a resume to Carrie at the FMC email address. We need representatives from all provinces so if you can spare the time, please consider volunteering.

b) Operations Manager's Report - Carrie Cekerevac

It is a privilege to be the Operations Manager for Family Mediation Canada and work for such a worthwhile organization. 2014 marks my 12 years of employment with FMC and I hope that my history and knowledge of the organization continues to serve you well. My role within the organization is to manage all operational aspects, some of which includes, working closely with our board of directors and committees, membership and certification administration, correspondence, website maintenance, accounting, organizing conferences, webinars and marketing.

My marketing efforts this year have resulted in revenue of \$3000 for the organization for obtaining new members and retaining lapsed members.

FMC continues to send out the "News & Happenings", an informational email that informs our Members, about the news & training opportunities across the country and abroad in effort to inform you about what's occurring in the field of family mediation. 4 quarterly News & Happenings issues went out this year.

FMC held and/or participated in five conferences this year:

The Dispute Resolution Five conference took place on November 1-2, 2013 in Toronto, Ontario presented by Nina Meierding on the Practical Strategies from Psychology, Communication, and Negotiation Theory and was attended by over 60 professionals. The DR5 groups include OAFM (Ontario Association for Family Mediation), AFCC Ontario (*Association of Family and Conciliation Courts-Ontario*), ADRIO (*ADR Institute of Ontario*), OCLF (*Ontario Collaborative Law Federation*) and FMC (Family Mediation Canada). The DR5 is a working group comprised of representatives from each organization. The DR5 was formed with the goal of providing high quality continuing education programs to all five member organizations.

In February and March of 2014 FMC held a 6 part webinar series on Child Support with Presenters, Linda Bonnell and Betty Ife with just over 30 participants. Participants earned

continuing education credits at this webinar that could count towards obtaining their certification.

In May 2014 FMC attended the AFCC Conference in Toronto, Ontario as an exhibitor and sponsor and many of our members and board members attended as registrants. FMC was busy networking at this conference and we made many great connections who will aid with our future goals.

In June of 2014 FMC attended the Children Now Conference held in Montreal, Quebec. This conference was attended by our current President, Tom Dart and Past-President's Gerry Schoel and Mary Damianakis who still serve on our board, as well as Past-Presidents, Dr. Larry Fong and Judge Nancy Flatters.

FMC also sponsored a luncheon at the Elder Mediation International Network's Summit in Halifax, Nova Scotia which was held in June 2014.

I encourage our members to contact me with any suggestions for the organization that you believe FMC should focus on, to make FMC a healthier organization for our members and the general public.

I look forward my continued working relations and would like to thank the membership and board of directors of FMC for the opportunity to manage Family Mediation Canada.

c) Treasurer's Report – Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide

I am happy to report that the 2013-2014 fiscal year for Family Mediation Canada was a productive and stable one.

As in prior years, MNP LLP in Waterloo, ON, prepared our year-end financial statement. This year's financial statement did not require auditing. In this statement, they report that "Based on [their] review, nothing has come to [their] attention that causes [them] to believe that these financial statements are not, in all material respects, in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations."

Copies of the financial statements have been distributed to board members, executive members, and other members attending the AGM as an attachment to the agenda. Further, a copy will be posted to the website along with a copy of this report after the AGM.

At year end (and continuing to today), FMC was in a very stable financial position, with no outstanding debt. The General Operating Account has consistently been maintained above \$50,000.00, which has allowed us to make a move towards obtaining bank accounts which have no service fees for minimum balance accounts at a new Financial Institution (RBC), whereby eliminating monthly banking fees. This change of accounts and institution will be complete by the end of the calendar year, and will save FMC significant money. This past year, we have found many other innovative ways to save FMC money, and to streamline practices.

As treasurer, I have made every effort to be the guardian of FMC funds with integrity and frugality, seeking ways to save FMC money where possible, and ensuring that I am accountable for same to the board, the executive and the membership at large. I thank the membership for entrusting me with this responsibility, and look forward to continuing on in this role for the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

i. Review of Financial Statements 2013/2014

The Review of the Financial Statements for 2013/2014 was presented. Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide moved we accept the Accountants report as presented and Betty Ife seconded. All in favour, No-one opposed, So Passed.

ii. Appointment of Accountants

It was moved by Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide and seconded by Betty Ife that the existing accountants: MNP LLP, be declared our accountants for the upcoming year's review. All in favour, No- one opposed, So Passed.

d) Certification Committee Report – Judy McCann-Beranger

The FMC certification committee is chaired by Judy McCann-Beranger (NL) and the members are: Cynthia Spratt Goodmundson (MN), Betty Ife (BC), Eric Skoglund (NL) and Linda Bonnell (BC)

As of September 8, 2014 we have a total of 142 certified members: 2 from Alberta, 114 from British Columbia, 5 from Manitoba, 1 from New Brunswick, 2 from Newfoundland, 1 from Nova Scotia, 12 from Ontario, 3 from P.E.I., 1 from Quebec, and 1 from Saskatchewan. Since our last AGM we have 9 new FMC Certified mediators, we currently have 11 candidates in the application process. Last year 3 certified members retired. The committee continues to review the FMC certification Program and has examined some of the challenges that continue to prevent mediators from acquiring their certification. FMC certification is considered by most in the field to be the gold star training program, exemplified by also having achieved the status as an IMI certifying organization.

Over this past year the committee addressed protocols for people renewing their certification credentials after a lapse in membership; reviewed the PLAR program, (Prior Learning and Recognition); reviewed and approved family mediation training on request and we are in the process of reviewing and updating all our policies and procedures. Work is ongoing with regard to a database system for tracking certification maintenance hours and practicum requirements. The updated Program Manual, Candidate's Manual, Trainer's Manual, and Assessor's Manual was revised and in use since last year.

A very special thanks to our Certification Committee for their dedication and donation of expertise and many precious hours. Thanks to our Certification Registrar, Linda Bonnell who oversees the assessment process and all its entails. Thanks to assessor Kirstin Lund for her ongoing support to Linda and the program.

Thank-you to Carrie Cekerevac, for her support to the committee and who is the first contact with our new certification candidates. Carrie does the referral to either the Certification Registrar or the Certification Committee for assistance.

Thanks to the Board of Directors, whose ongoing recognition, commitment and support of this exemplary program allows us to continue promoting and developing this necessary standard.

e) Governance Committee Report – Gerry Schoel / Ernest G. Tannis

For the past two years the Governance Committee has been working to prepare the necessary documents to renew our registration with the federal government. We sent out a first consultation to our members and integrated their suggestions into the final package that was then sent out for a vote of acceptance.

We received no negative votes and therefore are proceeding to the final stage of sending the necessary documents to the federal government. When we receive the government approval you (the members) will be notified by email.

I would like to take this time to thank all the members of the committee who worked on our behalf at this very arduous task.

The Committee members are;
Chairperson, Gerald Schoel
Ernest Tannis
Eric Skoglund
Karen Stewart
Mary Damianakis
Tom Dart
Brenda Arseneault

f) Public Outreach Committee Report- Brenda Arseneault

The Public Outreach Committee wishes to thank FMC's Operations Manager, Carrie Cekerevac for her assistance, the FMC Board and committee members for their assistance.

Tom Dart, Mary Damianakis, Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide and Carrie Cekerevac attended various family mediation events throughout this past year.

FMC had a booth at the AFCC conference this year, and Carrie Cekerevac did an amazing job with the FMC booth.

Mary Damianakis and Tom Dart officially represented FMC at the Children NOW Montreal family mediation conference, with Ricardo DiDone. Thank you to Gerry Schoel who represented Quebec at the conference.

Mary Damianakis represented FMC at the Center of Excellence for Matrimonial Real Property.

The committee is happy to report that the website is being reviewed and the updated version is running well. We would like to express our gratitude to everyone who worked on website project; a very special gratitude goes to Betty Ife and Carrie Cekerevac, on their contributions.

g) Membership Committee Report – Carrie Cekerevac

The committee consists of two members: Brenda Arseneault as chair and myself, Carrie Cekerevac.

As of September 8, 2014 FMC has a total 492 members and the total in each province is as follows:

- Alberta - 58
- British Columbia - 203
- Manitoba - 13
- New Brunswick - 13
- Newfoundland – 5
- Nova Scotia - 16
- Northwest Territories - 2
- Nunavut - 1
- Ontario - 153
- Prince Edward Island - 9
- Quebec - 2
- Saskatchewan - 17

Of those 492 members, we have 51 new members that have joined our organization this year.

The membership committee conducts renewal retention efforts of its members by sending renewal reminders by regular mail, email reminders and a telephone call. This year our FMC Board of Director also assisted in the renewal retention efforts and this has resulted a few more renewal of our members. Thank you to our members for your continued support of FMC.

The Membership Committee promoted membership within FMC this past year, by searching for mediators and like-minded professionals across Canada and sending them a membership information package by email along with a complimentary copy of News & Happenings in an attempt to bring in new members. These efforts resulted in 24 new members.

FMC Members can continue to benefit from the opportunity to seek FMC Certification, the website member listing, referrals, group rates on our Professional Liability Insurance, a reduction on professional development workshops and webinars, participation on committees and information on news, events and training opportunities occurring in the family mediation field.

FMC continues to offer a referral program, which rewards current members of FMC with \$25 off their next year's membership renewal dues for each new member referred to FMC. Thank you to those of you who have recruited new members for Family Mediation Canada.

If you would like to sit on the membership committee or if you have any comments or suggestions for the committee please contact our office.

h) Elder Mediation Committee Report – Elizabeth Sterritt

The Elder Mediation section of Family Mediation Canada wishes to extend its sincere appreciation to Carrie Cekerevac, FMC's Operations Manager, for her invaluable assistance and support of its endeavours, as well as to the FMC Board.

The Elder Mediation Committee for 2014 included the following FMC Certified Elder Mediators: Colleen Currie (ON), Patricia Donihee (NB), Judy McCann-Beranger (NL), Andrew Pavey (BC), Elizabeth Reagh (PEI), Elizabeth Sterritt (ON), Chair.

1. The Elder Mediation Committee continues to meet on a regular monthly basis with the exception of the summer months. All of our Committee minutes are available to FMC members. We remain open to, and encourage any questions regarding Elder Mediation from FMC members.

2. The Elder Mediation Committee accomplished its major outreach goal for the 2013-2014 year with the production of its Elder Mediation brochure. Special thanks to all committee members for their contributions to this successful brochure as well as to Carrie Cekerevac for:

(i) her technical skills in the mass production of the brochure that is now for sale to FMC members.

(ii) acceptance of the Committee's request to place its new brochure in all of the AFCC conference packages as a means of advertising and promoting this specialized form of mediation at the Conference, as well as FMC's national Elder Mediation certification process.

3. The Elder Mediation Committee's meeting of March 25th, 2014 focused upon marketing Elder Mediation to the Canadian public. To this end the following initiatives are under way:

(i) An Elder Mediation Committee letter, approved by the FMC Board, to be sent to seniors' organizations and senior resource centres regarding Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Thank you to Patricia Donihee and Andrew Pavey for their work in drafting this letter.

(ii) A letter to the Attorneys-General of Canada describing the importance of Elder Mediation and how it may be of significant assistance to Canadian families.

(iii) The addition of a video clip from an Elder Mediation role play to the Elder Mediation section of the FMC website. The purpose of the video clip is to demonstrate a variety of skills in an elder mediation and to invite interest in Elder Mediation.

It has been a distinct pleasure to work with the Family Mediation Board on behalf of the dedicated members of the Elder Mediation Committee. As a committee, we have accomplished much in the past two years, and we continue to strive to meet the growing need for certified Elder Mediators in Canada.

i) Child Protection Mediation Committee Report – Donalda Halabuza

The Child Protection Committee began in the winter of 2013 and has four members, Mary Damianakis, Lia Versaevel, Vicky Visca and Donalda Halabuza as chair. We have met throughout the year and have two new members, Lia who joined the committee in the winter and Vicky who joined the committee in the spring of 2014. We continue to seek out new members who have experience in Child Protection Mediation. It is important that people on this committee have experience in child protection mediation, a background in family violence, addictions, and an understanding of various social problems (ex. the effects of poverty on families, colonization etc.) and cultural sensitivity. The aim of this committee is to promote and advance the practice of Child Protection Mediation in Canada.

Our goals are to expand knowledge about CP Mediation, to provide education about Child Protection Mediation and be a source for FMC members to obtain information about CP Mediation. We want raise visibility of CP mediation as one of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Methods available to families who are involved with Child Protection Services. Therefore, we are proceeding to plan a webinar that will feature Perri E. Mayers as the facilitator. The tentative dates for the webinar dates are November 28 and December 5 at 2 PM EST (Ontario and Quebec time).

j) Aboriginal Committee Report – Mary Damianakis

The Family Aboriginal Committee meet a few times this year and has been working hard to connect with the different Aboriginal communities in Canada. The committee hopes to gain learning from our Aboriginal communities and help build a stronger alliances and future projects, helping families, children and communities.

6. Adjourned at 1:07 P.M. Newfoundland Time.